

Navigating from the Middle: Enabling Middle Leaders
in Secondary Schools in Jamaica

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Leicester

by

Lincoln D. Phipps

2007

UMI Number: U237288

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U237288

Published by ProQuest LLC 2013. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Abstract

Recent educational reform in Jamaica includes a focus on school leadership, mainly among school principals but the work of middle leaders is not addressed. This study therefore, aims to examine the role played by middle leaders in Jamaican secondary schools. The research uses a tripartite leadership model consisting of professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics to explore how academic middle leaders in three distinct types of secondary schools are accomplishing their roles and functions.

A methodological approach combining survey and multi-site case study provided both qualitative and quantitative data and offered the advantage of triangulation. Using a purposive sampling approach, six secondary schools were selected; three of which comprised the case study schools. Data were collected through self administered questionnaires to subject teachers, semi-structured interviews with principals and heads of department in the case schools, observation of senior management meetings, survey of documentary records and interviews with officers from the Ministry of Education and Culture. The data were manually and electronically analyzed.

The findings indicate that whilst the academic middle leadership position carries numerous challenges, consciously or unconsciously, academic middle leaders have developed various tactical manoeuvres to combat or pre-empt the challenges they are likely to encounter from principals, senior teachers, peers and new members of staff. As such, they are able to navigate from the middle, enabled by their ability to apply the skills they have acquired.

Acknowledgements

The researcher wishes to recognise the contributions made by a number of individuals towards the completion of this thesis and extends to them his personal gratitude.

To the principals, academic middle leaders and teachers of the six participating schools in Jamaica who willingly shared their experiences. Thank you for allowing me into your world.

To Professor A. R. J. Briggs, my main supervisor, for your patience, and guidance. Ann, I thank you for being such a committed and accessible supervisor, for making me feel as if what I had to say was worth saying and for believing in me when I doubted myself. Your facilitative approach, experience, and expert knowledge combined with your ability to offer immediate and constructive feedback to the various drafts were extraordinary.

To Dr. Chris Comber, my second supervisor, for helping me with the management and analysis of my quantitative data. Chris, thank you for making yourself available at short notice and for your patience with me in using SPSS.

To Dr. Hugh Busher, who helped me organise my thoughts especially during the early stages of my research. Hugh, I particularly enjoyed those early tutorials which helped me to construct my ideas for this research.

In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to Joan Smith, fellow doctoral student and friend. Joan, you helped me to construct my ideas and put my thoughts into perspective; you took time from your own studies to read my work and offered positive criticisms. Thank you for your support and for making the doctoral journey manageable.

To all my friends in Jamaica who assisted, especially, Max, Precious and Laureen who helped with references and offered encouragement, especially when I became home sick and frustrated.

To my cousin Keith and his wife Elaine who offered me the comfort of their home during my studies. Your generosity is beyond measure.

To my sister Eugenie who was always available to offer assistance when it was needed, thank you.

Special thanks to the principal and staff of Shortwood Teachers' College especially, Sandra, Marleen and Lorna from the Geography, History and Social Studies Department.

Finally to my wife Millicent and daughter Sharie for the personal sacrifices you both endured.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
CHAPTER ONE	1
<i>Overview</i>	1
SECTION ONE	1
<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Background to the Problem</i>	3
<i>The Problem</i>	5
<i>Who are Academic Middle Leaders?</i>	9
<i>Why a Study on Academic Middle Leaders in Jamaica?</i>	11
SECTION TWO	14
SECONDARY EDUCATION IN JAMAICA: HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS	14
<i>Introduction</i>	14
<i>Secondary Education During the Early British Colonial Period</i>	15
<i>Expansion of Secondary Education in Jamaica</i>	16
<i>Changes in Secondary Education in the Mid 20th Century</i>	18
<i>Secondary Education in Jamaica during the Late 20th Century</i>	20
<i>The Organisational Management of Secondary Schools in Jamaica (1953-1979)</i>	20
The Minister of Education	22
Education Officers	23
The Board of Governors	23
The Principal	24
The Vice-Principal	25
Heads of Department	26
Senior Teachers	26
Student Placement	26
increasing Places in High Schools	27
Types of High Schools in Jamaica	28
The Technical High School	29
The Upgraded High School	29
The Traditional High School	30
The Shift System	31
Examination and Curriculum	32

<i>A Plethora of Reforms</i>	33
SECTION THREE	37
<i>Justification for the Study</i>	37
<i>Overview of the Thesis</i>	39
CHAPTER TWO	41
LITERATURE REVIEW	41
<i>Introduction</i>	41
SECTION ONE	42
TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP	42
<i>Pressures on Schools to Change</i>	42
<i>Challenging the Traditional Theories of Leadership</i>	43
<i>Defining Distributed Leadership</i>	44
<i>Challenges in Distributing Leadership in Schools</i>	46
<i>The Importance of Teacher Leaders</i>	48
<i>Defining Teacher Leaders</i>	49
<i>The Importance of Teachers Who Lead</i>	51
SECTION TWO	53
<i>Who are Academic Middle Leaders?</i>	53
<i>Academic Middle Leaders in the Jamaican Context</i>	55
<i>Middle Leadership in the American Context</i>	56
<i>Middle Leadership in the British Context</i>	57
Role and Responsibility	61
Recognition	61
Professional or Manager	61
Leadership- Sharing the Vision	61
Administration - The Driving Force	62
Preparation for the Role	62
Head of Department as Servant Leader	63
Head of Department as Organisational Architect	63
Head of Department as Moral Leader	63
Head of Department as Social Architect	64
Head of Department as Leading Professional	64
<i>Team Leadership</i>	65
<i>The Emergence of Teams</i>	66
<i>Team Leadership within the Department Context</i>	67

SECTION THREE	71
DEPARTMENT CULTURE	71
<i>Related Research on School Culture</i>	72
<i>Defining School Culture</i>	73
<i>The Role of Culture in Schools</i>	74
<i>The Culture Continuum</i>	76
<i>Sculpting a Department Culture</i>	78
SECTION FOUR	80
<i>Micropolitics in Schools</i>	80
<i>The Micropolitical Relationship between Principals and Heads of Department</i>	82
<i>Challenges at the Middle</i>	84
<i>Summary</i>	89
CHAPTER THREE	92
METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY	92
<i>Introduction</i>	92
SECTION ONE	92
<i>Educational Research</i>	92
<i>The Philosophical Framework</i>	93
<i>The Mixed Methods Approach</i>	97
<i>Criteria for Soundness</i>	99
SECTION TWO	101
THE RESEARCH DESIGN	101
<i>Aims of the Research</i>	101
<i>Research Questions</i>	102
<i>The Application of Mixed Methods</i>	102
<i>The Case Study Approach</i>	103
<i>Data Collection Strategies in Case Study Methodology</i>	105
Multi-Site Case Studies	105
<i>The Research Cycle</i>	106
<i>Defining the Research Population</i>	108
<i>Sampling</i>	108
<i>Sampling Procedures for the Research</i>	109
<i>Research Respondents</i>	110

<i>Piloting the Research Instruments</i>	111
Semi-structured interviews	111
SECTION THREE	113
<i>Fieldwork in Jamaica</i>	113
<i>Phases of the Research</i>	113
<i>Instrumentation</i>	114
<i>The Questionnaire</i>	115
Questionnaire Response Rate	117
<i>Interviews</i>	119
Principals' interviews	121
Middle Leaders' Interviews	121
Education Officers' (Ministry of Education) Interviews	122
<i>Observation</i>	123
Observation in the Case Study Schools	123
<i>Problems Encountered during the Research Process</i>	124
<i>Validity and Reliability</i>	127
<i>Analysis of Data</i>	129
Qualitative Data	130
Quantitative Data	131
<i>Ethical Considerations</i>	132
<i>Summary</i>	133
CHAPTER FOUR	134
THE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS	134
SECTION ONE	135
CASE STUDY SCHOOL NO. 1	135
TREDWAY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL	135
<i>School context</i>	135
PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP	136
<i>Challenges to the Head of Department Professional Leadership Role</i>	138
DEPARTMENT CULTURE	140
MICROPOLITICS	141
CASE STUDY SCHOOL NO. 2	142
CONDOUR UPGRADED HIGH SCHOOL	142
<i>School Context</i>	142
PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP	143
<i>Challenges to Heads of Department Professional Leadership</i>	144

DEPARTMENT CULTURE	146
MICROPOLITICS	147
CASE STUDY SCHOOL No. 3	148
BUCKSHIRE TRADITIONAL HIGH SCHOOL	148
<i>School Context</i>	148
PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP	149
DEPARTMENT CULTURE	151
MICROPOLITICS	152
SECTION TWO	154
SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES ACROSS THE THREE CASE SCHOOLS	154
<i>Professional Leadership</i>	154
The Academic Qualification of Teachers	155
<i>The Promotion Process</i>	156
Exemplary Leaders	157
Delegation Among Heads of Department	158
Effective Communication	159
Work Overload	159
The Need for Training	160
<i>Department Culture</i>	160
Initiating New Members of Staff	161
Forging a Collaborative Department Culture	161
Developing a Culture of Care for Students	161
Developing a Culture of Concern for Others	162
The Department Culture Continuum	162
<i>Micropolitics</i>	163
The Leadership Style of Principals	163
The Shifting Micropolitical Orientation of Principals	163
Lack of Involvement in Decision Making	164
The Shift System	165
<i>Conclusion</i>	165
CHAPTER FIVE	168
PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP	168
<i>Introduction</i>	168
<i>Defining Professional Leadership</i>	169
SECTION ONE	171
HEADS OF DEPARTMENT PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP	171

<i>The Promotion Process</i>	171
Seniority	176
Consensus	177
Default	178
Orchestration	179
<i>Exemplary Leadership</i>	182
Head of department plans ahead	182
Heads of department refusal to delegate	184
<i>Communication</i>	186
<i>Leading the Department's Team</i>	190
<i>The Monitoring Role of the Academic Middle Leader</i>	192
<i>Summary</i>	195
SECTION TWO	196
CHALLENGES TO HEADS OF DEPARTMENT PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLE	196
<i>Challenges to the Promotional Process</i>	196
<i>Challenges in Leading Teams</i>	198
<i>Challenges to the Monitoring Role</i>	200
<i>Lack of Time</i>	201
<i>Work Overload</i>	203
<i>Managing Across the Two Shifts</i>	206
<i>Heads of Department Level of Preparedness</i>	209
Heads of department received additional training in the position	210
<i>Summary</i>	214
CHAPTER SIX	218
DEPARTMENT CULTURE	218
<i>Introduction</i>	218
<i>Initiating New Members of Staff</i>	220
<i>Forging a Collaborative Department Culture</i>	223
<i>Developing a Culture of Care for Students</i>	227
<i>Developing a Culture of Concern for Others</i>	230
<i>The Department Culture Continuum</i>	232
<i>Summary</i>	235

CHAPTER SEVEN	237
MICROPOLITICS	237
<i>Introduction</i>	237
<i>Heads of Department Leadership</i>	238
Heads of department negotiate support for their department	239
Heads of department challenge management decisions	243
<i>Principals' Leadership Styles</i>	245
<i>The Shifting Micropolitical Orientations of Principals and Heads of Department</i>	252
<i>Problem of Delayed Promotion</i>	258
<i>Involvement in Decision Making</i>	262
<i>Competition among Heads of Department</i>	267
<i>Favouritism</i>	268
<i>Summary</i>	270
CHAPTER EIGHT	273
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	273
<i>Overview of the Research</i>	273
<i>Categorizing the Data</i>	274
DISCUSSIONS	275
<i>Positioning Heads of Department in Secondary Schools in Jamaica</i>	275
<i>Levels of Challenges Confronting Academic Middle Leaders</i>	276
FINDINGS	281
<i>Question one</i>	281
Teaching Role	281
Monitoring Role	281
Team Leadership	282
Delegating within the Department	283
<i>Question Two</i>	283
Lack of Time	283
The Shift System	284
Principals' Leadership Styles	285
Decision-Making	285
Challenge to the Head of Department Leadership	286
Delayed Promotion	287
Work Overload	288
Level of Preparation	288
<i>Question Three</i>	290
Strategic Thinking	290

Motivating Teachers	290
Demonstrating Care and Concern for Staff and Students	291
Navigating their Micropolitical Environment	291
<i>Question Four</i>	292
Change Agents	292
Culture Modelling and Culture Maintenance	292
Forging a Collaborative Department Culture	293
The Department Culture Continuum	294
<i>Limitations of the Research</i>	294
<i>Strengths of the Research</i>	295
<i>Conclusions</i>	297
REFERENCE LIST	299

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	313
THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A HEAD OF DEPARTMENT IN A PUBLIC (STATE) EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN JAMAICA	313
APPENDIX B	315
RESEARCH PROTOCOL	315
APPENDIX C	319
LETTER TO PRINCIPALS	319
APPENDIX D	320
QUESTIONNAIRE TO SUBJECT TEACHERS	320
APPENDIX E	325
PRINCIPAL'S INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	325
APPENDIX F	328
ACADEMIC MIDDLE LEADER'S INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	328
APPENDIX G	330
THE NUMBER OF SESSIONS TAUGHT AND THE NUMBER OF TEACHERS SUPERVISED BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENT	330
APPENDIX H	331
NON-TEACHING ACTIVITIES PERFORMED BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENT	331

List of Tables

Table 1.1	Students performance in IT between 2001 1nd 2004	4
Table 1.2	Differences in the three types of secondary schools in Jamaica	31
Table 1.3	Performance targets for the year 2010	35
Table 2.1	Formal and informal teacher leaders	50
Table 2.2	Roles of teacher leaders	52
Table 2.3	Sole leader and a team Leader	67
Table 3.1	Data collection strategies in case study research	105
Table 3.2	The research cycle	107
Table 3.3	Sample size for the research	110
Table 3.4	Phases of the research	114
Table 3.5	Questionnaire return rate	117
Table 3.6	Data engagement time	120
Table 4.1	Number of sessions taught per week and number of teachers supervised by heads of department	129
Table 4.2	Number of sessions taught per week and number of teachers supervised by heads of department	144
Table 4.3	Number of sessions taught per week and number of teachers supervised by heads of department	150
Table 5.1	Teachers were asked whether their head of department plans ahead	183

Table 5.2	Heads of department refuse to delegate	184
Table 5.3	Head of department received additional training for the position	210
Table 6.1	Heads of department provide extra support to new members of staff	220
Table 6.2	Heads of department exhibit high expectations of staff and students	227
Table 7.1	Heads of department negotiate support for their department	240
Table 7.2	Factors influencing a shift in the micropolitical orientations of principals	255

List of Figures

Figure 1.1	The organisational structure of secondary schools in Jamaica	21
Figure 3.1	Mixed methods application	103
Figure 7.1	The shifting micropolitical orientation of principals and heads of department	254
Figure 8.1	Levels of challenges confronting academic middle leaders	277

CHAPTER ONE

Overview

This thesis presents research into middle leadership in secondary schools in Jamaica. The first chapter is divided in two sections. Section One begins with an introduction followed by an outline of the research questions. The contextual setting for the research is presented, along with the background to the problem, including the challenges of effective leadership in secondary schools in Jamaica. The section closes with a discussion on academic middle leaders and their relevance to the educational development of the country. Section Two begins with a discussion on the historical development of secondary education in Jamaica during the colonial period. This is followed by an assessment of contemporary developments after the 1950s and the strategies employed by nationalist governments to correct the deficiencies inherited in the island's secondary education.

SECTION ONE

Introduction

School leadership is no longer the sacred preserve of head teachers but extends to others on the organisational hierarchy called middle leaders (Busher & Harris, 1999). Whilst the inclusion of middle leaders within the leadership domain is not new, recent developments in national and international contexts are forcing principals to devolve a greater degree of power and responsibility to teacher leaders. It is argued that schools are too complex to be led by one individual. Additionally, the need for increased accountability of principals and improved students' performance has reshaped school leaders' thinking and their application of leadership. Galvanising these challenges to change is the application of distributed forms of leadership (Gronn, 2000).

Although the challenges to school leadership may have developed in western countries, there are features which are also applicable to the Jamaican context. Secondary schools in Jamaica are undergoing changes resulting from past and current reforms

(Davis, 2004: Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, 2001). Increasingly, Jamaican school principals are being held accountable for what happens in their schools (Davis, 2004). Similarly, in keeping with international developments in educational reforms, school leadership cannot be seen as something sacred to principals (Lambert, 2003). How Jamaican schools are managed, their level of success and the image they convey in the eyes of the public are issues no longer central to principals alone, but have now extended to teachers who lead from the middle of the school's organisational hierarchy, including those called academic middle leaders.

The focus of this thesis therefore is to explore the academic middle leader's domain in an effort to understand the dynamics of the roles and functions in secondary schools in Jamaica. In order to develop a systematic approach in this enquiry and guided by the literature, four research questions were formulated. These are:

- What constitutes the academic middle leader's roles and functions in the Jamaican secondary school?
- What are the major challenges and conflicts confronting academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica?
- What leadership strategies do academic middle leaders employ to enable them to achieve effectiveness?
- To what extent are academic middle leaders able to effect change and contribute to a positive department culture?

In pursuing answers to these questions, the study sought to uncover how academic middle leaders were using their knowledge of professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics in executing their role and functions in schools. Additionally, the research focused on three distinct types of secondary schools, namely the technical high school, the upgraded high school and the traditional high school. It is hoped that exploring the academic middle leaders' realm of school leadership from the lived experiences of fifteen middle leaders will provide a deeper understanding of the challenges being experienced amongst teachers who lead from that level.

Background to the Problem

Secondary schools are expected to equip students with the competencies needed to contribute to the social, economic and political needs of the country (Gunter, 2002). However, stakeholders in a number of countries argue that this mandate is not being achieved. In the United States of America, reports show that parents are dissatisfied with the quality of education their children are receiving and are championing the government to give priority to education over health, security, and international relations (Washington Post, 2004).

In England, the problem also persists: the Quality Curriculum Authority (QCA) recently announced that more than half of the 11 year olds who passed tests in English last year could not spell the words 'effortless' and 'participate' (BBC Education News, 2004). The QCA acknowledged that the government was aware of the problem and had hoped that by the year 2002, 80% of the 11 year old students would have reached 'Level 4'. However, the proportion that did so in 2003 remained at 75% (BBC Education News, 2004). The Office of Standards in Education (OFSTED) is also grappling with unacceptable performance of students and expressed concern with the number of students in schools who are not performing. Their concerns were heightened by the seemingly large number of schools in Special Measures, which increased from 272 to 282 in 2003 (Office of Standards in Education, 2003).

The problem of poor performance is not unique to the developed countries, but exists in developing countries like Jamaica. Research conducted by local and international organisations (Myers, 1989; Thompson, 1987) has highlighted students' poor performance over an extended period. Results of terminal examinations in English Language for the Jamaica School Certificate (JSC) and the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) have also pointed to depressing performance of students (The Daily Gleaner, 1999).

The dismal performance has continued in the 21st Century. Leachim Semaj, human resources consultant and psychologist, while addressing the Faculty of the Built

Environment's sixth annual awards at the University of Technology, lamented students' poor performance in the 2003 Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) examinations where only 25% of the students gained three or more subjects in the examination (Simpson, 2005). The poor performance appears to be general; CXC result data collected from the island's three dominant school types, the technical, upgraded and traditional high schools for Information Technology (IT), between 2001 and 2004 was also gloomy. Table 1.1 below shows students' pass rate in Information Technology (IT) between 2001 and 2004.

Table 1.1 Students performance in IT between 2001 and 2004

Pass rates %				
School Types	2004	2003	2002	2001
Traditional	51.51	66.06	66.45	91.82
Upgraded	36.43	50.03	54.67	91.40
Technical	35.44	50.27	56.42	92.13
Overall	45.15	59.78	62.39	91.64
% Decline	24.5	4.2	31.9	—

Source: The Sunday Gleaner, September 5, 2004 p.7A

Analysis of students' performance in IT between 2001 and 2004 indicates that whilst the overall performance in 2001 was very good, with schools having over 91% pass rate, the performance for successive years drastically declined. In 2004, only in the traditional high school was there a pass rate above 50%, while the technical and upgraded schools had pass rates of 36% and 35 % respectively. In response to the problem of students' poor performance in IT, Campbell, (2004) commented that stakeholders in IT education have ignored the warning signs and are now panicking, trying to find answers for students' low performance in the subject.

The poor performance of students in both technical and academic education extends to other areas. A research conducted by the University of The West Indies, Mona, indicates that 70% of the unemployed young people, aged 14-29 are without

educational qualification (The Daily Gleaner, 1999). The report raised concerns from members of several social sector organisations including the National Youth Service (NYS), the Social Development Commission (SDC) and the Human Employment and Resource Training (HEART). The Minister of Education, the Honourable Burchell Whiteman in response to the report commented:

Students' lack of qualification was a combination of different factors including the failure of formal education system to provide school leavers with the necessary vocational and academic qualification (The Sunday Gleaner, June 20, 1999, p. 1a).

This claim from the government perhaps quite fittingly describes the state of education at the secondary level. Albeit, attempts have been made even before independence in 1962 to develop and maintain an appropriate level of education for the nation's children with very little success. This area will be discussed in the second part of this chapter.

The Problem

The effective leadership of schools is an issue confronting educators in many countries and Jamaica is no exception. Within the Jamaican secondary school context there is a leadership crisis. The problem lies not with the absence of leaders but rather with the lack of effective leadership. This is the cry from stakeholders including parents, teachers and policy makers (The Observer, 2001).

Referring to the current leadership crisis in Jamaica, Davis (2004, p. 45), notes:

There are a number of teachers who are unable to perform adequately, lacking capability, motivation and commitment to professional standards and principals are often ill prepared for their leadership responsibilities.

Davis' conclusion is as an assessment of the education leadership crisis crippling secondary education in Jamaica. However, the conclusion drawn may also represent a

reflection on the government's inability to avert the seemingly collapsing state of education.

The quality of leadership of secondary schools in Jamaica is reflected in how schools operate and the thinking of both students and teachers. Evans (2001) assessing the situation in secondary schools in Jamaica, alluded to the fact that some teachers appear to be demotivated and in a state of anxiety. Teachers who are in leadership positions have also noted the challenges they are experiencing from subject teachers including inadequate or poor planning of students' work, unprofessional behaviour and a general nonchalant attitude among teachers.

This state of apathy is further reinforced by some teachers developing a balkanised culture (Hargreaves, 1995). The general tone in some schools has contributed to teachers voicing a negative view of schools and school leadership, which has contributed to some teachers developing a culture of hostility and resentment which Peterson & Deal (1998), referred to as toxic culture.

It is generally acknowledged that principal leadership is critical in achieving school effectiveness and improvement (Bush & Glover, 2003; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). The importance attached to leadership is further heightened by research that underscores the relationship between the quality of leadership and the motivation of teachers which in turn affects the quality of teaching and improves students' performance (Barth, 1990). Stakeholders including parents, practitioners and policymakers continue to regard leadership as a key component to school improvement (Robins & Alvy, 1995).

Furthermore, a recent empirical study carried out by the researcher in Jamaica (Phipps, 2002) has indicated that there is a strong link between students' poor performance and school leadership. Also, information gleaned from the delivery of the course, School Administration and Management, to senior teachers at a Jamaican teachers' college alludes to the ineffective management of secondary schools.

The challenge to find effective leaders for Jamaican secondary schools is echoed in recent policy documents including the White Paper, (Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, 2001). The document reasserts the view that national development hinges on the commitment of leaders within schools to formulate development plans and implement reform measures aimed at improving the performance of both teachers and students and subsequently creating effective secondary schools. The White Paper also recognises that changes in the social, economic and human development are achievable through the nation's secondary schools. The paper states:

Jamaica can deal with its economic and social challenges if we unite around progressive strategies for change, optimise our investment in education... accomplished by a united effort centred around our schools as the focal point of intellectual and social growth and development (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001, p. 30).

This statement reassures us of the government's hope for the nation through the empowering of those who lead in schools.

Empowering leaders is perhaps as challenging as achieving effectiveness in Jamaican secondary schools. Educational researchers in the Caribbean (James-Reid, 1982; Miller, 1985) argue that many school leaders who became principals had little or no formal training in school leadership. The general assumption was that good teachers would make good leaders in schools (James-Reid, 1982). Very little formal opportunity existed for teachers destined for the principalship to acquire training. The preparation of educational leaders in the Caribbean was by and large an informal "system of in-service-apprenticeship" (Miller, 1985, p. 37).

However, the need for good school leadership has long been recognised. Researchers including James-Reid (1982, p. 229) notes:

The situation in many schools in Jamaica seems to testify to the need for comprehensive training programmes to prepare principals to deal with curriculum development and instruction, staff and student personnel, school community relations, school management and professional development.

Although quoted over twenty-four years ago, the statement is still relevant today. James-Reid (1982) is not only stating the obvious but also goes further to identify some of the challenges of leadership. In fact, she points us in the direction of a new form of leadership that was needed in schools then and which is wanting in our secondary schools today.

Researchers have recognised new approaches to leadership and have been preparing teachers and principals for their new role. The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in England is one institution actively engaging in the preparation of other leaders within schools. The practice of recognising and empowering teachers in schools is given many different names including distributed leadership, transformational leadership and dispersed leadership. A discussion on these forms of leadership is found in Chapter Two.

The need for improved performance in schools has contributed to schools changing how they operate. One immediate concern is the acceptance of teachers who lead from the middle of the school's hierarchy. Such leaders are called middle leaders, one group of which are the academic middle leaders.

The next section looks briefly at academic middle leaders and the reasons they are the focus of this thesis.

Who are Academic Middle Leaders?

The literature on leadership has highlighted the importance of leadership in schools (Adey, 2000: Allix, 2000: Kenneth *et al.*, 1992). However, Lambert, (1998) reminds us

that leadership rests not only with the person at the helm but also among a group of subordinate leaders who are referred to as middle leaders.

The term academic middle leader is defined as:

Those specialists who are responsible for an aspect of the academic curriculum, including department and faculty heads, curriculum team leaders and cross-curriculum subject coordinators and who are expected to have responsibility for one or more teachers (Wise, 2001, p. 333).

The academic middle leader's position is similar to the post of head of department in secondary schools. In some cases, the term subject leader may also be used when referring to the academic middle leader. Therefore, throughout this thesis, the terms academic middle leader, head of department and subject leader are used interchangeably. These and other concepts including teacher leaders and head of faculty are discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

The position of academic middle leaders is recognised within the Jamaican education system. It is constitutionally placed within the bureaucratic hierarchy of secondary institutions (Education Act of Jamaica, 1980) and the duties of the academic middle leader are outlined in the Education Act of Jamaica (see Appendix A). The position is also within the organisational structure of secondary schools (James-Reid, 2001). However, the position carries tremendous challenges. Busher & Harris (1999) refer to the tension of being in the middle, while Wise (1999) describes the academic middle leader as being sandwiched between enforcing the directives of senior management from above and offering leadership and guidance to members of their team below.

Subject teachers, who are promoted to the position of middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica, would have acquired very little or no training prior to accepting the position. However, in most cases, the teachers who become middle leaders would have displayed outstanding knowledge of the content and pedagogical competencies, and it was assumed that they would by osmosis become good leaders (Bolam & Turner, 1998).

According to Earley & Fletcher-Campbell (1989) the roles and functions of this group are very extensive and demanding and place them under excessive pressure. In Jamaican secondary schools, the academic middle leaders' major role is leading their department. However, they are constantly being forced to negotiate their political position among various groups within the confines of the school system to achieve and maintain their effectiveness.

Hsieh & Shen (1998) argue that the position of the academic middle leader carries with it various levels of compromise, bargaining and negotiation. As middle leaders negotiate with different elements of the school system which comprise administrators, teachers, parents, students and support staff (Chrispeels & Martin, 2002), they are using knowledge of professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics to achieve their desired outcomes. This interactive process, among other things, challenges the leadership capacity of academic middle leaders and forces them to remain resilient in their position (Wise & Bennett, 2003).

Why a Study on Academic Middle Leaders in Jamaica?

While numerous studies have been conducted on middle leaders - see for example (Abbey, 2000: Bennett, 1995: Briggs, 2003: Brown, *et al.*, 2000: Hsieh & Shen, 1998: Wise, 2001: Wise & Bennett, 2003) - and a robust body of literature exists on effective leadership in England and the United States, virtually no research studies have been conducted on this topic in Jamaica.

Recent research in Western and Asian countries has highlighted the impact of middle leaders as teacher leaders (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001), team leaders (Pounder, 1999), change agents (Busher, 2001), and as shaping the culture of the department (Peterson & Deal, 1998). This is in addition to the fact that middle leaders play a significant role in improving the quality of learning in schools (Earley & Fletcher-Campbell, 1989: Glover *et al.*, 1998).

Middle leaders' position within the school's organisational hierarchy places them in a vulnerable yet strategic position as they mediate between the senior management team and subject teachers (Busher & Harris, 1999). This stems from their primary role to analyse needs and coordinate the implementation of initiatives at the departmental level on one hand, while embracing the policy initiatives of the senior management team on the other (Wise, 1999).

The recent educational reforms in Jamaica (Task Force on Education Reform Jamaica, 2004), propose a holistic approach to educational development for the island (Davis, 2004), which includes the training of principals but makes no reference to the developmental needs of heads of department. Similarly, although the position of head of department is well ingrained in secondary schools, there is the need to question the academic middle leader's access to 'real power' in the school. It would seem, therefore, that the head of department is not given the pride of place, as deserved. Harris *et al.*, (2000) commenting on the significance of heads of department as agents of change in schools note:

In order to survive in an increasingly turbulent and changing environment, issues of school development can no longer be seen as the exclusive preserve of senior staff. For strategies to be successfully implemented, staff at all levels in an organisation need to be involved in decision-making and policy formation. Heads of department are very much in the front line and, to be most effective, will need to be more involved in wider strategic planning for the organisation as a whole (Harris et al., 2000, p. 82).

Harris' assessment of the significance of the academic middle leader's role to school development reinforces the fact that their role is indeed challenging. This challenge is also evident in Jamaican secondary schools, primarily because of the social climate that exists.

According to Miller (1990, p. 75)

The secondary school system is plagued with differential allocation of human, material and financial resources, an increasing diverse student population, and socio-economic issues including problems such as poverty, domestic violence, unemployment, reprisal killing and neglect.

While Miller's description does not apply to all secondary schools in Jamaica, it does paint a frightening picture of the academic middle leaders' work environment. However, given the turbulent situation in which academic middle leaders function in some secondary schools in Jamaica: dealing with issues relating to students, pressures from senior management and parents, lack of teaching and physical resources, unsatisfactory work environment and unpopular policy directives from government, there is need to understand how academic middle leaders continue to offer effective leadership within their departments and also within the wider school community.

In conducting this exploratory study on academic middle leaders, a Tripartite Leadership Model was developed to explore, how consciously or unconsciously academic middle leaders were using their knowledge of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics to execute their roles and functions in secondary schools in Jamaica.

The next section traces the development of secondary education in Jamaica from the historical period through to the contemporary era.

SECTION TWO

Secondary Education in Jamaica: Historical and Contemporary Developments

Introduction

It is impossible for one to understand and appreciate the complexity of secondary education in Jamaica without having an overview of the evolutionary developments in secondary education on the island. This section therefore provides an overview of secondary education in Jamaica, accounting for the fragmented and disjointed structure that emerged; which accounts for the diversity that presently exists in the country's secondary education. Also, the section outlines some contemporary developments in education including educational reforms since independence and their implications for national development.

The shaping of education in Jamaica dates back to the beginning of the island's history, although historians are not quite sure which time to use for this dating. One argument is that the island existed and was occupied by the Arawak and Tiano people before the arrival of the Europeans. Another view is that the arrival of the Columbians in 1494 marked the beginning of the island's history. However, the Spanish colonisation of the island was followed by the annihilation of the original people, thus destroying much of their historical legacies. Miller (1984) argues that the extinction of Arawak society was a loss of their rich indigenous socio-political and cultural structures. The destruction of Arawak society also marked the expansion of European colonisation and exploitation of the island, which was characterised by nearly two hundred years of slavery. The period between the ending of slavery and independence from Britain was a dynamic era that

contributed to the development of Jamaica's education, particularly secondary education on the island.

Secondary Education During the Early British Colonial Period

The period of British Colonial occupation of the island between 1655 and 1838 was marked with no development in formal education (Augier *et al.*, 1971; Black, 1973). The education that was offered to slave children by missionary groups, consisted only of Christianity; reading and writing were not allowed (King, 1998). At that time it was the belief of the planter class in the Jamaican society that..."education would make the slaves unfit for and disinclined to perform manual labour" (King, 1998, p. 46).

The white population however was treated differently. Wealthy planters ensured that their children were privately tutored during their formative years and when they were old enough, sent off to England to continue their education. Children of poor whites were not neglected. From as early as 1694, a group of wealthy landowners and philanthropists began making bequests to establish trusts and maintained schools for poor white children. Through the efforts of these groups, a number of endowed elementary schools developed that were later followed by a number of high schools. Some of these high schools are still prominent today, and include Manchester High founded in 1694, Wolmers High founded in 1736, Mannings High founded in 1738 and Ruseas High founded in 1777. Ironically, the development of formal education in Jamaica is owed to the children of poor whites who had to be educated locally. After Emancipation in 1838, schools for children of black parentage began to develop and these were called elementary and normal schools (Whyte, 1990).

The elementary and normal schools were initially operated by various religious denominations, some of which were already offering education to the children of ex-slaves. The education offered was plagued with problems including the chronic shortage of schools, inadequate and inappropriate instructional materials and insufficient teachers. Also, the curriculum that was followed was guided by the aims of

British mercantilist policies, which regarded colonies like Jamaica as an agricultural outpost. As such they were designed to provide a ready supply of cheap labour, cheap agriculture products for industries in Britain and a local market for British manufactured goods (Augier, *et al.*, 1973). The need to satisfy external directives influenced the Colonial Office to recommend that the curriculum focus on areas of literacy, numeracy and vocational skills (Whyte, 1990).

The legacies of slavery created a stratified society, divided firstly by colour and then wealth. The wealthy white ruling class and privileged coloureds (children of mixed races) continued to educate their children abroad or in local preparatory and private schools operated by the churches. Up until 1878, the churches and trust funds financed and managed schools without assistance from the government. The Roman Catholic Church was very active after Emancipation and by the 1850s had their first high schools, Immaculate Conception High School and Saint George's College in Kingston. Like other high schools on the island, these schools catered to the needs of children from the upper and middle classes. The nonconformist churches also established their own secondary schools, because they refused to have their children attending the elementary schools or schools operated by the Catholics (King, 1987).

Certain features marked the system of education that emerged after Emancipation. Firstly, the elementary and normal schools were designed for the children of ex-slaves, who were now considered as the working class in a dual system. The high schools on the other hand were for the children of the wealthy coloured and poor whites, and who also formed the managerial class in the society. In essence, the predominantly black population maintained their low status, continued to access an inferior education and were largely illiterate (Miller, 1990).

Expansion of Secondary Education in Jamaica

A decline in Britain's demand for sugar affected the economy of the island, forcing some planters to discontinue sending their children to England to be educated. The Colonial

Special Note

**Page 16 missing from
the original**

Government, recognising the educational needs of the elite class, appointed the Jamaica Schools' Commission in 1879, to establish and administer a formal system of secondary education. Lobbyists amongst the ruling class forced the government to invest in secondary education on the grounds that the coloured middle class deserved a better education than what was available to blacks in the Elementary schools. Subsequently, the Jamaica Schools' Commission was able to reorganise their educational thrust, converting the endowed elementary schools into secondary schools. However, there was a marked discrimination between the education offered to blacks as against that offered to whites and coloureds.

Secondary education was considered privileged education for those who were worthy of it - the middle and upper classes. It was generally felt that the black working class did not need a secondary education. King (1998, p. 49) argues "the experience of secondary education would elevate them above the station in life in which they had been placed by the Almighty". Furthermore, it was also felt by those in power that there was a need to minimise the apparent threat a black educated population would pose.

Blacks were in general denied access to fee paying high schools for several reasons, including the fact that they attended the elementary schools that offered an inferior curriculum. The criteria for admission to the high schools included the ability to pay for tuition, knowledge of Latin and membership of a "higher social class" (King, 1987, p. 94). The curriculum of the elementary school consisted of literacy, numeracy and vocational skills, Latin was not offered. The poor economic status of the blacks meant that they could neither afford the cost of a high school education nor could they lay claims to being in a position of higher social class. Secondary education, therefore, remained the sacred preserve of the privileged white and coloured (children of black and white parents) middle and upper classes.

Changes in Secondary Education in the Mid 20th Century

The changes in secondary education in the middle of the twentieth Century resulted from Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools – Mr H. H. Piggott's, report. Among the changes that emerged from his report was the reclassification of secondary education. Miller (1987) explains that Law 34 of 1879 defined secondary education as a higher grade of education provided for those classes of the community who value it, if placed within their reach but whose means do not enable them to send their children to Europe for receiving it. The subsequent Law 34 of 1914 redefined secondary education. Miller (1987, p. 114) explains:

Elementary instruction included reading, writing, and arithmetic in Latin, the English Language and Literature, Modern Languages, mathematics, natural and applied sciences, commercial arithmetic, the principles of agriculture, commercial geography, book keeping, shorthand, drawing or in some such studies and general in the higher branches of knowledge.

The major changes in the two laws were the fact that secondary education was no longer defined on the basis of birth, status or wealth but now was based on content or curriculum. Secondly, the Schools' Commission sought increased government funding to assist with buildings, scholarships, salaries and teachers' pensions. Thirdly, schools privately owned by churches were gradually incorporated into the public school system, which provided increased places especially for girls, and also shaped the beginning of a national education system.

Amidst the development in secondary education, Miller (1987) argues that the management of education was still the responsibility of individual schools and this continued up until the 1940s. In addition, the system of education remained British. The

leaders of society were British or locals who had studied in Britain. Ideas about education also originated in Britain. The examination system was British; teaching materials including textbooks came from Britain, as did the teachers and principals (Miller, 1990).

The beginning of real change in the island's education resulted from a series of events on the island. The granting of Universal Adult Suffrage in 1944 resulted in Jamaica electing a Local Assembly to manage her political affairs. This move in putting political power in the hands of black leaders, culminated in the island's Independence in 1962, which also brought wide changes in the society, including greater access to secondary education.

The period of the 1940s benefited from the recommendations of the Kandel Commission of 1943. The recommendations were to have permanent effects on education in Jamaica. One of the main recommendations was to redefine secondary education from previous definitions. Miller (1990, p.114) explains that the new definition was "education for adolescence, a stage of human development". This definition was not tied to social class or content. Professor Kandel report also questioned the practice of prescribing British educational ideas as answers to Jamaican problems (Whyte, 1990).

A number of changes were also proposed which included: the integration of the various levels and types of schools into one system, selection of students for the secondary schools based on merit, a curriculum based on Jamaican experiences and the abolition of British examinations, provision of different types of secondary schools, based on the needs and abilities of students; and a test at the end of primary school to determine the most appropriate type of secondary school for each child. Although Kandel's recommendations were not all accepted, they continued to influence reforms in

secondary education in the 1950s and 1960s. Of significance was the expansion in secondary education which meant increased access for black children.

Secondary Education in Jamaica during the Late 20th Century

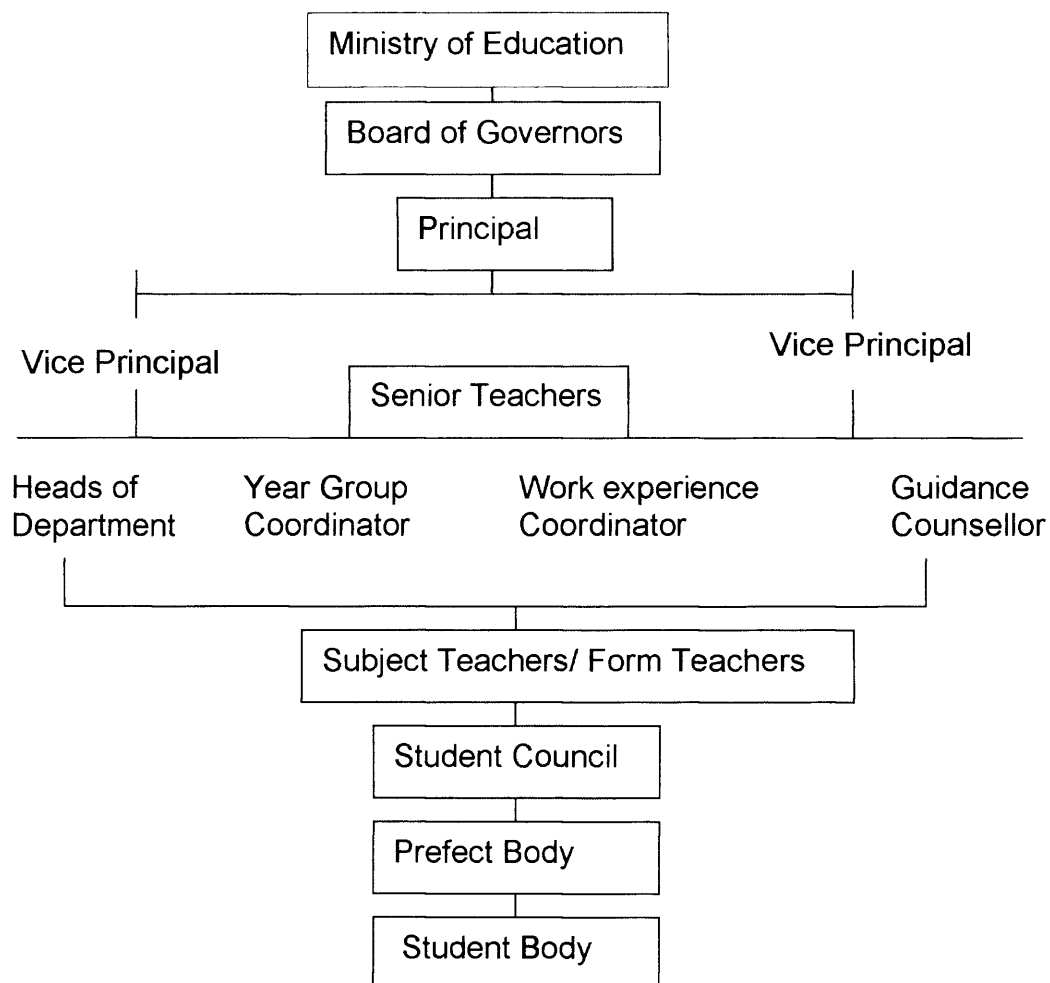
The challenges of the second half of the 20th Century were different from those of the previous era. Local political leaders were chanting for decolonisation and political independence. There were also cries for the democratisation of education and the creation of an egalitarian system of education (Manley, 1974). Another concern of the period was Jamaicanising the education system. Michael Manley (1974, p. 21), Prime Minister of Jamaica, discussing the economic, social and psychological legacies of colonisation, described Jamaica's education system as having been "imported lock, stock and barrel from England without a moment's thought about its relevance to Jamaica's needs and aspirations". Prime Minister Manley's statement represents the beginning of a nationalist philosophy and reflected a shift from British modes of thinking. The periods before and after independence in 1962 were flavoured with thoughts of social reformation and national development rooted in the educational transformation of the masses.

The Organisational Management of Secondary Schools in Jamaica (1953-1979)

The transfer of power from the Colonial Government to Elected Representatives in 1953 and Independence in 1962 brought various forms of reforms aimed at addressing deficiencies of the colonial era by expanding and 'Caribbeanising' secondary education. The Board of Education that was responsible for elementary schools, and the Schools' Commission, responsible for secondary education were integrated into the Ministry of Education. The Minister of Education, who replaced the former Colonial Director of Education, was now answerable to the Jamaican people. An elaborate structure

evolved into what is referred to as the organisational structure of secondary schools, see figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 The Organisational Structure of Secondary Schools in Jamaica



Source: (Ministry of Education, 1980)

The organisational structure of secondary schools in Jamaica is quite similar to what exists in England, which consists of a strong management hierarchy comprising the

senior management team (principal and vice principal) at the head, followed by middle leaders or senior teachers and then subject teachers. Although there is a central body (Ministry of Education) responsible for the island's education system, individual schools have their own administrative structure and maintain their own identity.

Schools are governed by a Board of Governors consisting of persons drawn from the community, including representatives from the two major political parties, the Parents Teachers' Association (PTA), the academic staff, ancillary staff, students' council, the business community and the principal.

While the school board has over-seeing powers, it is the principal who directs the operations of the school and makes recommendations to the Board. The leadership style, personality and technical power of the principal determine his/her level of influence on the school board. It is often argued that in some schools, the school board merely acts as a rubber stamp, giving the principal's wide discriminatory powers.

The education system in Jamaica has a number of stakeholders some of which are directly responsible for the administration and delivery of education in secondary schools. A brief description of the roles and functions of each of the various stakeholders follows.

The Minister of Education

The Minister of Education is usually an elected member of parliament who is appointed by the Prime Minister. The Minister of Education's main responsibility is overseeing all public educational institutions. The Minister of Education is assisted by the Minister of State and a team of special advisors. The Permanent Secretary is appointed by the Civil Service Commission and is responsible for executing and administering the educational policies of the minister. This is achieved by coordinating the work of six different divisions within the Ministry which include:

- Planning and Development
- Educational Operations
- School Services
- Personnel and Management Services
- Finance
- Projects, Construction and Maintenance (James-Reid, 2001).

Education Officers

The Minister's representatives in schools are the Education Officers, who fulfil similar roles to Her Majesty's School Inspectors in England. The Education Officers play many roles including assessing the performance of students and teachers, and advising the Board of Management and teachers on issues relating to education policies and practices. They also identify problems and needs of school personnel and present these to the relevant section of the Ministry for attention. The portfolio of the Education Officer also includes conducting workshops and conferences, demonstrations and seminars where developments in the subject content and methodology are disseminated. The leadership capacity of the Education Officer includes, developing the professional leadership capacity of both teachers and principals, and ensuring that the quality of education is maintained and goals are achieved.

The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors, School Board or the Board of Management is appointed under the Education Act. A typical Board consists of fifteen members appointed by the Minister of Education. These include the chairman nominated by the Minister of Education, the principal of the school, one representative from each area of the school operations, namely, the academic staff, the administrative staff, the ancillary staff, and the student council. There are also four nominees from the school community including

the Past Student Association, and the Parent Teachers Association. Additionally, the Board appoints three members for their expertise.

The board is responsible for the general operations of the school which includes:

- Reporting on the financial standing of the school and handles breaches of discipline among students.
- Overseeing the appointment and dismissal of teachers, and recommends prospective principals to the Minister for appointment.
- Granting of casual leaves and making recommendations to the Ministry for other types of leave
- Acting as an arbitrator on issues between the school, teachers and the Ministry (James-Reid, 2001: Education Act, 1980).

The development and operations of the school board are clear examples of school based management in secondary schools in Jamaica.

The Principal

The principal is referred to as the chief executive of the school and is responsible for the operations of the organisation. His/her primary task is developing and maintaining structures that will produce an efficient and well-coordinated school. The Minister on the recommendation of the Board of Management appoints the principal. The principal is required to work closely with the Board of Management.

The principal's areas of responsible include:

- Student personnel as it relates to admission, record keeping, evaluation, counselling, discipline, health, social and cultural development.
- Staff personnel as it relates to recruitment and selection, timetabling and deployment of teachers, staff welfare, professional development and interpersonal relationships.
- Curriculum development which involves determining objectives, planning and organising to achieve specified outcomes and selecting materials and equipment
- Community relations: this includes establishing and maintaining good school-community relationship and extending the services of the school to the community.
- Management functions, which include routine activities relating to the operations of the school and maintaining the school plant.
- Relationship with the Ministry of Education and the Board of Management (James-Reid, 2001; Education Act, 1980).

Although principals are responsible for all aspects of the school's management, they are expected to delegate authority to members of their staff, including the vice principal, heads of department and other senior teachers.

The Vice-Principal

The Vice Principal is second in command of the school and chief assistant to the principal. The vice principal performs the duties assigned by the principal which may include the professional development of new teachers, dealing with supplies and equipment, managing school records and overseeing extra-curricular activities.

Heads of Department

The position of head of department in a secondary school is usually given to a teacher who has demonstrated good knowledge of the content and excellent pedagogical skills in a defined subject area. The head of department is expected to coordinate the work of the department, assign workload to teachers, and engage teachers in developing appropriate teaching methodologies. The head of department is also expected to monitor teachers by observing lessons and checking their schemes of work. The position of heads of department attracts additional remuneration.

Senior Teachers

Teachers who have outstanding performance coupled with years of service are sometimes promoted to the position of senior teacher. The position is referred to as a “post of special responsibility” (Education Act, 1980) and carries additional remuneration. Senior teachers are assigned areas of special responsibility that are in addition to the regular teaching loads and include extra-curricular activities, staff welfare or sanitation.

Student Placement

Among the changes in the culture of the high schools was the introduction of the Common Entrance Examination in 1958. All students sat the examination at the end of Grade Six and those who were successful gained a free place in the high schools. Thus, admission to high school was based on performance rather than ability to pay. The top 2000 successful students in the Common Entrance Examination gained free places in the high schools, while a further 2000 earned grant places or half scholarships with the government paying half the fees and the parents paying the other half.

The system however failed because the top performers were from homes where the parents could afford to pay for their education. Secondly, those who won half scholarships were unable to pay the other half in addition to the other school expenses (Miller, 1990). Other strategies to increase the percentage of poor children able to access a high school education, for example, the 70:30 quota system introduced in 1964 were not successful. The quota system offered 70 percent of the 2000 places to students from public primary schools, while 30 percent went to children from preparatory schools. Between 1962 and 1972 the proportion of students from the lower social class who were admitted to high schools moved slightly from 9.3 to 10.9 percent (Miller, 1999). Thus, in practice, the high school education was still being enjoyed by the privileged middle and upper classes.

A significant shift in high school places came in 1973 under Prime Minister Michael Manley, with the introduction of free education. Miller (1999) noted that admission from students within the lower social class moved from 10.9 percent to 15.7 percent. The selection process in favour of any particular group changed. All students who were successful in the Common Entrance Examination (CEE) gained admission to the high schools. Various forms of welfare schemes were developed to assist needy students with lunch, uniform, transportation, and books.

Increasing Places in High Schools

Whilst the granting of free education increased students' access to high school education, another dilemma was created for the government. There was now the need to provide additional places to accommodate the increased enrolment in high schools. Several strategies were introduced which included: church schools joining the public education system, boarding schools converted to regular day schools and the shift system introduced in some schools. However, the final strategy was to increase the different types of secondary schools. Thus, by the end of the 1970s, there were five

types of government secondary schools on the island namely: the traditional high, the technical high, the upgraded high, the comprehensive high and the vocational high.

Types of High Schools in Jamaica

The system of public secondary education in Jamaica is very complex, with various types of institution offering secondary education. As mentioned earlier, public secondary education is offered through one of five types of secondary schools. The public secondary schools include the traditional high, the upgraded high, the technical high, the comprehensive high and the vocational high schools. In addition, some All Age schools also carry a secondary component, grades 7-9.

The terms 'secondary' and 'high' schools are interchangeable and describe government operated schools offering a post primary education to students ages 11 to 17. The terms are also used interchangeably throughout this thesis. Three of these school types are the focus of this thesis and they include the traditional high school, the technical high school and the upgraded high school. These three school types were selected because of their historical significance and the fact that they enrol a much larger number of students, and subsequently employ a greater number of teachers. The three school types have some similarities and differences. Among the major differences are their admission criteria, type of curriculum, enrolment patterns, future promise, social currency, and unit expenditure (Task Force, 2004). A discussion on the three school types will be presented towards the end of this chapter.

The President of the Bursars Association in Jamaica, Kofi Nkrumah Young, highlighting the differences in the school types, explains that from a survey of six schools, the three that were 'bursar paid' (the traditional high school), received sums of Jamaican dollars, \$97,300, \$55,000 and \$49,200 respectively per student. On the other hand, the other three schools which were 'non-bursar paid' (technical or upgraded high schools),

received allocations of \$6, 800, \$5,000 and \$2, 200 per student per annum (Gilchrist, 2005). The term 'bursar paid schools' refers to schools that were originally owned and operated by various religious denominations and have a bursar who is responsible for all financial matters including the payment of salaries to teachers. The non-bursar paid schools also have bursars, but their job includes issuing prepared salary cheques to teachers. The origin of these schools has shaped how they are perceived today (Evans, 2001). All three school types were established at different times and for different reasons (Evan, 2001: Morris, 1998).

The Technical High School

The technical high schools offer a four year programme to students between ages 13 and 18 years old. The curriculum is mixed consisting of academic, vocational and technical programmes. The technical programmes are highly specialised and include commerce, home economics, building technology and electronics. The vocational areas include business education, electrical installation, auto mechanics and agriculture. Additionally, students pursue the academic courses including English, Mathematics, Science, and foreign languages.

Students pursue at least one technical/vocational area during their course of study. Subsequently, at the end of their programme, many are offered places in industry. The technical high schools developed in response to the need for the country to have a cadre of skilled individuals capable of addressing the manpower needs of industry, agriculture and commerce (Morris, 1998). The schools also have a strong link with employers. The high capital-intensive nature of the school's curriculum has implications for staffing, parental support, and funding from the Ministry of Education.

The Upgraded High School

The newly upgraded high schools offer a mixed curriculum similar to what is offered in the technical high schools, with an emphasis on prevocational subjects. The specialised

curriculum covers a five year period and engages students between ages 11 to 17. Approximately 40% of the curriculum is reserved for prevocational subjects (Morris, 1998). Additionally, students are exposed to the realities of work in their chosen field, through a Work Experience attachment. The programme provides students with a three to four week on the job training in a public or private sector organisation to learn some of the skills related to their chosen vocational area (Morris, 1998).

The newly upgraded high schools were formerly the Junior High and All Age schools that the government upgraded by adding two additional grades. However, the upgrading was mainly in name only as minimal changes were made to staffing, equipment and the physical plant (Morris, 1998). Students who achieve low grades in their terminal examination at the end of their primary education are usually admitted to these schools. Parents, students and teachers tend not to be very supportive of these schools because of the negative perceptions and the fact that students' overall performance is below acceptable levels (Miller, 1990).

The Traditional High School

The traditional high schools date back to the nineteenth century British colonial period. These church schools were established mainly from bequeaths and grants from various religious denominations in England. The schools were established for the white elites on the island and therefore offer a very intense academic programme that include, English language/ literature, foreign languages, the sciences, history, art, geography and mathematics. In addition, a limited number of prevocational subjects are offered including commerce, home economics, technical drawing, plumbing, woodwork and metal work. However, very few students opted for these areas mainly because very little effort is made to encourage students' interest in these prevocational areas (Morris, 1998).

Although the traditional high schools were established to provide workers for the managerial sector, they also equip students with Advanced Level qualifications for entry to university. The high academic expectation of the traditional high schools is well ingrained in students, teachers, administrators and the wider school community (Evans, 2001). Generally, stakeholders prefer to be associated with these schools because of the high status they offer.

Of the three school types, the traditional high school boasts very lavish facilities, varied programmes and strong support from the Past Student Association, the Parents Teachers Association and the business community in general (Evans, 2001). Although all school types offer a coeducational programme, in some traditional high schools single sex educational programmes are offered for both boys and girls (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 Differences in the three types of secondary schools in Jamaica

School Types	School Categories	Single Sex	Co-ed	Length of Programme	Nature of Programme
A	Technical		✓	4 years	Academic/ Vocational
B	Newly Upgraded		✓	5 years	Academic/ Prevocational
C	Traditional	✓	✓	5 years	Academic/ Prevocational

The Shift System

A common feature of many secondary schools in Jamaica is the 'two shifts system' or 'shift system'. The shift system was born in the 1970s as an attempt to provide additional secondary places for students, since the government was unable to provide

additional school buildings. The strategy was effective in maximising the use of schools' facilities. The introduction of the shift system meant that the school day was divided in two halves, one starting at about 7:30 am to 12:30 pm, while the other started at 1:00 pm and ended at 5:30 pm. A few years after the introduction of the shift system, many groups involved in education, including the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA), the Secondary School Principals Association (SSPA) and various groups of Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs), condemned the system on the grounds that it had students travelling very late after school and it did not offer students the opportunity to be sufficiently involved in extracurricular programmes in schools.

Supervision of teachers was also difficult, since in most cases, heads of department could work on only one shift. Where heads of department worked across the shifts, it meant that some supervision was possible, but only for teachers working close to the ending of the first shift and those who worked close to the beginning of the second shift. The shift system also encouraged competition between the two schools, and little opportunity existed for group cohesion. Although many traditional high schools have abandoned the shift system, many upgraded and technical high schools across the island continue to use this strategy.

Examination and Curriculum

In keeping with changes that started under Prime Minister Manley's government, a regional examination body developed, the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), which replaced the British Ordinary and Advanced level examinations. Students in 16 Caribbean territories are able to sit 34 different subjects in the examination. More recently, the CXC introduced the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE), which is a post secondary qualification, replacing the Advanced levels examinations offered to students in grades 12 and 13.

A Plethora of Reforms

Having inherited a fragmented education system, successive governments since 1962 have tried to develop an education system that would be able to galvanise the society and provide individuals with greater scope for economic, social and political development. This has been echoed in several policy documents, including the White Paper, the Green Paper, the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) and currently, the Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica. The Prime Minister, Honourable P.J. Patterson, in recognising the need for educational development states:

Jamaica is part of the global village of this century of open borders, easy travel, mass migration and easy access to information and technology. We are no longer educating our people to live in Jamaica. We are preparing them for a borderless world. Times have changed and we too must change. We must critically examine the product, and together as a nation, make the necessary changes that are called for. It is therefore as imperative as it is immediate for Jamaica to move from a culture of incremental reform and embrace a radical transformative approach to the achievement of growth in the education sector and ultimately national economic development (Davis, 2004, p. 17).

Among the earliest attempts to provide equity in education was the establishment of the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) programme, in 1993. The ROSE programme had two phases, the first phase was between 1993 –1998 and the second phase between the years 1998 – 2009. The central aim of the programme was to develop a common curriculum for students between ages 11 to 13 or grades 7 to 9, in all public secondary schools (Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, 1998).

Prior to the implementation of the ROSE programme, the five public secondary schools on the island all pursued a different secondary education curriculum. However, whilst the ROSE programme offered some positive benefits for the nation's children, it only addressed specific aspects of education and therefore was deficient in some ways. A more holistic approach at reforming education was needed.

The Task Force on Educational Reforms, developed in 2004, has been hailed as the answer to the country's challenges in education (Davis, 2004). The Task Force on Educational Reform proposes certain targets that the country's children should achieve by the year 2010. See Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Performance Targets for Education to the year 2010

Objectives	Measures	2010 Targets
To obtain high levels of education outcomes	Percentage of students achieving mastery in all 4 areas of Grade 1 Reading Inventory	90%
	Percentage of students achieving mastery	85%
To have learners realising their potential	National mean score at GSAT for each subject	85%
	Percentage of cohort attaining Grades 1-3 in 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	60%
	Percentage of Primary schools providing at least 4 co-curricular activities	100%
	Percentage of secondary schools providing at least 8 co-curricular activities	100%
	Percentage of students in at least 2 co-curricular activities (1 of which must be a community service)	100%

Source: (Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica, 2004, p, 5)

Whilst the projected targets seem over-zealous, even if the minimum targets are achieved there would be some positive benefits. Furthermore, to achieve the above strategies, the government has given more power to schools. The document states “School leaders and managers will have the responsibility for how institutions are managed” (Davis, 2004, p. 6). Schools will also be accountable for students’ achievements through a performance-based management system.

In order to achieve this mandate a number of recommendations have been considered for secondary schools. Whilst it is not possible to provide a list of all the recommendations, those relevant to the thesis have been identified. These are:

- Transfer the management of the teaching function from Education Officers to the school’s management team.
- Provide training and certification of all Board Members in School Board Governance.
- Principals are to be accountable to ensure that their school meets the objective and performance targets of the school’s development plan.
- Principals to undergo regular training in school management and Leadership.
- Design and implement a diploma programme in school leadership and management
- Design and implement Performance Based Management Systems, to include all staff in public educational institutions on the following bases:
 - a. Teachers should be rewarded based on improved student achievement
 - b. Departments within schools based on increased student performance in specific subject areas
 - c. Management team based on overall school performance.

The reform resulted from a desire to correct the imbalances that were created during the formative years of the island's educational development, as was discussed earlier in this chapter.

SECTION THREE

Justification for the Study

The research on academic middle leaders in secondary school in Jamaica is relevant to various groups of stakeholders within the Jamaican context. Additionally, its distinct Jamaican cultural context makes its findings significant to school leaders elsewhere. These issues are discussed below.

Firstly, enquiries at the University of The West Indies, Mona, Jamaica and a search of the major databases have revealed that no research study has been conducted in the area of academic middle leadership on the island. This therefore offers several concerns. Namely that research students should consider pursuing further research in this area in an effort to deepen our understanding of the academic middle leader's role in secondary schools. The fact that no empirical research has been conducted in this area suggests that the Ministry of Education Youth and Culture (MOEY&C) could begin funding studies in developing an understanding of the practice and therefore be better able to plan for these leaders.

Secondly, the study offers the opportunity for academic middle leaders to have their voices heard. Academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica are engaging in many different roles including executing their professional leadership (Durant & Holden, 2006), leading teams of teachers (Cardno, 2002), developing a collaborative culture (Hargreaves, 1995), and monitoring teachers (Wise, 1999). They are also contributing to whole school decision making (Turner, 2004). Given the fact that most academic middle leaders have not acquired any formal training, it is imperative that

researchers begin to explore their role and functions in an effort to support the development of appropriate instructional materials.

Thirdly, whilst it is necessary to refer to empirical research and scholarly work from the western countries, the absence of locally derived knowledge confines our thinking, especially in light of the complexity of our educational development. Miller, (1985, p. 41) in discussing the applicability of educational theory to the Jamaican context argues:

It could be that existing theory is already sufficiently powerful and capable of incorporating Caribbean experiences in a meaningful and constructive way. But the possibility also exists that the specificity of the circumstances in which administrative theories have been developed is sufficiently at odds with Caribbean experience as to make the mere adoption of such theory not feasible.

Therefore, conducting the research in a Caribbean setting not only serves to provide a body of local knowledge on academic middle leaders, but also contributes to the body of data which would stimulate further discussion within an international context.

Finally, the research can also serve as a guide for future decisions relating to the training needs of academic middle leaders. The Ministry of Education Task Force Reform team, recognises the link between effective school leadership and improved student outcomes. Therefore, knowledge of how academic middle leaders execute their roles and functions, combined with the challenges they confront and the strategies used to address such challenges, can provide rich information for the training of future middle leaders.

Overview of the Thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter one is subdivided in two sections. Section One looks at the background to the problem and the reasons for doing a study on academic middle leaders in Jamaica. The second section explores both historical and contemporary developments in secondary education in Jamaica.

Chapter Two covers four themes. The first discusses leadership theories, focusing on distributed leadership and some of the challenges in its implementation. The second examines leadership from the middle and includes discussion of both teacher leaders and middle leaders and their roles in schools. The third section uncovers the nature of department culture while the fourth examines the features of micropolitics in school. A discussion is also presented showing the interconnectedness of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics as used by the academic middle leaders. The chapter closes with a discussion of the challenges confronting academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica.

Chapter three describes the philosophical framework that guided the research enquiry. The use and rationale of mixed methods is discussed as the appropriate methodological approach. A detailed account of the sampling procedure and use of multi-site case study is presented, along with the data collection processes and instrumentation. The various methods of triangulation used, are identified and discussed. The chapter concludes with the strategies applied to ensure the maintenance of ethical considerations throughout all phases of the research.

Chapter four presents a summary of the research findings under the three distinct school types based on the themes professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics. The major similarities and differences across the three school types are also identified and discussed.

In chapters five, six and seven the cumulative data are presented and discussed under the headings; Professional Leadership, Department Culture and Micropolitics respectively. Chapter eight reviews the purpose and methodology of the study, along with discussions of the findings from chapters five, six and seven. The chapter closes with a discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of the study, implications of the study and arguments supporting the need for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides the literature review on the research “navigating from the middle: enabling middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica”. The study explores how academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica are executing their roles and functions through their understanding of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitical strategies. The literature review takes an international perspective, drawing mainly on empirical research and outstanding scholarly work. The chapter is divided into four sections: the first presents a discussion on the traditional and contemporary thinking of leadership and examines distributed leadership as a broad construct and the potential impact it can have on leadership in schools.

The second section focuses on academic middle leaders as teachers who lead from the middle of the school’s organisational hierarchy. The third section examines the dimensions of department culture and how knowledge of it can be used to develop cohesiveness among members in the organisation. The final section explores micropolitics and examines how different groups in school can use this knowledge in navigating their potentially turbulent environments. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the tripartite leadership model galvanising the three strands of enquiry mentioned earlier; professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics.

SECTION ONE

Traditional and Contemporary Theories of Leadership

Pressures on Schools to Change

Since schools are microcosms of the wider community, decisions in schools are reflective of policy directives from various groups of stakeholders. Currently, there is a call for reforms in education and this has led to educational reformation in schools both nationally (Gronn, 2003) and internationally, see for example, in the USA (Lambert, 2003), Canada (Anderson, 2004; Storey, 2004), Australia (Walker, 1997) and New Zealand, (Cardno, 2002). Similarly, in the small island state of Jamaica, educational reforms are also taking place (Davis, 2004; Ministry of Education Youth and Culture, 2001). Such reforms include schools being held accountable for the various aspects of education that they offer (Brown *et al.*, 2000; Davis, 2004) and the academic performance of students (Davis, 2004). In England schools are being subjected to public scrutiny, "through the publication of tests and examination results and the resultant league table" (Brown *et al.*, 2000, p. 238). Harris (2000, p.81) expresses similar views, noting:

During the past decade, there has been an increasing momentum in England, as in many other educational systems, toward educational reforms directed at raising school performance. ...and this has been accomplished by a string of government policies aimed at generating the impetus for school improvement, including development planning, target setting and performance management.

These educational reforms across the world, including the Caribbean, reflect the need for schools to find new ways of improving students' performance (Brown, *et al.*, 2000),

and therefore impinge on the development of effective leadership in schools. The pressures schools are experiencing from external stakeholders have contributed to changes in the way principals manage their work, how they think, learn, and also, how leadership is demonstrated in their schools (Brown *et al.*, 2000).

One approach that Harris (2000) proposes and which is being practiced in some schools in England, Canada, New Zealand and the United State is restructuring schools at the whole school level. This means redefining leadership and how it is executed in schools. This change involves a shift from the traditional view of leadership to a type that can create positive changes in schools (Fullan, 2001; Hopkins & Jackson, 2002). Arguments are also being proposed for changes in the role of principals (Slater, 2005) and to include an emotional dimension to leadership (Beatty, 1999; Oduro, 2004). Furthermore, given the new challenges confronting school leadership, principals are being expected to develop new skills, including, soft skills, people skills, and a willingness to accept failure (MacBeath, 2003). These multiple dimensions of leadership are challenging the traditional forms of leadership.

Challenging the Traditional Theories of Leadership

It is argued that the contemporary view of school leadership (Slater, 2005) implies dispensing with the traditional view of the lone leader (Southworth, 2002). A similar view is echoed by Harris & Day (2003), noting that the traditional theories of leadership are no longer applicable and that we should begin looking for competing theories of leadership. Similarly, Lashway (2003) contends that schools are too complex to expect one person to manage single handedly. William (2002, p. 167) adds that 'the old cult of the individual' headteacher alone expressing leadership has given way to varied patterns of sharing. In reinforcing the limitations of the single leader, Fullan (2001) notes that the skills, abilities and capabilities of one person has been limited in generating and sustaining school and classroom level changes.

Additionally, Lambert (2003) presents the view that since 1995, there have been multiple shifts in defining leadership and these have shaped new definitions. She adds that how we define leadership engages and pull others into the work of leadership. These arguments propose that leadership does not necessarily reside in one person and that it involves the empowerment of followers by the leader, that is, the head teacher incorporating teacher leaders at different levels within the school. This view is supported by Moller & Eggen (2005), adding that leadership is an interactive process, involving many players operating at different levels in schools.

The form of leadership which is being widely promoted as one way of achieving positive changes in schools is distributed leadership (Frost & Harris, 2003; Harris & Muijs, 2002).

Defining Distributed Leadership

It is argued that distributed leadership is well developed and quite popular in Canada, Australia and USA (Muijs & Harris, 2003a). In England, distributed leadership is emerging within the official discourse on school leadership (Frost and Harris, 2003; Wood *et al.*, 2004; MacBeath, 2005), and is currently at the cutting edge of thinking about leadership activities in schools (Harris, 2003). According to Bennett (2003), distributed leadership is not something done by an individual to others or a set of individual actions through which people contribute to a group or organisation. Rather, distributed leadership or shared leadership in secondary schools is leadership that extends beyond the exclusive powers of the headteacher to include other groups of teachers as leaders (Harris, 2004).

The application of distributed leadership offers positive benefits to both individuals and the organisation (Harris, 2003). Researchers argue that distributed leadership has a positive effect on organisational development, change and improvement (Louis & Marks, 1996; Silins & Mulford, 2003). Similarly, it has been proposed that when schools are facing challenging situations, the application of distributed leadership may have positive effects on members in school. In supporting the claim that school leadership should be shared among staff, Wallace (2001) advances several principles, namely :

- They (staff) are entitled to contribute to decisions about development of the school which affect their work, and to be empowered to collaborate in creating an excellent institution.
- Since staff give their professional lives to their school, they are entitled to enjoy the comradeship that working closely with colleagues can engender.
- Staff are entitled to gain their experience to further their professional development and career aspirations.
- As role models for students, staff have the responsibility to express in their working relationship the kind of cooperative behaviour they wish their students to emulate.
- Shared leadership is potentially more effective than the principal acting alone. Staffs are interdependent; every member has a contribution to make as leadership tasks can be fulfilled only with and through other people. Achieving ownership of policy decision is necessary if staffs are to work together to implement them.
- Empowerment through mutual commitment and support enables staff to achieve more together than they would as individuals. In these situations, they are able to achieve an optimum degree of synergy, which may be defined as

group members combining their individual energies to the best of their abilities in order to achieve (Wallace, 2001, p. 154).

Although it is argued that distributed leadership can be an asset to the organisation as it places emphasis on maximising intellectual and social capital (Hargreaves, 2001), there are problems in its application.

Challenges in Distributing Leadership in Schools

Whilst distributed leadership is practised by some headteachers, there is need to seek clarification on what is distributed and how much is distributed (Storey, 2004). In analysing the challenges of distributed leadership forged by the headteacher and the department head in her case school, Storey (2004, p.253) argues “multiple leaders came increasingly into conflict as policy differences in whole-school, department and individual levels, became increasingly evident”. The dynamics of the case revealed that there are challenges in how distributed leadership unfolds in schools and that there needs to be clarity for both the headteacher and subject leader in how distributed leadership works. Storey (2004, p. 257) further explains:

As the head teacher and the head of science began to assert their leadership roles more fully, they increasingly came into conflict. The relationship migrated from mutual support to one of growing mistrust and dissonance. These negatives could be traced to a number of sources. ...In each of these key regards, the precise meaning of distributed leadership', espoused at a rhetorical level, was found to be wanting.

The statement is evident of the challenges that may develop between the headteacher and middle leader in an attempt to articulate features of distributed leadership within an organisational framework. As Storey later concluded, questions of what exactly defines distributed leadership and how this is to be distributed should be negotiated before embracing the policy of distributed leadership in schools. Storey's experience however,

is not an isolated case. MacBeath, (2005), in his research on distributed leadership, sponsored by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), discusses the reluctance of headteachers' to distribute power to other members of their staff. In highlighting the dilemmas of teachers and headteachers, MacBeath (2005) notes that while teacher leaders needed the opportunity to exercise their initiatives; headteachers were anxious of not being in charge and were fearful of something going wrong.

Teacher leaders are therefore caught in a mould that has some predetermined constraints; for example, the perceptions and expectations of headteachers will significantly affect the way in which teacher leaders construct their professional role. Also, the extent to which teachers are allowed to access or influence policies and changes in schools depend on the opportunities they are given. The failure to unshackle the leadership potential of teachers discourages them generally and may even frustrate those teacher leaders who have formal authority to lead.

Whilst it is argued that some headteachers are reluctant to devolve power to their middle leaders, preferring to maintain the top-down management structure in schools (Muijs & Harris, 2003b) headteachers can be forward looking (Anderson, 2004) and identify ways in which they can work collaboratively with teachers leaders in achieving an effective school. It would appear that some headteachers are not aware of the potential of academic middle leader in creating a positive effect on the overall performance of schools. According to Gronn (1999) the reciprocated relationship between principal and teacher leaders can cause principals to be both dominant and dependent and therefore removing the fear of losing power to teachers. Also, the application of distributed leadership is rooted in the notion of teacher leaders accepting greater levels of responsibility and offering greater level of support to both members of the senior management team as well as providing empowerment for classroom teachers.

The application of distributed leadership clearly involves some challenges. Wood *et al.*, (2004) assert that although distributed leadership has come to have an increasing currency in the field of education, its meaning and practices are not clear. Similarly, Gronn, (2003) questions the extent to which distributed leadership is being practised in schools. Moller & Eggen, (2005) argue that policy documents still speak of strong and visible leadership in the hands of the post holder or a few actors strategically placed in the organisation. However, whilst there are controversies surrounding the exact meaning and implementation of distributed leadership in schools, leadership is being distributed to teachers at various levels in schools.

The Importance of Teacher Leaders

As was explained earlier, the devolution of power to teachers has resulted from both external pressures to improve students' performance in schools and changes in teachers' expectations. Moller & Eggen (2005) assert that in the UK, both teachers and principals are subject to severe pressures from government to improve the school's national ranking in mathematics and literacy, and they are also accountable for the effectiveness of the school. Similarly, the expectations of teachers themselves have increased, and according to Chrispeels & Martin (2002, p. 328), "a common feature of most reform programmes is a provision for teacher participation in decisions that affect the school". The inclusion of teachers in the leadership of the school is one plausible reason to contest the leadership domain.

The notion of teachers leading other teachers, although not a new management tool, falls within the ambit of the schools' reform movement, which is calling for greater teacher professionalization and collaboration in schools (Anderson, 2004). Using teachers as leaders is also viewed as a management strategy (Frost & Durrant, 2002) which is aimed at empowering teachers committed to organisational development and improved students' performance. Teacher leadership is also viewed as the practice of influencing, engaging and directing colleagues towards improved practice (Leithwood &

Jantzi, 1997; Wasley, 1991). In supporting their view, Anderson (2004, p.100) suggests that 'adding the term teacher to leadership does not fundamentally change its meaning as it still is the exercise of influence by a leader over a follower'.

Defining Teacher Leaders

There is some confusion about the definitions and expectations of teacher leaders (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). The concern stems from the fact that both classroom teachers and headteachers are unsure about who exactly are teacher leaders and what their roles are. Lambert (2003), in addressing the concept of teacher leadership argues that teacher leadership is not a new concept, but that it is challenging to comprehend. It also appears that many writers on teacher leadership have not committed themselves to a specific definition, which serves only to add further confusion for others in arriving at a definition.

According to Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001, p. 5) teacher leaders are "teachers who are leaders within and beyond the classroom, who identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice". Wasley (1991) defines teacher leadership as the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do something they would not ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader. Lambert, (2003, p.422) argues that a teacher leader may be seen as "a person in whom the dream of making a difference has been kept alive, or has been reawakened by engaging colleagues in a professional culture".

Harris, (2003) adds another dimension, arguing that teacher leadership essentially refers to the exercise of leadership by teachers, regardless of position or designation. Anderson, (2004, p.100) posits that teacher leadership means, "to set directions and influence others to move in those directions". The definitions recognize the different types of leadership and also accentuate the application and collaborative nature of teacher leaders at different levels within schools.

Table 2.1 Formal and Informal Teacher Leadership

Formal Teacher Leaders	Informal Teacher Leaders
Leadership exercised by those in position including lead teacher, master teacher, department head, union representative, member of school governance council, and mentor (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).	Sharing expertise, volunteering for new projects, bringing new ideas to the school (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000)
Teachers who induct new teachers into the school and who have a positive influence on the willingness and capacity of other teachers to implement change in the school (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992)	Teachers who define success in terms of what happens in the entire school and accept responsibility for their own growth (Harrison & Lembeck, 1996).
Being an advocate for teachers' work Frost and Harris, (2003) remind us that the Standards of the Teacher Training Agency, (1998, p.481) outlines the roles of subject teachers which includes the strategic direction and development of the subject, monitoring and evaluation of teaching, leading and managing staff, and the deployment of resources.	The term foot soldiers (Whitaker, 1995) is used to indicate the influence of teacher leaders who are sometimes able to sell an idea to the other members of staff.

Teacher leadership is also conceived as both formal or informal in nature (Silins & Mulford, 2003). A summary table explains the main features of formal and informal teacher leadership. See table 2.1

The examples in table 2.1 describe the distinctive features of formal and informal teacher leaders. As Frost & Durrant (2003) point out, informal teacher leaders have chosen to act strategically to contribute to school improvement, while McBeath, *et al.*, (2003) argue that formal teacher leaders operate within the hierarchical structure of school organisations. However, while variations within definitions exists, for the purpose of this study, teacher leadership is defined as the leadership by teachers who have formal position and who are expected to direct the operations within their departments, influencing followers and impacting on and implementing the decisions of administration.

Teacher leaders include those teachers who are also called academic middle leaders and hold such formal positions as heads of department (Busher & Harris, 1999; Harris, 2001; Wise, 2001).

The Importance of Teachers Who Lead

Despite the inconsistencies in definitions, teacher leaders function in different capacities and play many different roles and as such are important in schools (Barth, 1990; Gehrke, 1991; Harris, 2004; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

Table 2.2 provides a summary of the roles and functions of teacher leaders as stated by these authors.

Table 2.2 Roles of Teacher Leaders

Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001)	Gehrke (1991)	Harris (2004)	Barth (2001)
Leadership of students or other teachers: coach, facilitator, mentor, trainers, curriculum specialist, creating new approaches.	Continuously improving their own classroom teaching curriculum development	Brokering: ensuring that links within the school are secure and opportunities for meaningful development among teachers are maximized	Choosing text books and instructional materials Deciding school budgets
Leadership of operational tasks: keeping the school organised and moving towards its goals, through roles including head of department and action researcher.	Organising and leading reviews of school practice Participating in in-school decision making Participating in the performance evaluation of teachers	Participative: where all teachers feel part of change or development and have a sense of ownership. Teachers work with colleagues to shape school improvement efforts and guide teachers towards a collective goal.	Shaping the curriculum Setting standards for pupil's behavior Evaluating teacher performance
Leadership through decision making or partnership: membership of school improvement teams, members of committees, instigators of partnership with business, higher education institutions, LEA's and parent-teacher associations.	Giving in-service training to colleagues	Mediating: teacher leaders are important sources of expertise and information. They can access additional expertise from internal or external sources Teacher leaders are able to forge relationships with teachers, facilitating mutual learning	Designing staff development programmes

There is evidence that teacher leaders operate at two levels. At one end they represent a strategic alliance between the senior management team and teachers, ensuring that the mandates of the former are disseminated. At the other end, teacher leaders provide a supportive role to other teachers by forging a collegial and collaborative culture, offering continuous professional development, being instructional leaders and providing professional leadership.

The dual nature of teacher leaders' role is synonymous with those of middle leaders. The next section will examine some aspects of the role and functions of academic middle leaders in secondary schools.

SECTION TWO

Who are Academic Middle Leaders?

Although several writers have written on middle leadership (Bennett, 1999; Wise and Bennett, 2003; Bush, 2003; Wise, 2001; Briggs, 2003; Wise and Bush, 1999), few have attempted to provide a working definition of the concept. An appropriate definition of middle leadership is indeed challenging since the term 'middle leaders' can refer to a range of categories and subgroups of teachers in schools. Wise (2001, p. 334) defines academic middle leaders as:

Those who are responsible for an aspect of the academic curriculum, including departments and faculty heads, curriculum team leaders and cross-curriculum subject coordinators and who are expected to have responsibility for one or more teachers.

In her definition Wise (2001) recognizes a number of subgroups, all of which contribute to the schools' academic curriculum and are responsible for the supervision of other members of the academic staff.

Busher and Harris (1999, p. 306-7), however, have widened the middle leaders' arena to include "site supervisors, senior office administrators, and heads of academic and pastoral departments in secondary schools", their main assumptions being that these leaders are operationally "responsible for overseeing and developing the work of their colleagues." However, not all middle leaders have line-management responsibilities. For example, the Work Experience Co-ordinator in Jamaican secondary schools, and subject or Key Stage Co-ordinator in British secondary schools, are also considered as middle leaders although they do not have line management responsibility for other teachers.

Bennett (1995) argues that a teacher with a promoted post in a secondary school with fewer than five responsibility points, or below the status of senior teacher, is likely to be seen as a middle leader. However, Bennett, (1995, p.109) further adds:

Providing that they hold a defined responsibility area which involves them having to coordinate some aspect of the work of another teacher, and providing that they are not discharging these duties within what has traditionally been a single subject department such as maths or English.

Bennett's definition differentiates between a leader of a curriculum area as against the leader of a single subject area.

Gunter (2002), while not providing a clear definition, refers to middle leaders as teachers who have regular classroom responsibilities and who might also be responsible for a subject department and /or pastoral responsibilities, and who receive a

special allowance for the additional duties they perform. This argument supports those of Busher & Harris (1999) and Wise (2001); however, it also makes it very clear that the middle leadership position offers additional remuneration to the post holders. This may be one of the reasons some principals in Jamaican secondary schools heap various tasks on the plates of academic middle leaders (James-Reid, 2001).

For the purpose of this thesis, academic middle leaders are subject teachers who are responsible for a team of specialist teachers in secondary schools and who are commonly called heads of department in the Jamaican context.

Academic Middle Leaders in the Jamaican Context

In the Jamaican secondary schools context, the term academic middle leader is not used in secondary schools or within the academic arena. However, academic middle leaders are recognised as senior members of the academic staff, and as such are part of the school's management team (James-Reid, 2001). The position of academic middle leader is also recognised within the Education Act (Education Act 1980). The middle leadership position in Jamaica is quite similar to those that currently exist in secondary schools in the UK and the U S A. These middle leaders are strategically placed between the senior management team consisting of the principal and vice principal at the top, and the classroom teachers at the bottom.

The roles and functions of academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica are outlined in the Code of Regulation (Education Act 1980), See Appendix A: The Role and Responsibilities of Heads of Department. James-Reid (2001, p. 99) also gives a summary of the academic middle leader's role in Jamaican secondary schools. This includes:

- Coordinating the work of the department
- Assigning teachers' workload
- Working jointly with other department members in planning the curriculum and methods of instruction
- Monitoring members by checking schemes of work and giving advice when necessary
- Representing the department both inside and outside of the school.

Teachers who are promoted to the academic middle leadership position are not only expected to provide leadership for the curriculum and their department's team, but also to provide general supervision to both staff and students. Bennett (1995) refers to the middle leadership position as one in which the head of department provides general support to the principal.

Middle Leadership in the American Context

The development of middle leaders or teacher leaders in the United States of America started in the 1900s. This was linked to the drive to improve schools generally, but more specifically to provide greater assistance to students (Smylie *et al.*, 2002). To a lesser extent teachers were to assist in the decision-making process in schools. This was aimed at "making all teachers, students of the problems of the school and proficient helpers in solving those problems" (Smylie *et al.*, 2002, p. 164). However, efforts to develop teacher leadership further faded in the 1960s and 1970s. The initiatives were renewed in the 1980s as a response to bureaucratic reforms with nearly every state in America adopting aspects of teacher leadership (Smylie, 1997).

The involvement of teacher leaders in decision-making gave them access to a limited form of political power in schools. Also, the early initiatives offered other benefits which included empowering individual teachers, 'professionalizing' the teacher workforce, and

improving teacher performance (Smylie *et al.*, 2002). These initiatives offered increased leadership responsibilities with commensurate recognition and compensation. It was also hoped that they would increase teachers' motivation, job commitment, satisfaction and performance. Furthermore, the new leadership roles would provide more incentives to attract and retain the best teachers in the profession.

Interestingly, although these early initiatives brought teachers into the hierarchy of administrative leadership, they failed to provide teachers with the opportunity to focus on areas of curriculum, instruction and student learning (Smylie, 1997). Overall, the teacher leadership initiatives that emerged did little to support school-level improvement. Consequently, the new thinking that emerged in the late 1990s proposed a shift from individual empowerment and role-based initiatives towards more collective, task-oriented, and organizational approaches to teacher leadership (Smylie *et al.*, 2002). This pattern of thinking supports current developments in teacher leadership in Jamaica and England where the notion of team leadership in secondary schools is being embraced.

Middle Leadership in the British Context

The official recognition of the middle leadership position in England and Wales came as early as 1956, when the Burnham committee awarded extra pay for those having the responsibilities of head of subject departments (Turner 1996). The position of subject head gained prominence during the 1960s when comprehensive schools assumed greater importance and some departments increased in size, for example, Mathematics, English and Science, with as many as 15 members. By the 1980s the role of the subject leader had become sufficiently significant to be recognized in Her Majesty's Inspectorate documents, for example, (Her Majesty's Inspectorate, Wales, 1984, in Turner, 1996, p. 21) notes:

The vital importance of the role of the head of department is that it lies at the very heart of the educational process; it is directly related to teaching and learning; whether a pupil achieves or underachieves is largely dependent on the quality of planning, execution and evaluation that takes place within individual departments.

The role of the head of department is crucial to the institution's performance and therefore should be fully explored. Turner (1996, p. 205) argues that; "it is the middle leaders in secondary schools who have the delegated responsibility for the introduction, implementation and evaluation of a variety of educational policies at the subject level". The position of these leaders is therefore crucial to the continuity, growth, success and evolutionary development in schools. Earley & Fletcher-Campbell (1989, p. 4 quoting H.M.I Wales 1984), concur noting:

Schools rely more for their success on the dynamism and leadership qualities of head of departments than on any other factor and the role of the department head lies at the very heart of the educational process.

The work of Earley & Fletcher-Campbell (1989), which is well known, highlighted the importance and significance of the middle leaders' role in secondary school, before the Education Reform Act of 1988 (ERA).

Several empirical studies have been conducted on academic middle leaders in secondary schools in England, since the Education Reform Act, 1988 (ERA). These findings have confirmed some of the findings of the pre ERA, but also recognized issues which have allowed us to understand the middle leadership role.

The research of Wise & Bush (1999) was the first large scale study on academic middle leaders in secondary schools, after the Education Reform Act of 1988. In assessing the findings of the previous research, Wise & Bush, (1999) concluded that the research of Bullock, (1988), Earley and Fletcher-Campbell (1989) and Bennett (1995) provided insights into the middle leader's use of their time and also the tasks they felt were legitimate. Wise & Bush (1999) also indicated that the middle managers acknowledged that the monitoring of teachers was an important part of their role, along with leading the department's team especially as an avenue for decision-making.

However, of priority was the teaching of their classes, which was being compromised by the lack of time which continued to be a constraint on the middle leaders' ability to perform their roles properly. In the study, the academic middle managers were asked to rank the tasks according to their main areas of responsibility. Top priority went to their teaching role, the second went to curriculum development, and the third was implementing schools' policies, and the last area was the monitoring of colleagues' work. Wise & Bush, (1999) noted that academic middle leaders in the post ERA period were now more willing to supervise and monitor teachers, which was a change from the previous findings of Earley & Fletcher-Campbell, (1989) which indicated that the academic middle leaders were reluctant to monitor their colleagues.

In another paper Wise, (2001) confirms the academic middle leaders' acceptance of their monitoring role. Also there was strong emphasis given to team development. However, the academic middle leaders had some concerns mainly the "mixed messages" that they received from management. The claim is, whilst they are being told to monitor, they also recognised that this may affect the relationship with the teachers in their department.

In their study, Glover *et al.*, (1998) looked at the changing role of the academic middle leaders in secondary schools. Using data from several sources, they investigated the

professional development needs of academic middle leaders as managers and contributors to the strategic development of the school. Glover *et al.*, (1998, p. 280) concluded that middle leaders were faced with four underlined dilemmas namely;

- That time and effort used in administration and management is time taken from teaching and learning;
- That leadership of teams may be inhibited by increasing bureaucratic demands upon middle management;
- The changing demands of accountability are affecting perceptions of professionalism and causing a shift from the concept of the subject leader or middle manager as first professional', to that of 'line manager', which has resulted in the ...,
- De-skilling and a need for re-skilling middle leaders to adapt to new ways of understanding professionalism, which differs from the ideas inherent in the status of head of department- as one among equals- prevalent in the 1970s, when many current middle managers began their careers.

In addition, Glover *et al.*, (1998) examined the contributions of the academic middle leaders in several areas which include:

- Roles and responsibility
- Professional or manager
- Leadership- sharing the vision
- Administration - the driving force
- Preparation for the role

Role and Responsibility

From the study conducted by Glover *et al.*, (1998, p. 281), they argue that academic middle managers generally define their role in terms of administrative tasks, which includes “organising the subject teaching so that the right staff are in the right place with the right equipment to teach the prescribed scheme of work”. Within their administrative tasks, the academic middle leaders saw themselves performing a series of unconnected duties, which led them to view themselves not as managers but as people with multiple jobs and tasks. Of particular challenge were the size of the department’s team and delegation within the teams.

Recognition

It appeared that whilst some academic middle leaders enjoyed favourable recognition within the structure of the school, others did not. The study noted that some academic middle leaders enjoyed perceived status, incentive payments, and access to decision making. To some extent, leaders of smaller departments were more likely to struggle for recognition and status. Of particular interest was the fact that the role of academic middle leaders and that of the senior management team were often “blurred”.

Professional or Manager

The academic middle leaders execute their roles and functions in a professional manner, although this is dependent on the leadership style in schools. Additionally, some academic middle leaders were not seen as expert teachers and their appointment may have been based on some strategic move of management.

Leadership- Sharing the Vision

Although middle leaders offered leadership to members of their departments, this was not consistent. Glover *et al.*, (1998, p. 286) also indicated that subject leaders and

others were seen more as “translators and mediators rather than originators of the policy and culture of the school”. One could argue that senior management may not have sufficient confidence in academic middle leaders’ ability to contribute to school-wide decision making.

Administration - The Driving Force

The academic middle leader was seen as the department leader responsible for human and teaching resources. Such roles include, inducting new teachers in the department, conducting formal appraisals, and monitoring and evaluating teachers. Among the challenges middle leaders experienced are the lack of time to carry out their functions and the absence of a formal system to support them in their role.

Preparation for the Role

The need for relevant and on-going training for academic middle leaders was identified. However the concern was the time to access appropriate training. Glover *et al.*, (1998) argue that academic middle managers are aware of their changing roles that include application of leadership, the monitoring and evaluation of teachers and the conveyance of senior management policies to team members. However, there was also a need for career development, if middle managers were to develop and offer the quality of leadership required of them.

In another study Brown & Rutherford (1998) examined whether heads of department were the key factor in developing successful departments. Using Murphy’s (1992) typology of leadership, Brown & Rutherford identified five inter-related and managerial roles, reflecting best practice. The five roles include:

- Head of department as servant leader
- Head of department as organisational architect

- Head of department as moral educator
- Head of department as moral architect
- Head of department as leading professional.

Head of Department as Servant Leader

The research findings indicate that the head of department was very careful to consider the needs of all members of staff when making decisions for the department; for example, in deploying teachers. The head of department tried to ensure that the right teachers were assigned to the right classes. Issues concerning classrooms allocation, and access to resources were also considered by the head of department. The focus was to ensure that the teachers were comfortable with their teaching assignments and the location of their classrooms.

Head of Department as Organisational Architect

Brown & Rutherford (1998) found that the head of department operated as a social architect, creating situations in which a collegial culture was created among members in the department. The findings indicated that within this department, members were constantly talking to each other, making plans, taking decisions and building consensus. The collegial relationship (Hargreaves, 1995) created a positive attitude in teachers and subsequently increased students' performance.

Head of Department as Moral Leader

There was evidence of the head of department demonstrating strong commitment to the values she had relating to her work. As such, the department head argued against issues that she considered were unsuitable for the department. Likewise, where she

thought that a particular practice was beneficial to the department, she argued positively. In both cases the department members were allowed to make the final decision which was accepted by the department head.

Head of Department as Social Architect

The findings also indicated instances where the head of department displayed a caring attitude to both students and department members. This level of caring was demonstrated in teachers and students feeling free to share their concerns with the head of department.

Head of Department as Leading Professional

The final area of the typology that Brown & Rutherford examined sought to determine how heads of department conducted their role as professionals. They indicated that although heads of department spent about 80% of their time teaching, they were responsive to factors that could improve the performance of students and ultimately the status of the department. As such, they welcomed constructive criticisms and responded to them positively. Other strategies that helped members to achieve their potential or enabled the head of department to display a professional role were also adopted, for example, the development of a department handbook.

Evidence from research conducted during the Education Reform Act of 1988 (ERA), has highlighted the roles and functions of academic middle leaders. Also, the studies recognised that academic middle leaders had accepted various aspects of their role, although they had challenges in executing them. One significant roles of academic middle leader was leading team leadership.

Team Leadership

Researchers of the characteristics of effective schools placed great emphasis on leadership, team work and sound management structures (Kerry & Murdoch, 1993). This is endorsed by Witziers *et al.*, (1999, p. 301) commenting that “teams are held more and more responsible for carrying out the middle management function, play an important role at the middle level of the organisation and can be considered as providing substitutes for leadership”. This statement emphasizes the significance of teams in secondary schools.

Smylie, Conley, & Marks (2002) refer to teams as a small group in which members have a common purpose, share interdependent roles and complementary skills. Dunham, (1995, p.46) views the functions of teams as “making collective decisions, generating ideas and providing emotional support”. Bell (1992), associates team leadership with school effectiveness, arguing that:

School effectiveness means getting things done through other people and supporting them in all that they need to do in order to establish and sustain their effectiveness. Effective team leadership, therefore, is vital to the management in every school (p. 24).

The definitions support the fact that teams are of strategic relevance to schools. Among their unique advantages is the fact that they are goal oriented and focus on providing support and cooperation to members. In addition, their relevance and benefit to school organisations cannot be over emphasised. According to Cardno, (2002) teams in schools are ‘a must have’ today. The conclusion therefore is that teams are vital in schools and play a special role in department settings.

The Emergence of Teams

According to Wallace & Huckman (1996) team leadership emerged as a response to increases in the size and complexity of educational institutions. This resulted in headteachers being forced to share their leadership role with other senior members (Wallace & Huckman, 1996). Cranston (2005) notes that teams are well embedded in schools and that the senior management team occupies a powerful place in school decision-making as well as being a key contributor to school leadership.

Belbin (1981) in the study of teams, demonstrated that the composition of teams was important as individual differences in style, role and contribution served as potential team strength. It was also discovered that effective teams were comprised of individuals who engaged in complementary role behaviour.

Belbin also found that no ideal team member existed but that members' skills varied and that this accounted for their exceptional performance in some roles. Using a typological representation, the different functions of the team leader and solo leader are discussed in table 2.3.

Clearly, the team leadership approach offers teachers the opportunity to be empowered and to develop their level of expertise in working collectively and autonomously. Team leadership also facilitates the synergy that teams need in order to function.

Table 2.3 The Solo Leader and the Team Leader

Solo Leader	Team Leader
Plays unlimited role; interferes in everything	Chooses to limit role to referred team role; delegates role to others
Strives for conformity; tries to mould others to particular standards	Builds on diversity-values differences between people
Collects acolytes; collects admirers and sycophants	Seeks talent; The team leader is not threatened by those with abilities
Directs subordinates- subordinates take their role and cue from the leader	Develops colleagues; encourages the growth of personal strength
Projects objectives; makes plain what everyone is expected to do.	Creates mission; projects the vision which others can act on as they see fit.

Source: Solo and Team Leadership (Belbin, 1981)

Team Leadership within the Department Context

Teams are important as operational agents of change in the effective school movement (Bell, 1992; Busher & Harris, 1999; Glover *et al.*, 1998; Wise & Bennett, 2003). These authors argue that middle leaders exercise multiple tasks in teams, and are experiencing increasing pressure and increasing diversity of roles throughout the school. Such roles include:

- routine administration and organization of the department;
- the planning of pupil learning experiences;
- monitoring and evaluating the work of the department;
- professional development within the department;
- liaison with other departments, senior management and external agencies

Busher & Harris, (1999) expanding this view, present a collection of department configurations that whilst reflecting the significance and political importance of departments, also identifies the tensions likely to be experienced by teacher leaders who operate from the middle of the school's hierarchical structure. Busher & Harris (1999, p. 308) argue:

The fact that departments vary in size, configuration, status, resource power and expertise make the job of each head of department contextually different from that of other heads of department.

In discussing how distinctions between departments reflect the level of teamwork middle leaders need to initiate in order to motivate and lead their departments, Busher & Harris (1999) present a typology of five departments. The first department they describe as federal, which is a very large multidisciplinary department, for example the humanities department. The second type they call the confederate, which involves a number of subjects coming together which may not be directly related. Busher & Harris argue that this configuration exists for administrative convenience.

The third department type is the unitary department that has a single subject area, for example Mathematics. The fourth department type is very similar to the unitary type except for its small size. The final type is the diffuse. This type of department exists to facilitate other departments or subject content that is being infused in other areas of the curriculum.

Teachers who are leaders of these different departments are expected to be multi-skilled in leading and managing their departments' teams, and also in overcoming the challenges that are associated with the nature, size and complexity of these departments.

Although it may be advantageous for schools to develop teams, according to O'Neill (2000), working with teams offers tremendous challenges to both members and leaders of the team. Teams do not always operate cooperatively and harmoniously; many function under pressure to conform, especially when members share differences in teaching and learning styles (O'Neill, 2000).

It is also argued that variables including conflicts, lack of time, poorly clarified roles and inadequate training, frequently undermine a team's ability to focus (Chrispeels & Martin, 2002). This is very discouraging to school leaders since the consensus is that teams are the way forward in the twenty-first century (Smylie *et al.*, 2002).

The need to offer various forms of leadership places increased demands on middle leaders. As such there is a need to be skilled with various leadership competencies. Jirasinghe and Lyons (1995, p. 272) identify the competencies principals need to function in their leadership capacities. See table 2.4

The areas of professional knowledge, leadership, planning, managing their political environment and interpersonal skills are areas of leadership competencies which heads of department need to acquire if they are to offer quality leadership in schools.

Table 2.4 Competencies of Principals

<u>Competence Area</u>	<u>Competencies</u>
Professional and technical knowledge	Professional knowledge Technical knowledge
The planning and administrative process	Analysing, Planning and Directional leadership
Dealing with people	Sensitivity, Motivating and Evaluating
Managing the political environment	Political ability Persuading and Negotiating
Personal skills	Commitment and values Reasoning and judgement Self-awareness and development Projecting a favourable image and communicating effectively.

Jirasinghe and Lyons (1995, p. 272)

In addition to the competencies identified, the head of department would also need to be able to apply the knowledge of various leadership enquiries, including school culture and micropolitics. The next section discusses department culture.

SECTION THREE

Department Culture

Culture is one of the least tangible but most significant elements in creating a quality environment (West-Burnham, 1997), as well as achieving effectiveness in schools (Moos & Dempster, 1998). West-Burnham, (1997) believes that if the culture of a school is not appropriate it will fail to achieve some general objectives, therefore, leaders need to pursue both macro-and micro-cultural strategies (Moos & Dempster, 1998 p, 107).

Proponents of the school effectiveness and school improvement movement (including Reezigt *et al.*, 2005; Angelides & Ainscow, 2000; Derek & Coleman, 2005; Harris and Hopkins, 2000; Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992; Clement, 2004) have recognised the importance of school culture as a means of raising students' achievement as well as improving teachers' commitment and participation. Muijs *et al.*, (2004), concur, adding that among the areas most important in achieving effectiveness in schools are leadership and school culture. In fact leadership and school culture are viewed as synonymous and are referred to as "two sides of the same coin" (Schein, 2004).

Whilst there is obviously some relationship between school culture and leadership, culture management is beyond the domain of the headteacher and involves teachers at all levels (Schein, 2004). Academic middle leaders therefore have a significant role to play in developing their school culture, especially where the principal is weak or ineffective (Firestone & Louis, 1999). Within the department structure, middle leaders by nature of their hierarchical position are responsible for developing and shaping their department's culture, which ultimately embraces the school's culture.

This collegial approach to leadership is characterised as a feature of intelligent organisations. Pinchot and Pinchot (1994), view the intelligent organisation as one supported by the decisions of teachers in the middle and those at the bottom of the organisation. West-Burnham (1997, p.107) has added that “the culture of the intelligent organisation is one of trust, respect and recognition of the individual”. Consequently, heads of department need to act as “culture builders”, identifying the individual needs of teachers and helping to develop teachers’ commitment to the department through a participative approach to decision making.

Related Research on School Culture

The significance of culture in school is well supported by empirical research. A review of the literature provides a range of diverse topics done locally and internationally. Busher & Barker, (2001) looked at how principals in England and Wales, created a culture that empowered members of the school to participate in the decision making process. Flores, (2004) examined how school culture and leadership impacted on new teachers. Pritchard *et al.*, (2005) investigated the relation between district culture, student achievement and attitudes about the school.

Busher & Barker, (2003) examine how three principals handled the impact of OFSTED inspection and the importance of both politics and culture from a leadership perspective. Clement, (2003) explores the relationships among a principal’s values, school improvement process, school goals, and school culture. Reeves *et al.*, (2003) explain how the nature of the prevailing culture in schools influence principals’ ideas about school leadership and management. Angelides & Ainscow, (2000), address the nature of school culture and the ways it can be examined quickly and effectively. Busher & Blease (2000), discuss how particular approaches to leading and managing science staff facilitated a culture of collegiality and community.

Mercer & Ri, (2006), compared cultural differences between heads of department in UK secondary schools with similar heads of department in Chinese secondary schools. Lam *et al.*, (2002), look at collaboration between two schools and how a culture of induced collegiality created positive effects. Other scholarly work includes Deal & Peterson (1999; Hargreaves (1995); Prosser (1999); Schein (2004).

Defining School Culture

Culture has long been identified as a distinct force within schools and schools have cultures that are definitely their own (Waller, 1932). Schools have developed “a complex set of rituals relating to personal relationships, folkways, mores, sanctions and an elaborate set of ceremonies” (Waller, 1932, p. 96). These observations are still relevant to schools today as principals, teachers, students and parents become aware of the undefined uniqueness of their school, something powerful but unable to be defined.

MacBeath, (1999, p. 38), defines culture as “a way of seeing and doing things, a set of attitudes to life and accompanying behaviour”. Robbins, (1998) refers to organisation culture as shared meanings held by members which distinguishes one organisation from another.

These definitions support culture as a strategy to build organizational unity while creating its unique identity. Peterson & Deal (1998, p. 28) look at culture from a broader perspective, referring to culture as:

The underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that have built up over time as people work together, solve problems, and confront challenges. This set of informal expectations and values shapes how people think, feel and act in schools. This highly enduring web of influence binds the school together and makes it special.

Another definition that captures the holistic nature of school culture is provided by Schein, (2004, p. 17). He argues that school culture is:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

These definitions support the view that culture is a product of the environment and is created by shared experiences developed overtime by members of the group. The head of department should therefore be keen in helping both the new teacher and the experienced members of the department to embrace the dynamic culture within their department. Since culture is fluid and is open to change, new ideas will emerge and new problems created, however, the head of department should be skilled in shaping and incorporating the evolving subcultures within the dominant culture.

The Role of Culture in Schools

School culture affects every aspect of the organisation. Additionally, Deal & Peterson (1998) confirm that strong, positive, collaborative cultures have a powerful effect on many different features of the schools. Although all schools have their individual cultures, successful schools have a strong and functional culture (Sergiovanni, 1995). Culture impacts on the school in different ways (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

Firstly, culture fosters school effectiveness and productivity. Deal & Peterson (1998) argue that teachers can succeed in a culture focused on productivity, performance and improvement. Teachers are drawn in a social bond that provides them with the motivation to persevere under difficult conditions. Also, school culture uses sanctions on one hand or it rewards the effort of teachers who are constantly trying to improve

their craft. Culture therefore serves as intrinsic motivator for teachers. Cheng (1993) adds that a strong school culture is characterised by teachers who are highly motivated and display caring and sharing characteristics.

Secondly, culture fosters improved collegial and collaborative activities which ultimately produce better communication and problem solving practices among teachers. Williams *et al.*, (2001) assert that a culture of collaboration not only fosters teacher development and pedagogic partnership, but it also counters professional isolation. Deal & Peterson (1998) add that culture offers the provision for the social and professional exchange of ideas and widespread professional problem solving among teachers.

Culture also fosters successful change and improvement efforts. Williams (2001, p. 254) posits that a characteristic of healthy organisations is “the ability to adapt readily to change”. Such schools embrace high performance, change, and efficacy, and have teachers who are willing to embrace innovations, are risk takers and have a spirit that values progress (Peterson & Deal, 1998).

The third positive feature of culture is that it builds commitment amongst staff, students and principal. People are motivated and feel committed to an organisation that has meaning, values and an ennobling purpose. It also amplifies the energy, motivation and vitality of the school staff, students and community.

Finally, culture increases the focus of individual’s daily behaviour and attention on what is important and valued by the organisation. Here “the unwritten rules are sometimes more meaningful than formal ones” (Peterson & Deal, 1998, p. 8). Culture is therefore significant to the overall growth and development of schools, influencing change at various levels and among all stakeholders.

The Culture Continuum

According to Schein (2004, p. 225) culture springs from three sources: namely, “the beliefs, values, and assumptions of the founders of the organisation, from the learning experiences of group members as their organisation evolves and from the beliefs, values and assumptions of new members and leaders.” School culture is therefore constantly changing, which makes the work of leaders challenging, since they need to maintain the dominant culture of the organisation. Notwithstanding, diverse personalities and experiences will ultimately create a host of subcultures.

Researchers have argued that there are different forms of cultures or subcultures (Bush, 2002; Hargreaves, 1995; Morgan, 1996; Peterson & Deal, 1998). Clement (2003, p.112) argues that the “personal ethics, values, actions, interactions, statement and assumptions of school leaders can produce either a positive growing culture or a negative culture”.

Within the department, the head of department is the one responsible for maintaining the dominant or monoculture (Morgan, 1996). Although leaders would prefer all members of the school to embrace the ‘popular’ school culture, this is not easily achieved (Hargreaves, 1995) since teachers will create different subcultures. Hargreaves (1995) identifies four broad forms of subcultures, which include individualism, collaborative, contrived collegiality and balkanisation. A fifth dimension is introduced by Peterson & Deal (1998) which they describe as toxic culture. These subcultures can be viewed on a continuum (Peterson & Deal, 1998) extending from the monoculture (Bush, 1995; Morgan, 1996) or positive culture to a negative or toxic culture (Peterson & Deal, 1998).

The first culture type on the continuum is monoculture (Bush, 1995; Morgan, 1996). This is the preferred culture type the head of department embraces. This culture type promotes positive thinking among teachers within a department (Deal & Peterson, 1998; Hargreaves, 1995) and aimed at building a common vision and fostering collective action across the whole school (Achinstein, 2002). Hargreaves (1995) discusses relatedness of collegial and collaborative culture and how they engender a sense of cohesiveness, fostering harmony and spontaneity in regards to how members view their work and relate to others. Fink (1999) also recognises the significance of a monoculture, recalled the experiences of Lord Byron (a fictitious school), Fink (1999, p. 136) notes:

In the early years, Byron's could be considered a truly collaborative culture, but overtime the shared school-wide goals of the early years tended to gain less commitment and the culture could be characterised as balkanised.

The deterioration in the school's performance was associated to the weakness in its dominant or monoculture.

The second culture type on the continuum is individualism. This exists where teachers consciously or by default become isolated in their schools (Hargreaves, 1995). Williams *et al.*, (2001) discuss how buildings and classrooms can impose a feeling of isolation on teachers at all levels, even principals. Duke, (2001) in his paper on the positive and negative effects of school size, argues that the design and size of schools can affect both students and teachers negatively. He proposes smaller schools as an attempt to reducing isolation among teachers.

The third form of culture type is contrived collegiality. Deal & Peterson (1998) and Flores (2004) see contrived collegiality as opposed to collegiality. They argue that a culture of contrived collegiality tends to be more regimental, as decisions are imposed and are compulsory. Deal & Peterson (1998) noted that policies are mandated from above with little or no input from teachers and in some cases teachers are left feeling unappreciated.

A fourth subculture is balkanised culture, which Hargreaves (1995) describes as occurring when teachers develop strong loyalties to a specific group or department. Teachers who display features of balkanisation tend to be competitive and supportive only to members within their group.

The final form of subculture is toxic culture. Peterson & Deal (1998, p. 28) argue, “unfortunately, some schools have, overtime, become unproductive and toxic”. This culture type produces extremely fragmented staff who have little or no commitment to students and who display signs of hopelessness. Toxic culture falls at the very extreme end of the continuum. Teachers who are identified as displaying features of toxic culture would need to be quickly identified before they contaminate the other members of their department and subsequently other members of the school community.

Sculpting a Department Culture

The existence of subcultures among academic middle leaders in their departments can pose a challenge (Owens, 2001). More importantly, heads of department will need to ensure that the right cultural signals are beaming across to members and efforts made to ensure that new members are embraced in the dominant culture of the department. A

positive school culture is associated with higher student motivation and achievement, improved teacher collaboration and improved attitude of teachers towards students, senior staff and their colleagues (Barnett *et al.*, 2000). The middle leaders' role in sculpting the department culture should therefore be seen as a strategic move.

Therefore, heads of department will need to know how to influence department members to support the department culture (Stoll, 1999). Langford and Cleary (1995, p. 35) suggest that "in educational systems, the role of leadership is to sustain the vision of connectedness, and ensuring that various stakeholders understand their roles". According to Berry (1997) leadership includes developing a vision for the future, and modelling the quality culture. The modelling of culture is strongly advocated by Sergiovanni, (1995). Therefore, heads of department need to model the appropriate culture in order to send the right signals to other members of staff.

Forging a positive school culture is more likely to produce effective departments; this will demand heads of department maintaining control over the numerous forms of subcultures. The influence of subcultures in school, offers what Stoll, (1998, p. 16) refers to as "the power issues in school". The 'power play' in schools comes in many forms, but whilst its forms may vary, its description will always be clear to those who it engages. This 'power play' in schools is described as micropolitics. The next section explores the micropolitical relationship that developed between principals and academic middle leaders in schools.

SECTION FOUR

Micropolitics in Schools

One means through which various elements and structures in schools can be viewed is through micropolitical lenses (Blase & Blase, 2002b). Although the study of micropolitics is not new (Ball, 1987; Hoyle, 1986), it has been hailed as a new thrust in understanding the complexity of life in schools (Mawhinney, 1999).

Various research studies have been conducted on different aspects of micropolitics in school, see for example (Blase & Blase, 2002a; Ehrich & Cranston, 2005; Greenfield, 1991; Johnson, 2004; Lindle, 1999; Morley, 2000). Justifying the importance of micropolitics, Achinstein (2002, p. 423) argues that “traditional theories of organisations have failed to “account for the everyday lived experiences of those who operate inside the organisation”. Gratz (1998) in developing a micropolitical framework for understanding school cultures among principals, teachers and heads of department, reports that individuals and groups used several types of power, including coercive, referent, coalition, information and exchange to pursue their interests in schools.

While it is argued that schools are “inevitably political”, (Linden, 1999, p. 172), there is some concern about what exactly defines politics in schools or micropolitics of education. The concern stems from the diverse ways in which researchers perceive micropolitics in schools and the fact that “its contextual boundaries and distinctive features are elusive and are being contested” (Johnson, 2004 p. 268). A suitable definition is therefore needed. Hoyle (1986) conceptualises micropolitics as those strategies individuals and groups in organisational settings use to access power and influence in order to further their interests. Ball (1987), in defining micropolitics, compares schools to arenas of struggle, driven with actual or potential conflict between members, poorly coordinated, and ideologically diverse.

These definitions encapsulate the power struggles of various groups and individuals and the strategies they employ as they manipulate existing structures and relationships in schools. Power exists where there is the opportunity to exercise influence on others (Corbett, 1991), and therefore defines the relationship between principal and teacher as a political one (Anderson, 1991).

A comprehensive description that supports the focus of this research is provided by Blase & Anderson (1995, p.11). They note:

Micropolitics as perceived in organisations provide valuable insights into understanding the diurnal activities in schools. It defines how individuals use power to influence outcomes and to protect themselves. It also speaks to ensuing conflicts as people compete with others to achieve their objectives. It describes cooperation and how people build support among themselves, to achieve their ends. It addresses what people in all settings think and have strong feelings about, but yet there are those elements that are unspoken and unobserved but brew and become explosive.

This definition epitomises the paradoxical nature of micropolitics, showing both power and conflict on one hand while potentially it is able to promote, support and offer cooperation on the other, albeit through quiet, submerged and unnoticed political interactions (Marshall, 1991) in schools. As Bacharach and Mundell (1995) explain, micropolitics is not only about conflict in school, that is order versus disorder, but a state in which order is constantly being politically negotiated. To some extent, political action results from perceived differences between individuals and groups, coupled with the motivation to use power to influence and/or protect (Blase, 1991). Micropolitical theory, therefore, provides a new dimension in which issues relating to power, influence, conflict, and negotiating processes between individuals and groups can be examined in schools.

In essence, micropolitics is about controlling power in organisations. It is one of the central mechanisms influencing organisational outcomes. Therefore, any attempt at understanding a school's management, involves uncovering its micropolitical relationships. Such relationships may exist among members at the same level or at different levels, for example between principals and heads of department.

The Micropolitical Relationship between Principals and Heads of Department

Johnson (2004, p. 268) argues "schools are intrinsically political, and ways must be found to create order and direction among people with potentially diverse and conflicting interests". As the one ultimately responsible for the school, principals have extensive powers (Malen, 1995). Principals' source of power according to Johnson *et al.*, (1998, p. 147) "determines the influence they acquire". Using the typology developed by French and Raven (1959), Johnson *et al.*, (1998) identify, five bases of power available to principals namely, legitimate power, coercive power, reward power, expert power and referent power. Principals at times use one or more of these power bases to accomplish the goals and objectives of the school.

Teachers including middle leaders have recognised the power of principals and have discovered that principals can and do use their power bases in both constructive and destructive ways (Johnson, *et al.*, 1998). Also, research in the political dynamics of principals points to the distinguishable features of effective and ineffective principals and the impact they have on teachers, see for example, Blase (1988), Blase & Base (1996) and Spaulding (1997).

Spaulding (1997, p. 41) in her qualitative study of teachers' perspectives on the politics of principals, identifies seven major categories of ineffective principals' influence upon

teachers thinking and behaviour. These include: lack of participatory decision-making; micro-management; lack of support; showing favouritism; unclear and unreasonable expectations; flexing muscle; and contradictory body language. The political behaviour of academic middle leaders to their principals will be reciprocated as middle leaders develop strategies of pre-empting or combating the controlling strategies of principals.

Where teachers feel their efforts are appreciated and valued, they tend to work cooperatively in planning and teaching situations. Also, they are supportive of administrative policies and pursue professional development efforts freely (Johnson & Short, 1998). On the other hand, teachers who feel devalued and unappreciated, or are dissatisfied with the principal's leadership, develop feelings of isolation and may experience high levels of conflict with their colleagues, students and administration (Johnson, *et al.*, 1998). Furthermore, these teachers may become passive and combative (Johnson *et al.*, 1998, p. 148).

Although principals control the decision-making process, heads of departments have the power to influence decisions not only in the area of curriculum management (Neufield, 1985), but also in school wide policies. Weiss (1993) however, argues that department heads are sometimes reluctant to exert their influence in areas of decision making, which indirectly increases the principal's influence. However, heads of department are not passive victims accepting senior management decisions (Smylie, 1994). They have agency and are able to act and react; and engage micropolitical strategies to regain and/or exert power of their own. Teachers also have the capacity to induce superiors to act or to prevent them from acting at all (Corbett, 1991).

While negative factors including fear of reprisal from senior management, or consideration that their inputs may be token gestures of rubberstamping senior management decisions (Vann, 1999), heads of department continue to engage the micropolitical process as they increase their interactions and expectations for

coordination in schools (Hargreaves, 1994). Therefore, it can be argued that while some heads of department lack the ability to influence decisions, others have developed the political acumen to influence school-wide policies, which is evidence of their ability to manage their micropolitical environment.

The nature of the political relationship between principal and teacher can occur anywhere along the organisational hierarchy. However, Busher (2004) reminds us that middle leaders by nature of their formal power should be able to negotiate with principals in the interest of department members. The position of heads of department is not without challenge. The decision to have actors other than principals planning the individual school's future (West, 1999), has created conflicts. Ironically, the Education Reform Act of 1988, which increased teachers autonomy in schools, created new conflicts between principals and heads of department, since principals are forced to recognise the role of others on the management hierarchy who can, and should be involved in the decision making process.

The academic middle leadership position offers numerous challenges that include providing professional leadership to their department and members of the wider school community. Similarly, the academic middle leader is expected to deal with issues relating to their department teams and shaping their school culture. Additionally, heads of department are also expected to use their knowledge of micropolitics to steer the relationship between their principals and themselves, especially when issues may be unfavourable among teachers in the department. The next section therefore looks at some challenges of the academic middle leader's position.

Challenges at the Middle

By nature of their political position, academic middle leaders are likely to confront numerous challenges in their leadership. It is argued that although academic middle leaders have a positive impact on students' performance and on the wider school

community (Silins & Mulford, 2004) and are involved in schools' decision-making (Anderson, 2004), there are challenges to the acceptance of their leadership role (Johnson, *et al.*, 1998).

For example, Lashway (1996, p. 7) argues that "in cases where teachers are formally given a slice of power, principals retain their authority but commit themselves to govern through consensus". Shen's (1998), analysis of data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education, concluded that, "despite today's rhetoric of teacher empowerment and decentralisation, empowerment thus far has gone to principals" (p.27).

Miller (2002), commenting on Shen's findings, notes that teachers have not experienced any positive change in the opportunity for them to lead, although principals perceived that teachers' leadership has increased over the years. She further states that principals and school superintendents find it difficult to accept the position of middle leaders. Rather, they hold to the traditional top-down view of leadership.

Similarly, Harris & Muijs, (2003, p.3) argue, "in the UK, the notion of leadership tends to prevail with an emphasis upon the leadership of those at the apex of the organisation". The prevailing position of headteachers suggests that the acceptance of teacher leadership in schools will demand structural changes in how power is conceived by principals, that is, a change in the top-down (Muijs & Harris, 2003b) model of leadership. Similarly, headteachers will need to accept the position of teacher leaders among them rather than ostracising them.

Middle leaders operate within a rigid organisational hierarchy and are positioned between the senior management team and subject teachers. Therefore, they act as a funnel for senior management decisions, which sometimes creates tension, especially when the decisions are perceived as unfavourable by the wider school community. Wise (2001, p. 10) describing this experience notes:

At the centre of the management sandwich are the middle managers, working with the practical difficulties and pressures from below, and the higher aspirations from above.

Middle leaders are expected to function in a dual role capacity which creates role conflict (Hannay & Ross, 1999). This common practice involves management requiring middle leaders to monitor while at the same time maintaining good collegial relationship with their colleagues.

Another challenge for middle leaders is the unprofessional attitudes of some members of the senior management team, which include lack of support for middle managers, inappropriate promotions of staff to middle leadership positions along with an over-loaded work schedule (Earley, 1990; Glover *et al.*, 1998; Wise, 2001). Several dilemmas of middle leaders were identified:

- time and effort used in administration and management is time taken from teaching and learning;
- that leadership of teams may be inhibited by increasing bureaucratic demands upon middle management; and
- the changing demands of accountability are affecting perceptions of professionalism and causing a shift from the concept of the subject leader or middle manager as a first professional to that of line manager.

Clearly, some academic middle leaders feel under-supported in their role. Additionally, while they are expected to offer effective leadership in their departments and in some aspects of the school, they lack the appropriate recognition and support from their principals (Glover *et al.*, 1998).

Another challenge is inadequate time for middle leaders to complete their numerous tasks. Several research studies have noted that the academic middle leader has significant teaching, administrative, monitoring and leadership roles which make them unable to perform effectively (Brown & Rutherford, 1998; Glover *et al.*, 1998), and which result in them being unable to meet the expectations of the senior management team (Turner, 2003). Wise & Bush (1999, p. 26) note that when asked:

middle leaders are most likely to state that the academic and educational tasks are at the centre of their role but when pushed for time are most likely to complete the administrative tasks because they are the most visible aspects of their role to others outside of their area.

The problem of lack of time for middle leaders to do their work effectively has long been documented, for example, see (Earley & Fletcher-Campbell, 1989). It seems much has not changed for middle leaders in relation to accessing enough time to perform their numerous tasks.

A sore area for middle leaders is involvement in the decision making process. It is quite paradoxical that while middle leaders are expected to offer leadership, they are vaguely involved in schools' decision making (Brown, *et al.*, 1999; Wise, 2001). Many are allowed to make some decisions at the departmental level, mainly concerning issues relating to the curriculum (Witziers *et al.*, 1999). There are also cases where principals manipulate teachers, controlling decision-making through coercion or selected distribution of resources and assignments (Miller, 2002).

There is also the concern of developing a common vision. Middle leaders do not always share the vision of the senior management team. Bush (2003) argues that some middle leaders become frustrated at having to subordinate their own vision to that of senior staff. Bush (2003, p, 250) notes:

There was insufficient quality of vision from the headteacher and the rest of the senior management and such vision was often handed down without consultation the head of department's vision was often undervalued and their professional judgement insufficiently recognised by senior managers.

This practice suggests that such principals have adopted an autocratic type of leadership and have failed to recognise the inputs of other senior members of staff, namely middle leaders. Also, it reinforces the notion that academic middle leaders are not allowed to engage sufficiently in school wide decision-making process.

There are other challenges affecting the academic middle leaders, for example, the high attrition rate among teachers. In the USA, the Institute for Educational Leadership (2001) reports that 30% of all new teachers remain in the profession less than five years, while half of the new teachers in urban schools quit teaching within three years. The transformation of teaching from a long term to a short-term career reduces the pool of potential teacher leaders. In the USA, the Oregon School Board Association (2002) reported that more than 50% of all Oregon teachers are between the ages 44 to 55, and they will continue to swell retirement numbers. Many of these teachers are in middle leadership positions.

Similarly, in the UK, the problem of recruitment and staff retention, particularly within the teaching profession, have recently encouraged a reappraisal of the workload and job satisfaction in the public sector (Butt & Lance, 2005). The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in conjunction with a number of teacher related organisations and agencies has also recognised the problems and has developed a series of initiatives

aimed at tackling the problems of poor teacher recruitment, loss of a high percentage of new teachers from the profession in their first year of teaching, and an increasingly aging population of teachers nationally (Butt & Lance, 2005).

Summary

The chapter has discussed the need for changes in school leadership and the notion of distributed leadership as a form of contemporary leadership for today's schools. The principle of teachers leading other teachers was also discussed which led to the importance of heads of department as leaders within the school's organizational hierarchy. It was identified that one important role of the academic middle leader is leadership of the department's team. The significance of team leadership to school effectiveness was also discussed.

Managing school culture was recognised as an important role of the academic middle leader. Various strategies were identified which the academic middle leader can use to sculpt the department's culture. The variations in culture types and the development of a culture continuum were also discussed. Emphasis was placed on the head's of department role in helping members to support the dominant culture and avoid becoming victims of a toxic culture.

The chapter also looked at micropolitics. It argued that the relationship between the principal and the academic middle leader is a political one. Both principals and middle leaders use various strategies to achieve their individual agendas. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the challenges confronting academic middle leaders as they execute their role and functions in secondary schools.

Having examined the areas of professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics, it becomes necessary to show the connectedness of all three strands. Leadership is

multidimensional and therefore cannot be measured by taking a single lens view. Several writers on school leadership have looked at leadership from a double lens perspective. For example, viewing leadership from a cultural dimension, Schein (2004) argues that leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin. Similarly, Muijs *et al.*, (2004), assert that the most important things in achieving effectiveness in schools are leadership and school culture. Clearly, there is some link between the type of school culture and the style of leadership in influencing how middle leaders attain effectiveness in schools.

There is also a strong connection between leadership and micropolitics. Busher (2004) argues that middle leaders engage in macro-political and organisational systems that surround them, which involves developing appropriate strategies for interacting with their colleagues and team members. Busher further demonstrates that there is a relationship between school politics and leadership. The influence of micropolitics on organisational leadership is also supported by Ball (1987) arguing that politics is the key element in understanding the process of shaping that takes place in schools. Bennett (2005) has added that the power dynamics is one way in which school organisation can be studied.

The interconnectedness of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics is further supported by Busher (2005, p. 76). He argues:

School organisations can be crudely divided up into six aspects; these are the political-dynamics aspects of negotiation and change: the cultural – shared norms, values and beliefs held generally by people in organisation; and the structural or bureaucratic frame work of formal role and administrative tasks.

Busher identifies six domains of the school organisation, three of which are identical to the areas which form the tripartite leadership model used in this thesis. Bennett (2005) adds another element to the discussion by presenting a model showing the interconnectedness of culture, micropolitics and structure, which he refers to as including decision-making. The models that these writers have described show that leadership within an organisational context can be examined and analysed by taking a multidimensional approach.

This current study therefore takes as its conceptual basis three interconnected concepts which are professional leadership, culture and micropolitics. These strands of school leadership represent the theoretical base on which the thesis is built. As such, the researcher argues that, consciously or unconsciously, middle leaders are applying their knowledge of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics as they execute their roles and functions in secondary schools in Jamaica.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological approaches and the research design used in collecting the data for the study '*navigating from the middle: enabling middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica*'. The chapter is divided in two sections: Section One outlines the theoretical approaches in educational research and justifies the research within the interpretivist paradigm. However, both paradigms are discussed and arguments are advanced for the mixing of methods in the data collection and analysis as the preferred choice for the research. Section Two outlines the research design giving specific reference to the techniques used in collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data. The chapter concludes with arguments supporting the validity and reliability of the study, and the extent to which the research can be replicated and the findings generalised.

SECTION ONE

Educational Research

Several views are advanced for the understanding of research. Bassey (1999) argues that research is a systematic, critical and self-enquiry which aims to contribute towards the advancement of knowledge and wisdom. Research may also be conceived as a methodical process carried out to discover something that is not already known (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997). Kumar (1999) adds that it is a controlled, empirical and critical investigation of propositions about the presumed relationships between various

phenomena. Research possesses certain enduring characteristics; firstly, the research must be empirical, that is, involving an in-depth study of the research topic in the field. Consequently, the conclusions drawn will be based on hard evidence collected from real life experiences (Silverman, 2005). Secondly, the research must be rigorous (May, 2001). This is achieved by ensuring that the procedures followed are relevant, appropriate and justified. Thirdly, the research should be highly systematic. This implies that the procedures follow a logical sequence that is documented for validation if needed (Bassey, 1999). Finally, there must be critical scrutiny of the research procedures and the methods employed to ensure that the process of investigation was foolproof and free from any drawbacks (Kumar, 1999; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Punch, 1998; Silverman, 2000, 2005; Yin, 2003). The process ensures that the researcher will be able to draw pertinent conclusions from the findings rather than depending on the “perceived wisdom” acquired over time on the subject (Morrison, 1998).

The Philosophical Framework

A major task of the researcher is placing the research within a particular tradition or paradigm (Gorard & Taylor, 2004). Denzin & Lincoln (2000) define a paradigm as a basic set of beliefs that guide action. They argue that all research is interpretive; is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied. Kuhn (1962), explains that a paradigm provides scientists not only with a map but also with some of the directions essential for map making. It may be conceived as the guiding world vision, shaping and organising both the theoretical reflection and the empirical research and therefore precedes both (Corbett, 1991). This world vision defines for its holder the nature of the world, the individual's place within it and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Although several paradigms exist, two forms that influence social research and are pertinent to this research on middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica are the positivist and interpretivist paradigms (Borg & Gall, 1989), which are also viewed as quantitative or qualitative research. Paradigmatic elements in social research are important in establishing the rules of the game or dispositions that guide everyday practices in research (Popkewitz, 1984).

The basic principles of positivist and interpretivist philosophies can be viewed in terms of four general questions that enquire into the ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods, which every researcher should consider (Livesy, 2003). It is the researcher's interpretation of these four areas that shape the nature of the research, revealing the intrinsic beliefs of the researcher. The ontological question asks what is the form and nature of reality and, what is there that can be known about it? It involves the fundamental beliefs that someone holds about the nature of the social world and its relationship to individual actors. The positivists answer the ontological question by stating that the social world is similar to the natural world in terms of the fact that practical laws govern both (Corbett, 1991). The assumption here is that patterns of behaviour exist in the social world as they do in the natural world. These patterns must have cause and effect relationships and it is these relationships that the positivists are concerned about (Livesy, 2003).

The first consideration is whether the laws governing human behaviour exist independently of the hopes, fears and aspirations of human beings. The reality is that our behaviour is governed by the action of both social and natural laws. The positivists therefore concede that although clearly different, the social and natural worlds have some basic similarities (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997). On the other hand, the interpretivists argue that the social world is very different from the natural world and

consequently cannot be studied in the same way. The methods of research that are reliable and valid in the natural world are not necessarily valid in the social world (Borg & Gall, 1989).

Secondly, interpretivists believe that human consciousness is both significant and crucial to any understanding and explanation of their behaviour (Corbetta, 2003). Therefore, people act consciously in order to create and recreate their existence. This implies that the social world can only be experienced subjectively and these experiences depend on the people's everyday behaviour. Perhaps the main difference between the social and natural worlds is the fact that the subject matter of the social world includes people, who have a consciousness and are aware of their surroundings (Livesy, 2003). These individuals are also the ones who are the researchers and the informants (Van Dalen, 1979) of the social worlds.

This leads us to the epistemological question that asks: What is the nature of the relationship between the knower or would be knower and what can be known? The positivists argue that social laws exist. These laws must be based on evidence that may be tested and measured, or quantified scientifically (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997). They do not accept the view that something can be either held as true or false on the basis of faith, trust or personal prejudice, but it must be evidenced through repeated and systematic testing (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997). They believe that knowledge is based on empirical principles and therefore seek to discover causal relationships between observable phenomena (Bryman, 2000). This implies that anything that cannot be observed is not considered to be either valued knowledge or part of a valued explanation of social phenomena. Therefore, although the research on middle leadership in Jamaica uses an interpretivists' approach, one aspect of the data collection will include an element of quantitative data in the form of questionnaires to subject teachers across six secondary schools in Jamaica.

While the positivists, accept only quantifiable variables, the interpretivist sees social reality as whatever people believe it to be (Salomon, 1991). The onus is therefore on the interpretivist researcher to accurately and plausibly document the experiences, beliefs and meanings of individuals. Here empirical evidence is obtained through the researcher's ability to experience the world of the respondents from their viewpoint. Using a tape recorder and detailed field notes will allow the researcher to capture and document the views of the respondents. This approach allows the interpretivist to understand how and why people interpret the world in various ways (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

The third question is that of methodology and asks, what are the procedures for discovering what there is to find out? The positivists believe that reliable and valid knowledge can only be produced by developing a hypothesis that can be tested through empirical observations (Bryman, 2000). Therefore it is possible to measure and quantify human behaviour objectively and statistically so that cause and effect relationships can be demonstrated. Scientists are aware that the social world is a large and complex system involving many different relationships; however they believe that they can gradually construct knowledge that contains the laws governing social behaviour by the careful study of various aspects of social life (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997). This can be achieved through the application of specific methodologies including, surveys, experiments and observations (Borg & Gall, 1989).

The interpretivists on the other hand argue that valid data can only be produced by a researcher who understands how people see and interpret the world in which they live (Livesy, 2003). This demands that the researcher becomes deeply involved with the people or phenomena being studied. This approach is based on the premise that in order to reveal, explain and understand behaviour from the viewpoint of those involved, the researcher must become a participant in the behaviour being studied (Corbett,

1991). Whilst several methodological approaches are used by the interpretivist researchers including, ethnography, emotionalism, ethnomethodology and naturalism (Bryman, 2001), for the research on middle leaders a case study approach was used. The case study as the preferred methodological approach for the research is discussed further in the chapter.

The final question seeks to recognise the appropriate method of data collection. Both the positivists and interpretivists are primarily concerned with the collection of empirical data (Cassell & Synmon, 1994; Creswell, 1994). Therefore, any method that is shown to be reliable is also considered scientific and acceptable. Furthermore, researchers from either paradigm use the various data gathering strategies jointly. The differences relate to how the specific instrument is utilised in collecting the desired data (Cohen *et al.*, 2003). The research on middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica used several data collecting techniques. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data, while semi-structured interviews, observations and documentary sources provided the qualitative data.

The Mixed Methods Approach

Whilst mixed methods as a research strategy is not new, see for example (Campbell & Fiske, 1959) some researchers (Sale *et al.*, 2002) question the extent to which quantitative and qualitative research can be mixed. Sale *et al.*, (2002) argue that because the paradigms do not study the same phenomena, qualitative and quantitative methods cannot be combined. However, other researchers differ. (Brewer & Hunter, (1989), Teddlie & Tashakkori (2003) argue that both approaches have strengths and a combination of both would increase the overall strength of the approach. Whilst individual methods may be flawed, the flaws in each are not identical and combining methods allow researchers to benefit from their individual strength and to compensate for their particular faults and limitations (Brewer, 1989). This view has long been

echoed by (Burgess, 1982, 1984). Brannen (2003) argues that researchers ought to be flexible in selecting methods that are appropriate to the research problem being studied. One strategy recommended for combining methods is triangulation (Denzin, 1970).

Triangulation in its broadest sense suggests the use of multiple methods of investigation as well as the collection of different types of data (Bryman, 2000, 2001) which have implication for the validity of the findings (Hammersley, 2003). Although there are several types of triangulations, the ones which best describe this research involve a combination of research strategies as a means of examining the same research problem and enhancing claims concerning the validity of the conclusion drawn from the data (Brannen, 2003; Denzin, 1970). Therefore, the data collected by the two approaches, focusing on the same problem, would be consistent and integrated with each other. Also, applying the methodologies from two paradigms may serve to increase the validity of the research.

Although researchers agree that there are differences between both paradigms, the difference is primarily how each treats data (Brannen, 2003; Hammersley, 2003). For the quantitative researcher, variables are isolated, defined and categorised. These variables are linked together to frame the hypotheses, which are later tested on the data collected (Brannen, 2003). Qualitative researchers however, begin with defining very general concepts which may change as the research progresses (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Therefore, for the quantitative researcher, variables are the means of analysis, while for the qualitative researcher variables form the outcome (Brannen, 2003). Gorard *et al.*, (2004) conclude that researchers will need to design their methods to ensure that the use of mixed methods is a choice influenced by the situation and the research questions rather than the researcher's personality, skills and ideology.

Criteria for Soundness

Researchers in both qualitative and quantitative traditions are interested in producing valid and reliable knowledge (Bush, 2002). This is achieved through the conceptualisation of the study, and the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting the data (Merriam, 1988). However, reliability and validity in qualitative and quantitative research relate to different kinds of measures of quality and rigour and these are achieved in different ways (Bryman, 2001). Reliability describes the extent a measure will consistently measure what it was intended to measure (Bryman, 2001; Kirk & Miller, 1986). Bassey, (1993, p. 75) define it as the extent to which the research finding can be repeated, given the same circumstances.

According to Sarantakos (2005) quantitative researchers are able to test the validity of an instrument in one of two ways, through empirical validation or theoretical validation. Theoretical or conceptual validation is used when empirical confirmation of validity is difficult or impossible. A measure is said to have theoretical validity if the findings comply with the theoretical principles of the discipline. Sarantakos (2005) identifies several types of theoretical validity including, face validity, content validity; construct validity, internal validity and external validity.

On the other hand, (Bassey, 1999; Kirk & Miller, 1986) argue that whilst the concepts of validity and reliability are appropriate for quantitative and qualitative research, they are not useful in case study research. Consequently, Lincoln & Guba (1985) have advanced the concept of trustworthiness as an alternative to reliability and validity. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest a list of terms associated with validity, including, objectivity, reliability, credibility, transferability and dependability. Objectivity (Guba & Lincoln, 1981) relate to the extent to which the research procedures were systematic, properly documented and were not influenced by the researcher's bias.

Dependability relates to the consistency of the research process over time and across researchers and methods (Smith & Robin, 1984). Another measure of validity is internal validity which seeks answers to key research concerns. For example, do the findings of the research make sense? And, is there an authentic portrait of what was being observed? The idea of thick description of data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1986) is used to describe the rich collection of data associated with the research. External validity (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) describes the extent to which the conclusions of the study are transferable to other similar contexts or can be generalised and if so, how far. The possibility of replicating the findings of the study to other situations is another measure of the robustness of the research findings.

In addition to the above measures of validity, Yin, (2003) has added construct validity. Yin argues that construct validity includes three important elements. Firstly, the data should be validated by informants. Secondly, a chain of evidence resulting from the collection of data from different sources should be established, and thirdly, that the element of triangulation is identified.

Triangulation is an important element in establishing research validity since it uses several methodologies in studying the same data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1997). Whilst several types of triangulations are used in qualitative research, the ones relevant to this research include methodological triangulation (Mason, 1996) and paradigmic triangulation (Sarantakos, 2005). Methodological triangulation offers the corroboration of data from different sources, for example interviews and observation. Paradigmatic triangulation is a combination of methods from two paradigms for example, using surveys and interviews. The use of triangulation in research, offers the potential for ensuring consistency of quality, rigour and the wider potential for the research findings to be accepted.

SECTION TWO

The Research Design

The research design is a blueprint of the entire research process (Yin, 2003), which includes application of the theories underpinning the particular methodology. It also includes the strategies that were employed along with the rationale that guided the research process (Bodgan & Biklen, 1998) and takes account of the challenges that were encountered in the research process along with the steps to minimise them.

Aims of the Research

Heads of departments in secondary schools in Jamaica occupy a middle leadership position and as such play a very important role in schools. Their multiple-dimensional skills make them very strategic to the operational function of the organisation. The research therefore seeks to highlight the role and functions of middle leaders as tactical leaders in secondary schools. Given the fact that middle leaders are positioned in the middle of the school's hierarchy, there is need to examine how they navigate the turbulent waters that sometimes exist between those above and below. Also, the research seeks to highlight how middle leaders are able to use school culture in shaping new members in their department. The quality leadership that middle leaders display is crucial to their overall effectiveness and therefore of primary importance to the organisation. The leadership capacity of middle leaders will be examined to determine how they are able to function effectively in their position.

Research Questions

Four research questions provided the guidelines for the development of the research. These are:

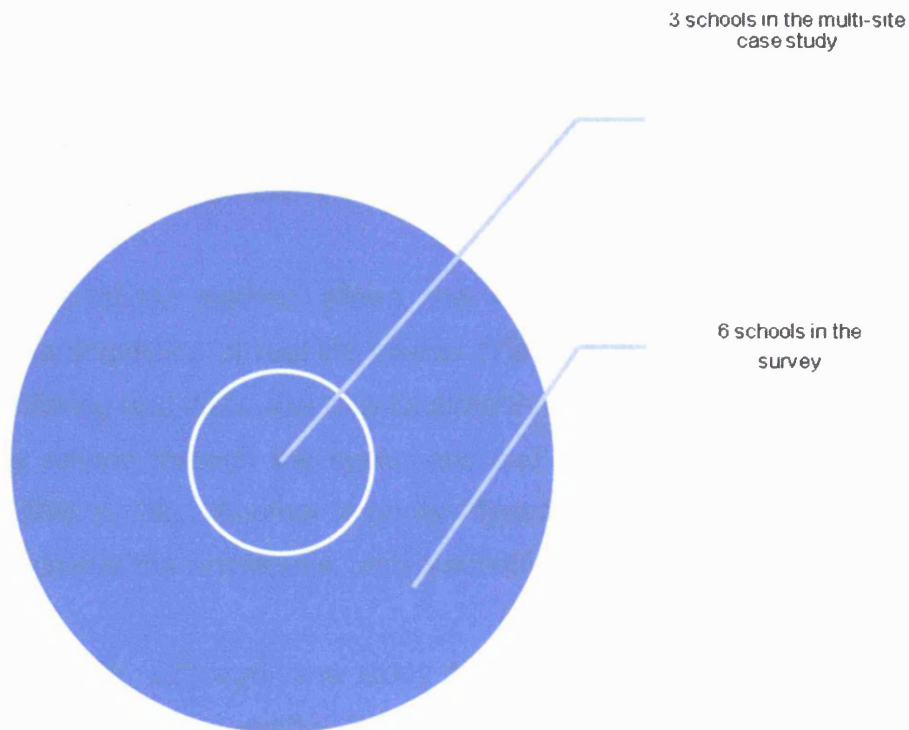
- What constitutes a middle leader's roles and functions in the Jamaican secondary school?
- What are the major challenges and conflicts confronting middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica?
- What management strategies do middle leaders employ to enable them to achieve effectiveness?
- To what extent are middle leaders able to effect change and contribute to a positive department culture?

The Application of Mixed Methods

As was discussed earlier in this chapter, a mixed methods approach was used in both the collection and analysis of data. However, the qualitative component of the research was used as the major methodology while the quantitative methodology was used to provide preliminary data for the main part of the research. According to (Brannen & Coram, 2003) the mixing of methods can be at various levels also, it can be done at different times and for different reasons. Qualitative data were collected through the use of case study research strategies, while the quantitative data were collected through survey research.

Figure 3.1 shows the mixed methods application of case study and survey research in the data collection process. The diagram also indicates that six schools were included in the research, three of which are the case study schools.

Figure 3.1 Mixed Methods Application



The Case Study Approach

While case study method is frequently used by researchers, there is little agreement on its explicit definition (Bassey, 1999; Merriam, 1988). Cohen & Manion (2003) describe case study methods as involving the study of a phenomenon by analysing the individual case. They further argue that the case may include a group, a person or a community.

Punch (2005) has added that case study also provides an opportunity for the intensive analysis of many specific details that are often overlooked with other methods. Based on the above definition, case study was recognised as the preferred research strategy

for researching the role and functions of middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica. Three conditions are advanced for deciding when case study as a research strategy should be used. Firstly, the type of research questions, for example “how” and “why” questions lend themselves to case study type research. Secondly, the degree to which the researcher cannot manipulate the contemporary events being researched. Thirdly, the degree the research focuses on a contemporary phenomenon within real life context and when a deeper understanding of the particular problem is being sought (Bassey 1999; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 2003).

Case study method allows the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2003). Also, case study research enriches the thinking and discourse of educators through the development of educational theory that is refined through the systematic and reflective documentation of evidence (Bassey, 1999, p. 28). Another important feature of case study is the attempt that is made to preserve the wholeness, unity and integrity of the case (Yin, 2003).

However, although case study research has a holistic approach, everything cannot be studied; the researcher therefore has to rely on the research questions to define his focus (Bassey, 1999; Punch, 2005).

Similarly, Hammersley & Gomm (2000) argue that case study research is especially suited for small-scale research, can be carried out by one researcher and will generate empirical data, thus reducing total dependence on existing research. Therefore, the use of case study will allow the researcher to develop a deeper understanding of issues in each school (Bassey, 1999). However, in order for these concerns to be addressed, the researcher has to temporarily subordinate other curiosities so that the stories of those living the case can be teased out (Bassey, 1999).

Data Collection Strategies in Case Study Methodology

One of the significant features of the case study approach is the ability to incorporate several data collection procedures that can provide both qualitative and quantitative data, which emphasises the case study as a comprehensive research strategy (Yin, 1994; Hartley, 1994).

Qualitative data for the case study research were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with the principals in the three case schools, semi-structured interviews conducted with heads of departments (five in each school), observation of senior management meetings along with documentary evidence from the three case schools and the Ministry of Education, see table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Data Collection Strategies in Case Study Research

Research groups	Data collection techniques	Number of subjects
Principals	Semi-structured interviews	$3 \times 1 = 3$
Heads of department/ middle leaders	Semi-structured interviews	$3 \times 5 = 15$
Senior management meetings	Observation	$3 \times 1 = 3$
Ministry Papers, school documents	Documentary evidence	3 case study schools
Subject Teachers	Self-administered questionnaires	202

Multi-Site Case Studies

The study of the same phenomena in three school settings and employing similar data collection procedures and analysis makes the research a multi-site case design

(Hammersley & Gomm, 2000). The use of a multi-case design offers some advantages over single case design, namely that the evidence from a multiple case is considered more compelling and the study regarded as being more robust (Schofield, 2006). This however does not undermine the fact that each case site is considered a whole unit and may predict contrasting or supporting results (Yin, 2003).

The decision for using multiple sites over a single site case design results from several factors. Yin, (2003) explains that there are certain conditions which determine when a single case is used. Firstly, when the case represents a critical test to prove or disprove an existing theory. Secondly, when there is a rare or unique circumstance, for example, the study of a particular phenomena existing in one particular setting. Thirdly, when the case is of the longitudinal type and therefore demands an extensive examination of the issue over a lengthy period.

However, since these conditions were not presented among the case study schools in Jamaica, the research cannot be considered as a single case but rather a multiple case design. Therefore, using three distinct schools types that shared some similarities and differences strengthened the need for a multiple site study.

The three distinct types of secondary schools that formed the case study schools were selected on the basis that each represented a unique feature of secondary schooling in Jamaica. Although the three schools shared some similarities, there are also differences among them. It is these differences that provided predictable, contrasting and supporting results (Yin, 2003) and which influenced their inclusion in the research.

The Research Cycle

Table 3.2 shows the research cycle used in conducting the research in Jamaica. The research cycle included both survey and case study methodologies and provides an

outline of the procedures involved in conducting the research on middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica.

The application of survey and case study research demonstrates the systematic development of the research process. For example, the first round analysis of questionnaire data was used to develop the questions for the semi-structured interviews which were conducted with heads of departments.

Table 3.2 The Research Cycle

Survey Research	Case Study Research
Formulation of the research questions	Identifying the research as an issue or problem
Definition of conceptual framework	Establishing research guidelines
Developing research instruments	Developing research instruments
Collecting quantitative data	Collecting qualitative data
Analysing quantitative data	Analysing qualitative data
Reporting findings	Deciding on the outcome and writing the case report

(Adopted from Bassey, 1999; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996)

The research cycle also allows for every step of the research to be validated, for example, the interview questions were crosschecked with the research questions to ensure relevance. Developing a structured research cycle also allowed the researcher

the opportunity of shifting backwards or forwards as needed (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). As indicated in Figure 3.1 and Table 3.2, the research cycle incorporated both qualitative and quantitative research procedures. The mixing of methods was an integral feature of the study and followed all aspects of the research.

Defining the Research Population

The research population for the study consisted of all subject teachers, heads of departments and principals in technical, upgraded and traditional high schools in Jamaica. These three distinct school types share many similarities; they are all referred to as high schools and have similar academic programmes. Some technical and upgraded high schools operate a two shifts programme. The schools also vary in relation to the number and size of their academic departments. Among the six schools in the study, two operate a double shift programme. For the purposes of the study, no distinctions are made between single and double shift schools in relation to their numbers, although a larger number of respondents were from the double shift schools.

Gender was not a criterion in the selection of heads of department in the school types. Whilst secondary schools in Jamaica are mainly co-educational, some are single sex. However, since the six schools that formed the research sample were co-educational, no special reference to single sex institutions will be made. Additionally, only the traditional high schools operate single sex programmes.

Sampling

Sampling is the procedure through which a subset of the population is chosen according to some criteria that enables the results to be extrapolated to the whole population (Corbetta, 2003). Sampling provides a clear description of the population to which the results can be generalised (Borg & Gall, 1989). Sampling is divided into two broad

categories probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Bryman, 2001). Probability sampling includes random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and multistage cluster sampling. Non-probability sampling includes, quota sampling, purposive sampling and convenience sampling.

Sampling offers several advantages including, allowing the research findings to be generalised to a wider subset of the population (May, 2001). Sampling also reduces the cost of data collection, as well as time needed for data collection and analysis.

Sampling Procedures for the Research

A purposive sampling procedure was used to select six schools for the research. Purposive sampling was chosen because it allowed the researcher to select subgroups that theoretically are significant to the topic being researched (Brewer & Hunter, 1989). Also, Punch (2005) argues that purposive sampling is used when the researcher is interested in highlighting relationships between variables or making comparisons between groups.

The six schools used in the research were therefore selected on the basis that they satisfied the classification of one of three school types which are the technical, upgraded or a traditional high schools. The selection of the schools was also based on their location that is whether the schools were located in the rural or urban areas. Because of the intrusive nature of the research, access to the school site had to be gained through the gate-keeper. Therefore, only schools that were willing to participate were included in the research. Additionally, schools that satisfied the criteria, but had participated in the pilot study were not considered for the major research. The three distinct school types were referred to as the three case study schools. Table 3.3 shows the research sample.

Table 3.3 Sample Size for the Research

	Schools Types	Rural	Urban	Case Schools	Number of Respondents
A	Technical	✓		✓	33
B	Upgraded	✓		✓	28
C	Traditional		✓	✓	40
D	Technical		✓		55
E	Upgraded		✓		30
F	Traditional	✓			16
	Total				202

Research Respondents

The respondents for the research comprised three groups, heads of department, principals and subject teachers. Heads of department were selected from the three case study schools. The selection criteria for the heads of department included those who had held office for three or more years and who also supervised three or more teachers in the department. The identification and selection of five respondents from each school type followed two approaches. In all three schools a member of the senior management team identified heads of departments who were to be interviewed. This approach was unsuccessful in providing the fifteen respondents needed for the interviews. Also, some of the heads of department identified by the school did not

satisfy one or both criteria indicated and were therefore rejected. Subsequently, the snowballing technique (Bryman, 2003) was used to identify other heads of department who possessed the desired criteria.

The principals selected for the research included those from each case school. A total of 202 subject teachers from the six schools provided the questionnaire data. The variation in the number of respondents from each school was determined by the staff enrolment at the school and the teachers who were available on the day the research questionnaires were administered.

Piloting the Research Instruments

Since no research instrument is perfect, the researcher had to pilot the instruments that were to be used in the study. These included the questionnaire to subject teachers and the semi-structured interview schedule to heads of department. A survey instrument consisting of fifty items was administered to twenty-five respondents across the three school types that had similar characteristics to those included in the intended research. Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaires as well as to comment on any perceived ambiguity in the items. Analysis of the questionnaire data and comments of respondents resulted in the removal of seven items and the rewording of items 12, 19 and 21.

Semi-structured interviews

Although the questionnaire data was intended to generate initial questions for the heads of department interviews, a pre-constructed semi-structured interview schedule consisting of twelve tentative questions was developed and administered to heads of department in three schools (one from each school type). Conducting these preliminary interviews was intended to assist the researcher in identifying possible problems that would hampered the smooth running of the data collection process as well as faulty

research techniques which would have undermined the validity of the research (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). Engaging the interviewee at this initial stage of the research allowed the researcher to consider several logistical concerns (Gorard, 2001; Yin, 2003), for example, the relevant lines of questioning were perfected. Where respondents indicated that questions were unclear, this was noted and the item reworded. The researcher also had to ensure that the approximate duration of interviews was noted and that interviewees' responses and comments were recorded for future reference.

Although the heads of department responded to the interview questions freely, there were some reservations concerning the level of confidentiality. This led to the design of a Research Protocol (see Appendix B). The research protocol according to (Briggs, 2003; Yin, 2003) serves many purposes including, as a contract between the researcher and the interviewees. It also increases the reliability of case study research. All interviewees in the research were given copies of the research protocol.

While it was not possible to pilot the principal's interview questions because of their unavailability, the interview questions were related to those used during the heads of department interviews but reworded for the principals' interview.

SECTION THREE

Fieldwork in Jamaica

Fieldwork in Jamaica began with some principals being contacted by telephone to determine their interest in the research topic and willingness to participate in the study. This initial contact was very important for many reasons including gaining access to the research site. As gatekeepers (Silverman, 2005), principals determined the availability of their staff to participate in research. Principals who responded favourably to the initial request were sent a formal introductory letter (see Appendix C), which outlined the reasons for and background of the study as well as the role the schools would be expected to play in the research. A meeting was then arranged with the principal and some senior members of staff, primarily to allay any fears or concerns and also to discuss the first phase of my data collection, which was the administration of the questionnaires. In five of the schools, the principal or a senior member of staff took responsible for the administration of the questionnaires. In the other schools, the researcher had to initiate contacts with the teachers. Table 3.4 outlines the phases of the research.

Phases of the Research

The data collection for the research on middle leaders in Jamaica was conducted in Jamaica over three months and consisted of several phases, (see table 3.4). In some cases there were variations in the phases, which resulted from the researcher's attempt to accommodate interviewees at the times they were available to be interviewed. Shifting between the principals' interviews and the heads of department interviews was advantageous since it offered the opportunity of validating the data of one group with the other and also allow for clarification of some issues identified in the heads of department interviews.

Table 3.4 Phases of the Research

Phases	Tasks
Phase 1	Telephone calls to potential schools
Phase 2	Letters sent to selected schools
Phase 3	Meeting with principals and middle leaders of case study schools
Phase 4	Administration of questionnaires and identification of interviewees
Phase 5	Initial analysis of questionnaire data and adjustment to interview instrument
Phase 6	Conduct middle leaders' interviews
Phase 7	Conduct principals' interviews
Phase 8	Observation of senior management meetings
Phase 9	Conduct interviews with Officers of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture
Phase 10	Transcribed taped interviews
Phase 11	Verification of transcripts
Phase 12	Analysis of transcripts
Phase 13	Analysis of questionnaire data

Instrumentation

A variety of research tools were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data for the study (Gillham, 2000). A single questionnaire was designed to collect quantitative data from teachers in all six schools. Qualitative data were collected through several means including:

- i. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with principals of the three case study schools.
- ii. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with heads of departments in the three case study schools.

- iii. Observation of management meetings between the senior management team (STM) and heads of departments in the three case study schools
- iv. Unstructured interviews with the Chief Education Officer and other Senior Officers of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, Jamaica.
- v. Document survey of schools' handbooks, and Ministerial Papers and Reports.

The Questionnaire

A questionnaire (see Appendix D) was designed to collect quantitative data from 420 subject teachers and heads of department across six secondary schools in both rural and urban parishes across the island of Jamaica. The schools were further divided into three distinct types, namely technical high schools, upgraded high schools and traditional high schools.

The instrument was divided into two sections with 44 items. Section one consisted of nine items labelled 1 to 7c, and which consisted of both opened and close-ended questions. They sought information on the teachers' biographical data including their professional qualification and academic experience. Section two consisted of thirty-five items organised in the form of a Likert Five-Point Attitudinal Scale. The scale sought to ascertain teachers' perception of their heads of department in the areas of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitical relationships in schools.

Whilst several attitude scales exist, the Likert five-point attitudinal scale (Bernard, 2000) was considered as appropriate to measure teachers' perceptions of their heads of department. In developing the five point Likert scale, the researcher firstly had to identify and label the variables that were to be measured.

A list of indicators relating to the variables mentioned in step one and which were written in both positive and negative forms was developed. Then the type and number

of response categories were identified. Five response categories were identified and these ranged from a scale where, strongly agreed (SA) = 1, agreed (A) = 2, undecided (U) = 3, disagreed (SD) = 4 and strongly disagreed (SD) = 5. The instrument was then tested to determine its suitability and reliability.

The questionnaire was designed to measure both positive and negative variables. A good questionnaire is one that 'produces questions that are reliable and valid and measures something we want to describe' (Floyd & Flower, 1995, p. 2). To ensure that the questionnaire maintained acceptable standards, the researcher adopted the following principles.

Firstly, the questions asked and the design of the questionnaire was consistent for all respondents (Floyd & Flower, 1995). Additionally, due care was taken to ensure that the language was consistent and did not pose a problem to respondents. This was achieved through the pilot study.

Secondly, care was taken to ensure that the appearance of the instrument, including the design, layout and style of questions would not have created a negative effect on respondents (Oppenheim, 1992).

The structure of the questionnaire was consistent as Cohen *et al.*, (2000, p. 258) argue:

The appearance of the questionnaire is vitally important. It must look easy, attractive and interesting rather than complicated, unclear, forbidding and boring..... clarity of wording and simplicity of design are essential.

Whilst the use of questionnaires can have its disadvantages (Foddy, 1993), several strategies were used to reduce this. Precise wording and the proper ordering of

questions (Sudan & Bradbury, 1982) were used. Piloting of the instrument was done to ensure that respondents were able to understand the questions. Also, in some cases efforts were made to discuss the nature of the research with respondents. Additionally, a cover letter explaining the nature and purpose of the research was attached to each questionnaire. Because the instruments was intended to be filled in anonymously, respondents were assured that they would not be incriminated in anyway through the responses they gave on the questionnaires.

Several strategies were used to increase the questionnaire return rate (Fowler, 2002). These include the use of personal contacts in each school to assist in collecting the questionnaire. Also, heads of department in some schools took charge of the questionnaires distribution and collection processes.

Questionnaire Response Rate

The questionnaire return rate varied across the six schools. Table 3.5 shows the questionnaire response rate for each school.

Table 3.5 Questionnaire Return Rate

School Types	Population	Sample	Spoilage	Valued Returns
1.Rural Technical	85	41	9	33
2.Rural Upgraded	75	38	10	28
3.Rural Traditional	40	21	5	16
4.Urban Technical	80	62	7	55
5.Urban Upgraded	50	34	4	30
6.Urban Traditional	90	49	9	40
Total	420	245	43	202

A high return rate was achieved with N= 202 respondents. As indicated in table 3.5. A number of the 245 questionnaires, 17.5% or 43 were discarded for one or more reasons. The spoilt questionnaires included those that had completed only Section 'A' (biographical data), instruments that had several responses for some items, instruments that had less than half of Section 'B' (Likert attitudinal scale) completed. Additionally, some respondents only ticked the undecided column in the attitudinal scale and these questionnaires were also discarded since the true opinion of the respondent could not be discerned.

The actual return of unspoilt questionnaires totalled 202 or 68%. Whilst it is difficult to determine the causes for the high spoilage, it could only be presumed that teachers might have attempted to complete the questionnaires because they were told to do so. This supports what Foddy, (1993) argues, that when respondents are not interested in the research topic, they will not be committed to completing the questionnaires. Although the school term was a particular busy one, the fact that teachers were in possession of the questionnaire for several days, would have allowed them enough time to complete the instrument properly.

From the table above, the highest returns were from the urban schools, with the technical school providing just fewer than 70 %. It is assumed that where the overall percentage return rate was highest, resulted from the assistance the researcher received from a colleague who was a senior member of the academic staff.

The seemingly low response rate describes what Flower (2000) refers to as one disadvantage of the self-administered questionnaire. Re-administering the questionnaire was not possible because of both time and financial constraints.

Interviews

Interviews in qualitative research are not neutral tools for data gathering but active interactions between two or more persons leading to negotiate contextually based results (Seidman, 1991). It is also a very good way of “assessing people’s perceptions, meanings, definitions of situation and construction of reality” (Punch, 2005, p. 168). The primary purpose of interviews is to generate data, which give an authentic insight into people’s experiences. Although several types of interviews exist, both the semi-structured and unstructured interviews were selected for the research because they allow the researcher to select key questions for which answers are sought, and in the same breath, it gives the subject the opportunity to tell his/ her story (Drever, 1995).

The difference between the unstructured and semi-structured interview is the degree to which both the researcher and the respondent are restricted in the process (Drever, 1995). Semi-structured interviews allow pre-arranged questions to be used and therefore are more restrictive for the interviewee (Bryman, 2001). On the other hand, unstructured interviews allow the interviewee to be more expressive and the interviewer to follow-up on important issues during the interview. Both kinds of interviews provided a thick body of contextual data. The data collected from one set of interviews was used to validate the data from other interviews.

Several considerations guided the selection and use of interviews as a research instrument. Direct involvement with the respondent ensured a greater response rate, especially when compared with questionnaire surveys (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). The ordering and choice of follow-up questions remains totally in the researcher’s control as well as the decision of altering, omitting or rephrasing questions when this is considered necessary (Borg & Gall, 1989).

The interviewing process tells much more than what the participant ‘tells’ you. For example, through observation of the respondent’s body language and the tone of

responses to questions, cues were identified which indicated that probing was necessary or that the line of questioning should be changed (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). The interviewing process provided large amounts of rich and useful data that complemented the quantitative data collected.

Although there are weaknesses in using interviews for data collection, these can be minimised. Bell (2000) identifies several strategies which the researcher can employ to increase the validity of the interview. Firstly, the need for adequate training was recognised as paramount in conducting the interviews. For that reason, along with the formal postgraduate training offered to the researcher, a considerable amount of research was done to develop a full understanding of the principle and psychological challenges involved in conducting interviews (Foddy, 1998).

Additionally, practice-interviewing sessions were conducted with colleagues both at the university where the researcher was a student and with lecturers from the college where the researcher had worked previously. Such preparation enabled the researcher to be conscious of inherent weakness during the interview such as researcher's bias, using loaded questions and the wording of questions (Bell, 2000; Oppenheim, 1992).

Another concern that had to be overcome was the time and cost factors. The piloting of the tentative research questions (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003) provided the opportunity for the researcher to judge the duration of the interviews. Whilst in some cases the schedule shifted and interview sessions went beyond the scheduled time, in general timing proved effectively managed. Timing (Wragg, 2003) was particularly important for heads of departments in shift schools who also had tight schedules which included teaching, supervising teachers and handling issues with students in their departments. Scheduling two interviews within the same day in one school was one attempt to reduce the high transportation cost. Although only minimal success was achieved, it nevertheless offered some benefits.

Interviews are intrusive and reactive (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990) and therefore interviewees were reminded that they did not have to answer a question that they felt uncomfortable about. Also that they were free to have the tape recorder switched off at any point of the interview. Additionally, interviewees were given a copy of the research protocol that was explained to them.

The researcher also took care to ensure that researcher bias was reduced as much as possible. This was achieved by maintaining a professional approach throughout all interviews. Also, all comments and questions that were not answered or had caused unfavourable response from respondents were recorded as field notes.

Principals' interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three principals from three distinct school types across the three parishes. These interviews, were approximately sixty minutes long, and were all conducted in the principals' offices in the morning. The interviews were aimed at providing a general outline of the principal's leadership style, their perception of the effectiveness of heads of departments in their role, and the challenges heads of department experience in their position, (see Appendix E). The interviews were all tape recorded.

Middle Leaders' Interviews

Fifteen middle leaders (heads of departments) five from each case study school provided qualitative data through semi-structured interviews. An interview schedule was developed for this purpose (see Appendix F). The heads of department interviews were conducted at various times of the day, dependent on when heads of department had a non-contact period.

In all case schools, heads of department had difficulty finding suitable places to conduct the interviews. On one occasion the interview had to be rescheduled because there were no available classrooms and because the school was hosting an exhibition. In addition, there was a general high level of noise over the entire campus. In general, interviews were held in the classrooms or in the head of department office. Both venues, however, proved unsuitable because there were numerous interruptions from other members of staff or students. There was also the occasional telephone call. These interruptions caused the durations of the interview to go beyond the forty minutes schedule. It may also have affected the interviewee's level of concentration or trend of thought.

In most cases interviewees were cooperative and answered most questions. Only one respondent was uncomfortable and appeared unwilling to be interviewed. In one particular school, three of the five heads of departments interviewed indicated their grievances with the principal's selection and promotion policy. Since this issue came from a large percentage of the interviewees of one school, it was raised at the principal's interview. The principal, however, pre-empted the question and freely discussed his policy concerning promotion of heads of department. His arguments were noted and raised at the meeting with officers at the Ministry of Education. A full discussion on this issue is included in Chapters Five and Seven.

Education Officers' (Ministry of Education) Interviews

Unstructured interviews were conducted with five officers, including the Chief Education Officer of the Ministry of Education Youth and Culture, Jamaica. The other officers were drawn from several areas, including accounting, secondary school programmes and the professional development unit. Two of the education officers objected to having their interview tape-recorded; also, there was some level of reservation among the officers.

Although they were presented with a signed introductory letter from my university, they had doubts concerning the true purpose for the research.

The information collected from the Education Officers' interviews was used to complement both the principals' and heads of departments' interviews.

Observation

According to Simpson and Tuscon (1995), observation is not just looking, but also the systematic recording of events and subsequent analysis and interpretation of the data. Denzin & Lincoln (1998, p. 80), refer to it as "gathering impressions of the surrounding world through all relevant human facilities. Non-participant observation was used as a research strategy (Borg & Gall, 1989) to collect qualitative data for the study. The use of non-participant observation as a research strategy was advantageous in several ways. Primarily it allows the researcher very little interaction with the subject being observed, and It provides a complete record of the behaviours relevant to the research topic (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003).

Although observation is very useful as a tool in both paradigms, it has its shortcomings (May, 2001). The first is that it has a high demand on time, effort and resources (Foddy, 1998). Another negative feature of observation as a research strategy is the extent to which it is susceptible to the observer's bias (Simpson & Tuscon 1992). The observer must at all times try to maintain distance between him/her and the setting being observed.

Observation in the Case Study Schools

Observation of management meetings was conducted in two case study schools. The third school had conducted their management meeting earlier in the school year before the start of the data collection period. Whilst data from a single observation may not be conclusive, nevertheless, the data provided some insights into the specific phenomena

being observed. Also, the data collected through observation are a small part of the large body of qualitative data collected for this investigation.

Problems Encountered during the Research Process

The research posed several challenges for the researcher and these are now discussed.

The thought of using two methods initially seemed practical and offered the potential of providing a large quantity of rich data whilst offering additional means of triangulation. However, the application of mixed methods proved very challenging in many ways. Firstly, utilising two methodologies meant developing a clear understanding of the research paradigms and offering convincing arguments in support of issues raised in discussing the two methodologies. Extensive literature reviews were necessary in order to achieve this competency.

The administration of the questionnaire was very challenging. The fact that only a fifty percent rate of return was achieved is an indication of the difficulties involved in having respondents completing the questionnaires. The researcher used different strategies to collect the questionnaires. For example, in some schools, teachers who were well known and respected were asked to collect the questionnaires. In another school, the researcher had to make personal requests of individual teachers, and in a number of cases the teachers were unable to locate the questionnaire.

The choice of using schools of different types, located in both rural and urban areas created a problem for the researcher. For example, it was difficult to use the sampling techniques identified in the literature because access to the schools had to be first agreed to by the principals and even then, the schools also had to satisfy the criteria that were identified earlier; for example, the schools selected had to be classified in one of the three school types identified in the study. Added to this was an additional criterion

of location, that is, whether the schools were located in the rural or urban areas. These conditions were compounded by the fact that some principals refused to engage their schools in the research, which meant that the total number of possible schools that were able and willing to participate in the research became relatively small.

Another problem was finding a convenient time to conduct the interviews. In the three case study schools, it was very difficult to keep scheduled appointments. It seems that the schools were plagued with a host of activities including Parents Week, threats from thugs in the community, national and international athletics events, Girls' Day, exposition, cadet presentation, and external competitions.

Although in most cases interviewees co-operated with the researcher, there were exceptions. In one case, the potential interviewee wanted to preview the interview questions and since other interviewees would not have had this privilege, the wish was denied, and this resulted in the interviewee refusing to be interviewed. In another example, the interviewee protested against the use of the tape recorder. This was quite surprising since the researcher had met the interviewee days before and had explained the format of the interview. Other incidents of sudden withdrawal of the interviewee meant that the researcher had to quickly find other heads of department who were willing to be interviewed. It also meant scheduling further visits to the research sites.

There were cases in which some heads of department who had agreed to be interviewed declined on the day of the interview. In all three case schools the principals identified heads of department who they thought would be suitable to be interviewed. However, the researcher later realised that some heads of department were reluctant to be interviewed and frustrated attempts to be contacted. In an attempt to identify possible interviewees, the snowballing effect was used, allowing interviewees to suggest other heads of department whom they knew were experienced in the position and would be willing to be interviewed.

The problem of gaining appointment with education officers was also a concern. Although the Ministry of Education Youth and Culture has recently adopted the data protection policy that speaks to transparency, this was not the experience of the researcher. Many officers at the Ministry were unwilling to speak with the researcher. Some outrightly said that they were not able to comment on the matter or scheduled meetings several months ahead that were not realistic and also inconvenient for the researcher. In one particular case, the officer used her secretary to relay questions and answers rather than talking directly with the researcher.

The shift system (a full discussion can be found in Chapter One) also offered some challenges for the researcher. In the case where rural schools operated on shifts, the researcher had to make special provisions regarding finding suitable accommodation near the schools. This was necessary for both the administration of the questionnaires and the conducting of interviews. Because the interview questions were informed by the data from the questionnaire, efforts had to be made to collect a reasonable number of questionnaires and do the initial analysis before conducting the interviews. The shift system made this even more difficult because teachers are literally on the school compound for five hours during each shift and heads of departments who were to be interviewed found it difficult to find an appropriate time for engaging in the interview. There were frequent interruptions during the interviews. In one particular instance, the head of department had to leave to set work for her class before continuing with the interview.

A final constraint was the high economic cost of the data collection process. Several factors added to the high cost of the research. Firstly, the inclusion of schools on the shift system meant that a relatively large teaching sample was used for the shift schools (up to 90 teachers in some schools), and a five-page questionnaire had to be produced

for each teacher. Also, making contact with the schools and setting appointments with Education Officers at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, added to both telephone and postage cost.

Secondly, securing accommodation in the rural parishes further contributed to the overall expenses. Some of the schools were approximately 80 miles from the researcher's home and because no effective public transportation existed, and it would have been a physical feat driving to the research site and conducting the research over several days, it was more suitable to book accommodations in the respective parishes during the data collection period. The cost of accommodation and meals added to the overall expenses. The numerous additional expenses were strenuous on the researcher who was a self-funded student.

Validity and Reliability

The overall acceptance of the research findings is summed up in the process of validity and reliability and applies to both qualitative and quantitative research (Bush, 2002). In addition to the arguments presented earlier, the researcher applied several strategies to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings.

One means of achieving research validity is through triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Different aspects of triangulation were achieved throughout the research process namely; data triangulation, methodological triangulation and environmental triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Data triangulation describes the collection of different kinds of data during the research, and this included observation data, heads of department semi-structured interview data and also principals' semi-structured interview data.

Methodological triangulation is the use of several methods to collect data on the same phenomenon. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used to collect the

data on middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica. A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, while case study methods were used to collect qualitative data. According to (Creswell, 1998), the finding from one data collection source can be used to corroborate the other.

Environmental triangulation is the collection of data from several different sites or locations. Three different school sites were used and this was a further attempt at increasing the validity of the research through triangulation. Yin, (2003) argues that the use of multiple research sites increases the credibility of the research and provided clear examples of the extent the research findings can be replicated.

Respondent verification (Hammersley & Gomm, 2000) was also used with all respondents. Transcribed interview data were returned to respondents for validation. The practice ensures that respondents agreed with what has been documented as primary data.

Also, care was taken in documenting the research processes both in relation to field experiences as well as the evolutionary process of data collection. This was important as the researcher needed to ensure that he accounts for and discloses the approaches to all aspects of the research process. A reflection and evaluation of various aspects of the research including the methodology was also carried out.

Another strategy used was the data engagement time (Creswell, 1998). In case studies, the researcher immerses him/ herself in the research in order to win the confidence of respondents. Emersion in the research also helps the researcher to recognise distortions and assists in developing a better understanding of the topic (Creswell, 1998). A data engagement table (see table3.6), shows the researcher's engagement time with the research over several phases.

Another means of verification is the rich, thick description of data, which allows the reader to make decisions regarding transferability. This is due primarily to the fact that the researcher maintained the field notes and detailed all the relevant information concerning participants and the research setting. Such information informs the reader on whether the findings can be transferred to similar settings.

Table 3.6 Data Engagement Time

Phases	Action	Duration	Start Date
1	Review of literature	33 months	October 2003
2	Construction of research instruments	3 months	June 2004
3	Piloting and correction of instruments	2 months	October 2004
4	Administration of questionnaires and conduct interviews	3 months	January 2005
5	Analysis of data	18 month	February 2005
6	Writing up	12 months	September 2005
7	Submission		October 2006

Analysis of Data

The research used a mixed methods approach which included the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. The techniques used in analysing each sets of data are described under separate sub-headings. The analysis of the qualitative data will be discussed first.

Qualitative Data

The method used for analysing the qualitative data involved the principle of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In the first phase, time was spent interrogating the data, which involved immersing one's self in the data in order to understand the meaning the data were conveying (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

The data were grouped into predefined themes consistent with previous research studies identified in the literature, and organized sections of the interview schedules. The interview schedules were divided into three themes, which were: (1) professional leadership, (2) department culture; and (3) micropolitics. The three themes were common to both the principal interview schedule and the heads of department interview schedule. The themes were also common to all three school types.

Categories were then identified from the themes, for example the categories common to all three school types included team leadership and work overload. Some categories were unique to specific school types and these were also reported, for example, in one school type, three of the five heads of department were dissatisfied with the promotion processes. Whilst this issue was not common to heads of department in the other two school types, the researcher felt it was worth mentioning, since it affected three of the five participants from one particular school. Similarly, the theme favouritism was found in one school type; however, it was included because the participants felt strongly about it.

The data were further interrogated and similar categories identified and coded according to school types. The categories were then examined and redefined for example, the category 'effective communication', was redefined and placed under the category 'effective leadership'. Some of the earlier categories were omitted, for example

'students' performance' since they were not sufficiently supported by the data. In addition, similarities and differences among school types were noted. Categories were then merged with the data to provide some understanding and to begin theorising based on the existing literature.

Quantitative Data

A questionnaire consisting of 44 items was used to collect the quantitative data from a sample of 202 subject teachers across six high schools. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section One contained the Biographic data (N=9) items. Section Two consisted of the statistically analysed data and was subdivided into three subsections namely; (2.1) Professional Leadership with (N=13) items; (2.2) Department Culture (N=11) items and (2.3) Micropolitics. (N=11). A Five Point Likert Scale was used to measure respondents' levels of agreement. Items had positive and negative scaling, which were recorded in the reverse for consistency in the data analysis (Green *et al.*, 2001).

The questionnaires were coded according to the three school types: (1) the upgraded high school; (2) the technical high school; and (3) the traditional high school. A Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test was run using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 12.0. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test was run to determine the extent to which the items in each subsection were compatible and measured the same variable. A reliability test score of .815, for professional leadership, .824 for department culture and .808 for micropolitics indicated that each subsection could be viewed as a subscale of the three areas of inquiries identified in the questionnaire namely, professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics.

A One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also used. This facilitated the comparative analysis of the three schools types according to the three subscales: professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics, to indicate statistically

significant differences across the three areas. Items that showed high degree of variance were analysed descriptively. These included item # 9a heads of department plan ahead, Item # 9b heads of department refuse to delegate, item # 10i heads of department received additional training for the position and item #10e, heads of department play key role in supporting members, item # 12e, heads of department exhibit high expectations of staff and students and Item # 11d heads of department challenge management decisions. The statistical results were presented using frequency distribution tables.

Ethical Considerations

The challenge to maintain ethics throughout this research began with the conceptualisation of the research topic, and was followed by constantly asking questions of why, who and what (Punch, 1998). The researcher's role included maintaining the subject's privacy and confidentiality, especially the identities of participants as well as those of the research location. Participants were all informed about the nature, purpose and consequences of the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Open information on the research was provided, which included the duration, methods, possible risks and the purpose or aims of the research. Every effort was made to ensure that the work of the school was not affected by the research process and similarly, efforts were made to reduce the possibility for members of the school community suffering personal abuses. Foddy, (1993, p, 122) argues that in some cases the researcher needs to maximise trust on the part of the respondent, through the guarantee of confidentiality and the assurance that their answers would not lead to any form of sanctions. This was achieved through the development of a research protocol (Briggs, 2003), which formed a contract between the interviewee and the researcher. All fifteen heads of department and three principals were issued with copies of the research protocol.

Finally, the researcher recognises that failure to maintain an unbiased view during the research process would cloud his judgement and jeopardise the quality of the research, therefore he consciously maintained control over all aspects of the research process.

Summary

This research was specifically designed to collect data on the study of middle leaders across six secondary schools in Jamaica. A mixed method incorporating both case study approach and survey research were identified as most appropriate for collecting the desired data. In developing the research design, consideration was given to the fact that the Jamaican public, and in particular, policy makers are more inclined to accept research findings that are grounded in quantitative methodology. Conversely, the exposure to qualitative methodology and the fact that the use of two methodological approaches serve to reinforce the credibility of the research compounded the use of the mixed methods approach. The research design was outlined, paying particular attention to the groups that provided qualitative and quantitative data and the instrumentation used in the data collection process. The challenges in executing the research and how some of these were overcome were also discussed. Finally, the issues of validity and reliability were examined and arguments were presented on how these were achieved throughout all stages of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS

In this chapter the features of the three case study schools are described and discussed in two sections. Section One provides a summary of the issues relating to the three distinct types of secondary schools used in this research. Pseudonyms are used to identify the three case schools and all participants identified in the research. The case study schools identified are referred to here as Tredway Technical High School, Condure Upgraded High School and Buckhire Traditional High School. The major issues drawn from the data are presented separately for each case school under three broad themes namely, professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics. Under each major theme, the emerging sub-themes are identified and discussed.

Although the three case study schools are similar in many respects, they also have their differences and similarities which are discussed in Section Two. The discussion of the similarities and differences follows the three broad themes identified. Each theme will be discussed in relation to the sub-themes emerging from the data. Tredway Technical High School will be the first case study school to be examined.

SECTION ONE

Case Study School No. 1

Tredway Technical High School

School context

Tredway Technical High School is located in a rural parish, in relatively close proximity to a town centre. It is easily accessible and therefore has students and staff coming from various neighbouring districts. Tredway Technical High is a recently established technical high school, and unlike the older type of technical high schools, offers students a five year programme instead of the regular four year programme. The school operates a shift system and has a student enrolment of 1800 and a staff complement of 90 teachers. The school offers a mixed programme consisting of academic and technical /vocational education, with emphasis on the latter. The school is fully owned and operated by the government.

The principal of Tredway Technical is relatively new in the position, having been principal for only four years. Although he holds a Masters Degree from the University of The West Indies, Mona, this is not in a field related to school leadership and management. Since taking up office, (the principal) Mr. Shedwit, has had frequent altercations with members of his staff, resulting in interventions by Officers from the Ministry of Education Youth and Culture, on several occasions. These matters have been referred to the teachers' union, the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA) and have also been reported on in the media.

Professional Leadership

Under the theme professional leadership, several sub-themes emerged and these will be discussed in this section. The sub-themes include exemplary leadership, heads of department delegating aspects of their role, the monitoring of teachers, team leadership and the promotion process. The section also discusses the challenges confronting heads of department in their professional leadership role. These challenges include managing across the two shifts, lack of support from principals, increasing work load and lack of time.

Subject teachers in the technical high school felt confident about the professional leadership of their heads of department. They believed that their heads of department were able to execute their professional leadership roles, which included planning ahead, communicating with members within the department and the wider school community, and delegating aspects of their professional leadership role. In general, most teachers were pleased with the support they received from their heads of department. This may have resulted from the various strategies used to empower subject teachers. Heads of department explained that they used different strategies to support their teachers. For example, there were joint planning sessions and extensive use of the internet as a learning resource.

Delegating was a strong professional leadership element experienced by teachers. Many teachers felt that their heads of department willingly delegated aspects of their professional leadership role. The shift system may have directly influenced delegation among all heads of department in schools that operated the shift system. Heads of department explained that because they could not be physically present to offer the level of supervision required on both shifts, they had to employ 'strategic thinking'. This

involved working overtime or taking work home in order to get the volume of work done. Two of the five heads of department interviewed said they used a senior/ responsible member of the department on the other shift to act as head in their absence.

All heads of department recognised and accepted their monitoring role. The checking of students' note books was frequently done; however, other strategies including checking teachers' attendance and punctuality at their classes, planned and unplanned class visits, and observation of a lesson being taught, were also used. Some heads of department made it quite clear that subject teachers who consistently submit poorly developed lesson plans were reported to the principal.

Team leadership was also identified as important within the professional leadership role of heads of department. However, only one of the five heads of department referred to the department as a team, the others commonly used the 'we' concept, which represented some form of group cohesion. Heads of department experienced some challenges from teachers, both those new to the department and those experienced in the department. It was felt that some senior teachers were unhappy with young heads of department being promoted to the position.

The promotion process was an area that impinges on the head of department's ability to offer effective professional leadership. Heads of departments noted that the principal, Mr. Shedwit, used a subjective approach in recruiting subject teachers to the head of department position. He explained that teachers who were promoted, would have demonstrated their willingness to support his plans. From the interview data, it was also observed that no systematic process of promoting teachers existed in the school. Subsequently, some heads of department were promoted using the strategies of seniority and default.

Challenges to the Head of Department Professional Leadership Role

Heads of department were aware of their professional leadership role and offered teachers effective leadership; however, this was undermined by issues between the teachers and heads of department, as well as between the heads of department and the principal. For example, heads of department complained that some subject teachers were reluctant to complete their schemes of work. There were also some senior teachers who were unwilling to follow directives given by their department head.

Managing across both shifts was also problematic. Heads of department had to develop a strategic leadership approach when managing across both shifts. Additionally, two heads of department spoke about competition between both shifts and the fact that the principal was the main instigator. Incidents of the principal promoting competition between both shifts were also observed by the researcher in a senior management meeting held at the school with the principal and middle leaders. Heads of department expressed the view that the principal's support for competition between shifts and among departments has affected the forging of a collaborative culture between teachers on both shifts, and also between departments on either shift.

There were examples of some heads of department not getting support from the principal. This was viewed as the principal favouring those departments that obtained more favourable results in Caribbean Examination Council (CXC). The absence of basic teaching resources was also noted, especially in the mathematics department. The head of the science department explained how the principal would recruit and deploy teachers in her department, even when they were unable to teach biology to the CXC level.

Heads of department complained about the numerous tasks they had to perform in addition to their major role, and said that this contributed to what they identified as work

overload. From the interview data it was noted that heads of department supervised varying numbers of teachers and taught different numbers of classes, see table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Number of sessions taught per week and number of teachers supervised by heads of department

Subject departments	Years in teaching	Years in position	Number of sessions taught	Number of teachers supervised
Home Economics	25	15	24	9
Business	8	3	28	12
Language	12	5	Missing	20
Mathematics	17	10	34	12
Science	30	10	24	15

Heads of department explained that the challenge directly linked with work overload is the fact that they do not have sufficient time to complete their assigned tasks, and therefore are sometimes viewed as ineffective.

The lack of preparation and inadequate training for the head of department's position were also mentioned. Some heads of department recalled their early experience in the position, how they felt intimidated and unable to offer effective professional leadership to members of their department.

Department Culture

Heads of department have developed various strategies to forge a collaborative culture with teachers in their department. The head of home economics spoke of having one-to-one meetings with teachers. The head of business spoke about how she encouraged teachers to share information and materials. Rotating leadership was used by the head of mathematics. This was used as one strategy in developing a department spirit.

The head of language said she used a reward system to get teachers to work and to feel good about doing it. It seems the reward system has contributed to teachers developing a greater level of commitment to their work. In relation to new teachers, the head of mathematics used the orientation programme as a means of getting new teachers involved in the department's activities. She also spoke about how social events were planned across both shifts where teachers could meet, talk and play games.

Heads of department expressed deep concerns for students generally, and showed commitment to students' performance. Although students at this school are recognised as being low academic performers, some heads of department believed that students can succeed in their examinations if they and their teachers are willing to work together. The heads of department in home economics, business and language said they used the department meetings to encourage teachers to work for the good of the students.

Micropolitics

It was discovered that there were issues which created conflict between heads of department and the principal. Heads of department identified several issues which could have contributed to micropolitical conflicts. All five heads of department spoke strongly about the principal's leadership style and how it affected them. They used phrases including 'one man show' and 'autocratic' leader to describe their principal. All five heads of department felt that their principal was an autocratic leader. This view was supported by the researcher's observation at the senior management meeting between the principal and members of the senior management team. Additionally, from the interview with the principal, it was observed that he viewed himself as being capable of functioning in an autonomous way, remarking that he was trying to employ staff without the School Board's approval. The principal was also identified as using high-handed tactics. For example, one head of department recalled how in one academic year, the principal single-handedly recruited and interviewed teachers for several departments; however, when it was discovered by the school board, he was asked to re-interview the teachers in the presence of the vice principals.

Some heads of department also mentioned their pseudo-involvement in decision making: contrived collegiality. They explained that even when they were allowed to participate in the decision making process, their suggestions were not considered. The lack of autonomy and consultation in department matters were also concerns among heads of department. Other issues including the lack of physical and teaching resources were noted.

In addition to the autocratic style of leadership mentioned earlier, heads of department viewed their principal as displaying a shifting micropolitical orientation. The head of home economics explained that although the principal had an autocratic leadership style, he occasionally shifted to an open style of leadership, giving examples of how she

was able to have the principal shifting from his predominant autocratic style, to one which supported her idea. The head of language also spoke of how she convinced the principal to allow her to develop some of her own ideas.

Case Study School No. 2

Condour Upgraded High School

School Context

Condour Upgraded High School is situated in a rural farming and fishing community. The school is centrally located, with easy access for the over 1640 students and 70 teachers. The school was recently upgraded to high school status, having moved through various stages, namely, junior secondary, secondary, comprehensive high, and finally high school. Like other upgraded high schools, Condour High offers students a five year programme which consists of both vocational and academic programmes.

One of the features of this type of school is the two shift system. The 'shift system' as it is popularly called was developed by the government during the 1970s as a temporary measure to alleviate the shortage of space in secondary schools. Schools that operated on the shift system shared the same facilities on the same school days. The first shift started at 7:00am and lasted until 12 noon, while the second shift operated between 12:30 and ended at 5: pm. While the shift system solved the space problem, it created some new ones. Parents, principals, teachers and students complained about some of the problems which the system created. The principal, Mr. Gray has brought a wealth of experience to the post which he has gained from previous positions held in a number of schools. He explained that his five years in the position has been challenging but also rewarding.

Professional Leadership

Subject teachers identified several ways in which their heads of department displayed aspects of professional leadership. It was observed that heads of departments were forward thinking and this was displayed in the strategies they used in leading their departments. While some subject teachers were not happy with the level of support they received from their heads of department, most recognised the level of delegation which was practised. Heads of departments explained that the level of delegation they practised was partly due to their inability to offer direct supervision to all teachers, especially those on the other shift.

Heads of department indicated that they were aware of their monitoring roles and identified several strategies to monitor members of their departments, namely, checking lessons plans of the new teachers and observing some of their classes. Several heads of department spoke about applying the Education Regulations in cases where teachers were reluctant to carry out their assigned duties. One concern shared by several heads of department was that the older teachers were not expected to be as closely monitored as the newer members of staff. Some heads of department argued that the more experienced teachers complained that they were familiar with writing lesson plans and executing lessons and therefore did not need to be as closely supervised as the new teachers. However, one head of department also explained that the older and more experienced teachers needed close supervision, since some were not keen on updating their lesson content and therefore failed to challenge students' learning.

Heads of department were also viewed as displaying their professional leadership skills in developing members of their department team. Heads of departments explained that they used various strategies in empowering members of their departments. The head of the business department explained that she allowed teachers to co-chair department

meetings and do mini-presentations on their return from conferences. Other team building strategies identified included sharing materials and developing /problem solving skills among the new teachers.

Challenges to Heads of Department Professional Leadership

Among the challenges heads of department identified was work overload. One head of department explained that her workload had increased over time: for example, she was previously not responsible for timetables. Another spoke about operating between top management and middle management positions where she had to handle disputes among teachers. It was also not uncommon for heads of department to function in multiple roles such as, being form teacher, grade coordinator and head of department.

In addition, heads of department explained that the size of the department determined the number of teachers they supervised and the number of sessions taught: see table 4.2

Table 4.2 Number of sessions taught per week and number of teachers supervised by heads of department

Subject departments	Years in teaching	Years in position	Number of sessions taught	Number of teachers supervised
Mathematics	24	8	12	10
Business	17	4	16	9
Home Economics	12	7	24	8
Social Studies	18	7	24	6
History	21	10	22	6

Another area of challenge was managing across the two shifts. Heads of department explained that they used different strategies to effectively manage across the two shifts. Among the strategies they employed were getting to school early before the beginning

of the shift, in an effort to attend to their administrative duties, delegating some responsibilities to a senior member of the department who was respected by all the members of the team, and having classes earlier in order to have more time available for department matters.

The promotion process offered some level of challenge among all five heads of department. Subject teachers who were promoted to the head of department position indicated that they were promoted by their principals for different reasons. Both the heads of home economics and history said that they were selected because they were seen as teachers capable of doing the job. The head of business spoke of getting a consensus from three different groups: the principal, their colleagues and subordinates.

The principal on the other hand explained that criteria including years of service or friendship were not used in promoting teachers to the heads of department position. The principal also expressed some concerns regarding the competencies of heads of department as it related to leading the curriculum.

The fact that most heads of department were not prepared for the position could have added some pressure on heads of department who were new in the post. The head of geography spoke about making a personal effort to understand all aspects of the curriculum from grades 7- 11. However, she indicated that while subject content was not a major concern, she had problems offering professional leadership to teachers in her department.

Department Culture

Heads of department spoke about their commitment to teachers, especially those new in the post. Others explained that they supported new teachers by assisting them with pedagogy and content. Other strategies included having department socials to welcome new teachers. Another head of department spoke about the uniqueness of her department and how teachers worked collaboratively. Having lunch together once per week was mentioned by one department as a strategy to forge a collaborative department. It was also mentioned that various strategies including celebrating teachers' birthdays and treating them on Teachers Day were being used.

Heads of department explained that these strategies were not only used to show teachers that they were appreciated but also to build collegial support for their colleagues.

Motivating older and long serving teachers in the department was a challenge to heads of department. Some heads of department found that newer teachers and others who did not have a long history with the department were more receptive to their leadership.

One outstanding quality displayed by the heads of department was commitment to both students' learning as well as that of teachers. Some heads of department made special effort to assist students, especially the very weak ones. Heads of department also encouraged subject teachers to make extra effort for their students.

Micropolitics

There were some issues which created conflict between heads of department and their principal. Some heads of department felt that they were not sufficiently involved in the decision making process; they thought that greater effort could be made to value their opinions. It seemed that the official role of head of department was confined to preparing the budget and identifying resources for their departments. A common area of concern was the leadership style of their principal. All five heads of department agreed that the principal displayed a closed and somewhat autocratic leadership style. Nearly all the heads of department complained that they were unhappy with the level of support they received from their principal. There were also concerns about the ineffective communication between the principal and the heads of department.

A sore area among three of the heads of department was the issue of delayed promotion. They explained that they were very disgruntled by the fact that they had been in an acting position for between five and seven years.

In response to the issue of delayed promotion, the principal, whilst being very supportive of his heads of department, also indicated that he was unhappy with those who were unwilling to access further training. He also commented that teachers who did not demonstrate a keen interest in the students and the school were not likely to gain any form of promotion. However, the heads of department felt that the principal was being vindictive and took the issue of their delayed promotion to their teachers' union, the Jamaica Teachers Association.

Ineffective communication was also experienced by one head of department, who argued that her principal refused to communicate with her directly, but preferred to communicate with her through another member of staff. She explained that she had made several unsuccessful attempts to resolve this issue.

Four of the five heads of department were dissatisfied with the general lack of classroom facilities and teaching resources. One head explained that although she had indicated to the principal the specific resource she needed for her classes, the bursar had bought something else. The heads of business and science thought that their departments were not equipped to offer students the level of support they needed.

Case Study School No. 3

Buckshire Traditional High School

School Context

Buckshire is a very large traditional high school located in an urban area. The school is owned by the Roman Catholic Church, but operated by the government. The school operates a single shift with a student population of over 2000 and an academic staff complement of over one hundred teachers. Unlike most traditional high schools, Buckshire offers students the opportunity to choose from a wide option of vocational as well as academic subjects.

The principal of Buckshire high school has had a long period of service in the school, having moved up the ranks from subject teacher to department head, vice principal and subsequently principal. The interview with Mrs. Ainsworth indicated that she felt that having served the school for over thirty years enabled her to display a level of confidence in how she approaches her work. She also remarked that she feels confident in introducing innovative programmes at the school, including having single sex classes in mathematics.

Professional Leadership

Teachers in the traditional high school recognised various ways in which their heads of department were fulfilling their professional leadership role. These areas included planning ahead, leading the department team, developing effective communication, supporting, and monitoring teachers.

Some heads of department were carrying out their monitoring role effectively. However, some found it challenging because teachers opposed both planned and unplanned class visits. Also, senior teachers and those who were chronologically older than the department head were not willing to do lesson plans and have their classes observed. Heads of department complained that in addition to the age differentiation, the time to monitor teachers was not always available. One head of department said she was unable to do much monitoring because of the time constraint. The strategy perceived as most effective is unscheduled visits, but its effectiveness was limited since it did not allow the entire lesson to be observed. The head of religious education explained that she was very unhappy because she was not able to offer the kind of supervision her teachers needed, specially the new members of her department.

Heads of department were aware of their team building responsibility, and had developed team-building strategies. However, the younger heads of department or those inexperienced in the position were experiencing some problems leading departments which had older teachers.

Heads of department explained that they were expected to provide professional leadership for their department and this varied depending on the size of the department and the number of classes taught, as indicated in table 4.3.

Table 4.3 The number of sessions taught and number of teachers supervised by the head of department

Subject Department	No. of years in teaching	No. of years in Position	No. of sessions taught	No. of teachers supervised
Chemistry	31	10	12	4
Physics	30	20	18	3
Religious Education	15	14	17	4
Spanish	16	12	16	4
Geography	20	9	20	4

In addition to their professional responsibility, heads of department were charged with the responsibility of organizing various forms of extracurricular activities. In addition, heads of department were placed in charge of various non teaching areas of the school, for example, the tuck shop, graduation and organizing prayer meetings. Some heads of department noted that because they were not likely to say 'no' to the principal's requests, they were given more and more responsibilities. The volume of work heads of department are expected to carry out is viewed as work overload. They explained that whilst they were willing to perform the tasks assigned, they were also aware that in areas where they were unable to execute these tasks well, they might be viewed as ineffective by members of their school community.

One area of professional leadership with which subject teachers were disgruntled was with the level of delegation. It was felt among subject teachers that heads of department were unwilling to delegate aspects of their professional leadership role. Heads of department on the other hand, confessed that they were reluctant to delegate because they were afraid of the task not being done properly and therefore they would look incompetent to both their peers and members of senior management.

A major challenge to the professional leadership role of heads of department was the promotion process. They indicated that no specific system of promotion existed. In explaining how she was promoted, one head of department spoke about being in the right place at the right time. Another said she was transferred from one department where she was head for about ten years to the department that she currently heads. The principal explained that she used her own system of promotion and that it depended on how individual subject teachers performed. The principal, Mrs. Manderson, said she usually identifies teachers who showed the potential to offer something more if and when promoted. Subject teachers selected for the head of department position are therefore asked to assist in an unofficial capacity until a permanent position becomes available.

Department Culture

Heads of department explained that although the orientation of new teachers was done generally by a group of senior members of staff, individual departments also had their specific form of orientation. Various strategies were used to initiate new teachers. One head of department noted that she explained to new teachers how they were to relate to their colleagues and the students, and how this would impact upon their role. The head of religious education said most of the members of her department are past students of the school and therefore initiating them was not too difficult.

Heads of department shared a collaborative department culture. It was strongly felt by one head of department that her department was closely knit and she attributed this to the physical layout of the school and the location of the department's staffroom. The location of the staffroom provided the opportunity for teachers to meet frequently and informally. Therefore, the head of department and teachers could have small talk on any issue between classes and this contributed to the forging of a collegial department.

Another head of department indicated that her department members all had lunch together when this was possible. Heads of department indicated that teachers developed a strong collaborative spirit when they worked on projects together and shared materials.

While most heads of department had positive comments, some related negative experiences. One head of department said she did not consider her department to be collaborative, because the teachers in the department did not get along well with each other. Whilst several factors may have contributed to this, she blamed it on the grade levels that teachers taught, for example, teachers who taught grades 10-11 felt superior to those who taught grades 7-9. The head of chemistry said the grade levels teachers taught was not important as she occasionally moved teachers up or down the grades and this was not seen as promotion or demotion.

There was a strong concern for students' academic performance among all the heads of department. The head of physics said that although students were not as keen in her subject area as in previous years, efforts should be made to encourage them. Another head of department spoke about the importance of having the students believing in themselves.

Micropolitics

Heads of department recognised that there were several areas of their roles and functions which contributed to micropolitical issues in their schools. One area which was popular to all the heads of department was the leadership style of the principal and her shifting micropolitical orientation. Although heads of department all agreed that the principal displayed open and facilitative leadership tendencies, this was not always the

case. Heads of departments complained that the principal occasionally shifted from her democratic leadership style to a somewhat closed leadership style when it suited her. Heads of department felt uncomfortable with the shifting micropolitical orientation of their principal, since they could not be assured of how she would react in any particular situation.

Decision making was another area of concern among some heads of department. Some heads of department actively participated in the decision making process, but others did not do so. One head of department explained that although she was involved in the decision making process, she questioned whether her contribution was of any significance. Heads of department also questioned whether decisions made in their management meetings were accepted by senior management. They also argued that sometimes senior management consulted middle leaders, but this was only for the records as the suggestions from the middle leaders were not normally accepted by senior management.

Along with the lack of decision making was the general lack of autonomy and support from the principal. One department head spoke about the principal not acting on her recommendations when asked to appraise teachers in her department. Another head of department felt that the selection of teachers for the department should involve the head of department.

The issue of favouritism was identified by two heads of department. One indicated that she had worked with the principal for over thirty years and therefore had some influence over the decisions the principal made. The head of department explained that she was one of a group of seven senior teachers who shared this relationship with the principal. This close type of relationship between the principal and some heads of department borders on micropolitical conflicts. The head of physics felt that the principal was partial in how she treated all members of her senior staff.

The unsystematic promotion process was also disconcerting to some heads of department. One teacher explained that although she eventually developed a clear understanding of her role and functions, she struggled initially in the position. In addition, access to the relevant training was not available and this added to the challenges she encountered in the position.

SECTION TWO

Similarities and Differences across the Three Case Schools

The research on middle leaders was conducted in three distinct types of secondary schools in Jamaica. The findings indicate that there are some issues common to heads of department in all three school types. Also, there were issues which occurred in two of the school types while some issues which were unique to a particular one. A summary of these similarities and differences is presented under the categories, professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics.

Professional Leadership

Several sub-themes were identified under the theme professional leadership; these are the academic qualification of teachers, the promotion process, heads of department as exemplary leaders, work overload and the need for training of heads of department.

The Academic Qualification of Teachers

A common feature of the three school types was the professional qualification of teachers. As indicated in table 4.1, teachers' qualification across the three school types ranged from a Certificate in Teaching (Certificate Trained), to those with a Diploma in Teaching along with a Post Graduate Degree. The certificate trained teachers are those who completed their teacher training qualification some years ago, and have not upgraded their qualification since that time. The percentage of certificate trained teachers across the three case schools was insignificant, with the technical and upgraded high schools recording 1.5% and 0.5% respectively.

A small percentage of teachers were also referred to as Pre-Trained, with the highest being 2% recorded in the technical high school and 0.5% recorded in both the upgraded and traditional high schools. Teachers classified as Pre-Trained do not have any formal training in teaching.

The Graduate Pre-trained teachers have completed a bachelor's Degree in a subject discipline, but have no formal training in teacher education. The percentages of Graduate Pre-Trained teachers recorded in the case schools were highest in the traditional high school, with 2.5%, while 1% was reported in the other two school types.

The percentages of Graduate Trained was significant across the three school types, with the highest of 15.5% recorded in the technical high school and 14% in the upgraded and traditional high schools. Teachers, who are referred to as Graduate Trained, are the holders of both a bachelor's degree in a subject discipline and also a Diploma in Teaching. The category common to all three school types was the Diploma Trained teachers. A very high percentage was recorded in all three case schools, which reported 79%, 72% and 80.5% respectively in the technical, upgraded and traditional high schools.

The category in table 4.1, which is referred to as 'others' may include teachers who hold other types of educational qualification that fall outside the five classifications listed. Since the categories listed range from teachers who have no formal qualification to those who have a Bachelor Degree and a Diploma in Teaching, the 'other' types of qualification may have included post graduate qualifications.

Table 4.1 indicates the various types of educational qualification distributed across the three case schools. One observation is that teachers with similar qualifications are found in the three school types. The equitable distribution of qualified teachers across the three school types is based on the fact that all high schools prepare students to sit various subjects in external examinations including Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), the General Certificate of Examination Ordinary Level (GCE O'Level), the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and the Associated Examination Board (AEB).

Additionally, in the traditional high schools, a sixth form programme is offered which prepares students to sit advanced subjects in both the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) and the General Certificate of Examinations Advanced Level (GCE A 'Level). In some cases, Pre-trained graduates are used in scarce subject areas for the advanced level examinations.

As indicated in the case schools, teachers are highly qualified to offer secondary education in the three secondary school types in Jamaica.

The Promotion Process

A common feature among thirteen of the fifteen heads of department was the unsystematic process of promoting teachers. The principals in all three school types explained that in the absence of a policy on promoting teachers they were forced to

develop their own. The principals of the upgraded and technical high schools were autocratic in the promotion policies they developed. The principal of the technical high school promoted teachers who were committed to his agenda and possibly persons he could manipulate.

The principal of the upgraded high school was resolute that teachers would only be promoted if they showed interest in the students, commitment to the school, and had the competencies to lead their department. He also indicated that years of service or special favours were not considered when promoting teachers. This principal was accused by three heads of department of having them in an acting position indefinitely.

The principal in the traditional high school developed a democratic approach to the promotion of her teachers. She used a system which is similar to succession planning in which she identified teachers who showed commitment to the students and were willing to serve the school in an unofficial capacity, until a post became available. Although teachers were not remunerated in the post, they were offered a bursary when additional funds were available.

Exemplary Leaders

Subject teachers in all three schools said their heads of department were exemplary leaders. From the interview data, it was noted that heads of department displayed professional leadership role in their ability to employ strategic thinking to various functions in their departments. For example, they were keen on developing strategies including the reward system to motivate teachers. In strengthening their department team, heads of department ensured that teachers were given tasks that matched their abilities. While efforts were made to empower staff generally, new teachers were given special attention and given advice on how to relate to the students, especially the boys.

Heads of department were also involved in decision-making to varying degrees. In the technical high school, heads of department spoke about planning and developing programmes they thought would benefit the students, even though their principals were not supportive of their plans. One head of department organised a meeting for students sitting the CXC examinations. Another head of department organised students based on their abilities.

A greater level of autonomy was observed among heads of department in the traditional high school. One head of department informed the school's administration about when teachers were to be moved up or down the grades. Some were also considered as having significant influence on the principal, to the extent that they were seen as managing upwards.

Delegation Among Heads of Department

A major difference in the leadership among heads of department in the three school types was the level of delegation of duties. Heads of department in the traditional high schools seemed less likely to delegate compared to their counterparts in the technical and upgraded high schools. One possible reason for the high level of delegation in the technical and upgraded high schools could have been the two shifts system. The shift system has created the need for heads of department to have a member of staff on the opposite shift deputizing in her absence.

The reluctance of heads of department in the traditional high school to delegate responsibilities to members of their department could have resulted from the fear that teachers may not complete their tasks properly, which would have caused the head of department to be perceived as ineffective.

Effective Communication

Heads of department across the three school types developed various strategies for maintaining effective communication with the teachers in their departments. Among the strategies used were informal meetings, rotating the chairperson of meetings using the 'we' concept. There were, however, cases in the technical and upgraded high schools where the young or inexperienced heads of department felt challenged by the senior members of staff and those with longer service in the department. Heads of department were quite comfortable with the open and responsive form of communication which existed among teachers and themselves. However, there was one incident of ineffective communication in the upgraded high school, where the principals did not communicate directly with the head of department. The head of department said he was unsure of the reason for the principal's behaviour.

Work Overload

Work overload was common in all school types but the incidence was more prevalent in the traditional high school. Heads of department were engaged in four broad areas of work which included, teaching, administrative, supervision, extracurricular as well as assisting with special functions of the school, for example, graduation. Some heads of department were given special responsibilities based on their level of expertise, for example, overseeing the tuck shop, book-room and the school plant. The high level of work overload among the heads of department in the traditional high school might have resulted from the fact that the school does not operate a two shift system and students are involved in a variety of extracurricular activities which are coordinated by heads of department. Secondly, the nature of the school curriculum demands that a number of different programmes are created, some of which are organised by heads of department.

Whilst some heads of department willingly accepted the increased workload, they were not happy to distribute this to their teachers. One department head indicated that she became very angry with the administration when her teachers were being forced to teach beyond the required number of classes. Another said she usually took the additional classes herself rather than timetabling other members in her department. There were also cases of heads of department carrying a wide range of non-teaching related activities.

The Need for Training

The need for training was common among all school types. Heads of department complained that very little effort was being made to ensure that they received adequate training. The fact that training is usually offered during the academic year might have prevented some heads of department from benefitting, since it would mean time away from their classes. However, training programmes were identified in the different school types. Heads of department in the technical high school have benefited from the Technical High School Development Project, while the heads of department in the upgraded school were exposed to training offered through the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) programme. No specific training programme was identified in the traditional high school.

Department Culture

Evidence of a distinct department culture was observed in the case schools. Five sub-themes were identified, namely, initiating new members of staff, forging a collaborative department culture, developing a culture of care for students, developing a culture of concern for others, and the existence of a culture continuum.

Initiating New Members of Staff

Heads of department recognised the need for initiating teachers new to the department. Various strategies were used. In the upgraded high school, heads of department encouraged teachers discretely and identified areas in the department in which they were interested and were willing to work.

In the technical high school, teachers were given tips on how to relate to the students, especially the boys. Another head of department spoke about having one-to-one sessions with teachers in an effort to assist them in their content and pedagogical skills.

Forging a Collaborative Department Culture

Several strategies were identified which aided the development of a collaborative department culture. Rotating the persons who led out in department meetings and sharing materials, were common practices in the technical high school. One head of department mentioned the reward system which she developed and which she claimed proved very effective in galvanising teachers in her department.

In the upgraded high school, heads of department spoke about developing social activities among members, for example, giving gifts to teachers on special occasions, including birthdays, and having treats at department meetings. One head of department attributed her collaborative department to the location of the department's staff room, which contributed to teachers being able to meet and share informally.

Developing a Culture of Care for Students

There were several examples where heads of department demonstrated high expectation from students. Using the data collected from subject teachers (N= 202), it was noted that subject teachers were encouraged to show commitment to their

students. The interview data recorded heads of department reminding students that they cared about their academic performance as well as their welfare.

Heads of department in all three case schools mentioned a wide range of challenges students were experiencing. Among these challenges were economic constraints, demotivation, lack of assistance from home and various distractions. The challenges experienced by students contributed to the level of under-performance in the three schools.

Developing a Culture of Concern for Others

Heads of department demonstrated concern for teachers, both new and old, as well as their students. The head of department in the technical high school spoke about how she recognised the different teaching techniques of teachers, especially new teachers, and used them to improve the performance of students. Using the teaching techniques developed by teachers, especially new teachers, helped to show appreciation and recognition of individual abilities. On the other hand, in the upgraded school, teachers who were having problems developing their lessons or unable to deliver their lessons confidently, were offered assistance.

The Department Culture Continuum

While the experiences that heads of department related were generally positive, there were negative ones as well. These experiences reflected the different culture types found across the three case schools. Following on Hargreaves (1995), four culture types were identified, namely: individualism, collegiality, contrived collegiality and balkanised culture. A fifth culture type identified as toxic culture (Peterson & Deal, 1998) was also evident. Examples of the various culture types included the following: head of

department refusing to initiate new teachers, teachers in the department did not socialize, and some teachers only did some tasks when they were given specific directives.

Micropolitics

Issues were identified across the three school types which created conflicts between the principals and heads of department. Among these issues were the leadership style of the principal, the shifting micropolitical orientation of the principals, heads of department lack of involvement in decision- making, favouritism and the shift system.

The Leadership Style of Principals

There were differences in the leadership styles among the principals in the three case schools. In the traditional high school, the principal was referred to as facilitative; while in the technical and upgraded high schools, the principals were viewed as manipulative. In the technical and upgraded high schools, teachers used words including 'one man show' and 'autocratic' to describe their principals. Also, the principal of the technical high school indicated his desire to implement some decisions in the school without the ratification of the school board.

The Shifting Micropolitical Orientation of Principals

Heads of department in all three school types complained about the shifting micropolitical orientations of their principals. The principals of the technical and upgraded high schools were described as operating within a manipulative paradigm; one head of department shared various experiences in which her principal tried to manipulate her. The traditional high school principal operated within a facilitative

paradigm. The shifting micropolitical orientation of principals was influenced by several factors including the length of time in the position and the level of control the person had over the situation.

Lack of Involvement in Decision-Making

Decision-making was a major concern among the heads of department in both the technical and upgraded schools. These heads of department shared mixed views on their levels of involvement in decision-making. Some spoke about making decisions within their department but not being allowed to contribute to school wide decision-making. Others spoke about sitting on selection panels but not being allowed to contribute to the process. In the traditional high school, most heads of department spoke positively about their involvement in decision-making. One teacher described how she was able to have the vice principal move a teacher to another level in order to develop the teacher's competencies to teach at various levels. There were however two cases of heads of department expressing concern about the principal not supporting them on decisions regarding teachers' assessment.

Heads of department in the traditional and technical schools spoke about the strategies they used to influence the decisions of their principals. In the technical high school one head of department explained that she organised her programmes through the principal's office. In the traditional high school there was the issue of favouritism and the 'group of seven' senior teachers who were part of the principal's in-group that influenced decisions. The problem of delayed promotion was common in the upgraded high school, where three acting heads of department spoke about being treated unfairly by their principal and having to refer the matter to their teachers' union.

The Shift System

There was also the issue of the shift system in the technical and upgraded schools. Teachers in these schools complained about the challenges they encountered in providing effective leadership for their departments across the two shifts. They indicated that they had developed various coping strategies including working overtime, working across both shifts and delegating to a teacher on the opposite shift. These strategies allowed the heads of department to maintain some level of control over the problems caused by the shift system.

Conclusion

The researcher used a tripartite model to examine the roles and functions of academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica. The model which was discussed in Chapter Two acknowledges that academic middle leaders are consciously or unconsciously using their knowledge of professional leadership, school culture, and micropolitics to navigate the complexities of leading their departments. However, academic middle leaders in the case study schools are facing numerous challenges in their position. The challenges are partially due to the fact that the academic middle leaders are not sufficiently prepared for the role and in some cases are specifically selected by the principal. As such, they are being challenged by their principals, other heads of department, senior members of their department and even new members of staff.

Principals, recognising the limitations of their heads of department, exploit the latter's position by restricting their involvement in decision making, while adding more work to their portfolio. In an uncharted environment where the rules are unwritten, principals

continue to respond to situations that favour them. For example, having senior members of staff in an acting position for over five years could be viewed as a form of exploitation, and disregard for the teachers' dignity.

In the turbulent environment in which heads of department operate, academic middle leaders employ various strategies based on their knowledge of professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics. Thus, they developed tactical manoeuvres, which may also include pre-empting attacks from principals, other middle leaders and teachers within their department. The case data indicated that heads of department used tactical measures at times to secure the compliance of various members of staff. Heads of department are not afraid of open confrontation, for example, heads of department using their teachers' union to arbitrate their cases. Another head of department used a more subtle means to achieve her objective; she decided to launch her ideas as the principal's. Even when confronting new teachers, the academic middle leaders were able to quickly assess their environment and decide on the strategy to be employed.

The research data have indicated that there are various aspects of the middle leaders' role that are interconnected through professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics. Heads of department in all three school types employed a combination of strategies at various times, either consciously or unconsciously to address issues within their department or with their principals. The interplay of professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics is clearly seen as heads of department execute their middle leadership role.

Special Note

**Page 167 missing from
the original**

CHAPTER FIVE

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Introduction

In this chapter the combined qualitative and quantitative data are presented and discussed under the theme, Professional Leadership. The composite data comprised a survey of subject teachers N=202 across six high schools in Jamaica. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three principals and fifteen heads of department in the case study schools. In addition, observations of management meetings were carried out at each case study site. The chapter is divided into two sections. In Section One, the concept of Professional Leadership is first explained. The main themes that emerged from the data are then discussed; these include the promotion process, exemplary leadership, communication, leading the department's team and the monitoring role of the academic middle leader.

In Section Two, the challenges to the head of department professional leadership role are presented and discussed. These challenges are, challenge to the promotion process, challenges in leading the department's team, challenge to the monitoring role of the academic middle leader, lack of time, work overload, managing across the two shifts, and heads of department level of preparation.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, a tripartite leadership model was developed to examine how middle leaders are carrying out their roles and functions in the three case schools in Jamaica. The tripartite leadership model was therefore developed to explore the middle leadership realm through the lenses of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics. Examining the middle leadership from these perspectives provides further insights in how heads of department think and function. For example,

researchers such as Earley & Fletcher-Campbell, (1989) argue that middle leaders were too preoccupied with routine tasks to offer strategic thinking. On the other hand, researchers including Glover & Gleeson, (1997) and Wise, (1999) have indicated that the middle leader's role was changing. One important aspect of their leadership role is professional leadership.

Defining Professional Leadership

Professional leadership according to Brown & Rutherford, (1998, p. 79) "is a developmental role that focuses on improving teaching, learning and achievement in the department". The professional leadership role of the department head is multidimensional as outlined in the Standards of the Teacher Training Agency (1998). For example, heads of department employ strategic thinking (Davies, & Davies, 2004) in their role. Additionally, they are expected to monitor teachers (Wise, 2001), lead a team of teachers (Witziers *et al.*, 1999) and assist in the decision making process (Glover *et al.*, 1998). The level of professional leadership the head of department offers has contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the department (Brown & Rutherford, 1998; Harris, 1996; Sammons *et al.*, 1996).

It is argued that although heads of department spend much of their time teaching, they also engage in leading and managing their departments (Brown & Rutherford, 1998). This entails applying strategic leadership (Aubrey-Hopkins & James, 2002). Turner (2003) argues that while all subject leaders are not generally involved in whole school planning, they are involved in implementing strategies at the department level. Concurring, Aubrey-Hopkins & James, (2002) note that "as strategists at the classroom level, they are centre stage in the emotional and political drama of the school" (p. 318). A strategy is defined as "encompassing direction-setting, broad aggregated agendas, a perspective to view the future and a template against which to evaluate current activities" Davies & Davies, (2004, p.29). Leadership on the other hand is a process

which leads to the achievement of desired purpose (Davies & Davies, 2004). By virtue of their position, role and functions, heads of department are engaging in the application of strategic thinking within their department and to some extent the wider school community. Endorsing this view, Brown *et al.*, (2000, p. 241) argue:

The climate in most secondary schools in the UK today would appear to empower middle managers to have the opportunity to contribute to school-wide policy, enabling them to have a significant impact on management concerns beyond the sphere of their individual responsibilities.

Whilst there are variations in how heads of department perceive and execute their role, indications are that the position provides the opportunity for them to apply various aspects of leadership, including strategic leadership.

In addition to offering strategic leadership, heads of department are also perceived as exemplary teachers who are able to offer leadership to both students and teachers in their department and by extension to others in the wider school community. Their areas of responsibility include policy formation and organizational transformation (Bolam, 1999) and group thinking in formal and informal settings (Turner, 2004). In addition, there is the situational component, which identifies heads of department as operating within defined parameters, namely, their work environment and the relationship with followers (Yukl, 1994) and also with their principals. Hoy & Miskel, (2001) add that these leaders should be able to exert intentional influence over others to organize activities in their institutions.

The professional leadership role of heads of department identified by subject teachers (N=202) in the quantitative data reflected the extent to which heads of department plan ahead, the level of training department heads have obtained and the extent to which heads of department delegate aspects of their role. From the qualitative data,

indications are that middle leaders are engaged in various aspects of professional leadership through the roles and functions they undertake. These include, the communication process (Butt & Retallick, 2000), leading the department's team (Turner, 1996), monitoring subject teachers (Glover *et al.*, 1998; Wise, 1999), overcoming issues relating to work overload (Turner, 2000) and managing across the two shifts (Bolam & Deal, 1998). Underpinning the middle leader's professional leadership role is the promotion process (Adey, 2000; Fletcher-Campbell, 2003). The promotion process is considered as one area of importance and therefore is discussed in light of the implications it has on the professional leadership function of middle leaders. The chapter closes with a discussion on the level of training (Adey, 2000) heads of department received prior to or while in the position and the extent this was effective. The first area to be discussed is the promotion process.

SECTION ONE

Heads of Department Professional Leadership

The Promotion Process

The promotion of subject teachers to the head of department position varies in different countries. In the United Kingdom the post may be advertised nationally and teachers are recruited from any school for the position (Capel *et al.*, 2000) or they are recruited internally from their individual schools (Fletcher-Campbell, 2003). The promotion process symbolises the upholding of professional standard practices within the organization. It is also very important, since promotion to a middle leader's position means that the head of department has the potential to offer leadership across a section of the institution. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how principals promote teachers to the head of department position.

In the Jamaican context teachers are promoted internally and the principal usually makes all senior appointments that are later ratified by the school board (Education Act of Jamaica, 1980). Concurring with Adey (2000), heads of department in the case study schools view the promotion process as being tied to the teacher's knowledge of subject content and his/her ability to apply the appropriate pedagogical skills. While principals may use these criteria as general guidelines, there is no established system of promoting teachers in Jamaican secondary schools. Principals are empowered to make their selection arbitrarily and submit the candidate's name to the school board for ratification (Education Act of Jamaica, 1980). In most cases the school board accepts the principal's decision without reservation.

The principals interviewed in all three case schools were very clear on the role expectations of their heads of department. However, they also expressed concerns regarding the competencies of some heads of department and questioned their ability to offer professional leadership to members in their departments. In all three case schools the principals commented on the absence of any clear system of promoting teachers to middle leadership positions. The principals indicated that they were forced to develop their own system of promoting teachers, since the Ministry of Education had not provided them with one.

In the technical high school, the principal indicated that members of staff were asked to apply for the head of department position once it became available. However, he added that whilst seniority in respect to years of service and academic qualification were criteria for the post, other factors including the teacher's availability to serve in the position for the next four to five years, along with her ability to lead were also considered.

Sometimes I would give them different tasks and see how well they manage.... just to get a feel of what they would be like in a more senior leadership position (Principal, Technical High School).

This principal also explained that he usually preferred teachers who were supportive of his plans and who he could rely on. He further added that although he selected teachers for senior positions, the school board ratified his decisions. The selection process in this technical high school appears to be subjective, since teachers who are to be promoted must first satisfy the principal's arbitrary sets of criteria.

In the upgraded high school the principal seemed not to be influenced by arbitrary factors. In explaining how teachers are promoted he noted:

While some teachers expect to be considered for promotion based on their years of service, this is not my policy, nor will I succumb to the route of friendship. I expect quality leadership from teachers (Principal, Upgraded High School).

However, he contended that a major challenge was the competencies of the teachers who are expecting to be given leadership position. He lamented that some heads of department have not attained the level of competencies needed to lead a department.

In the traditional high school the issue of competence was also raised. The principal explained that promotion among teachers to the head of department position was very difficult because of their inability to lead.

Over the years we have not looked at promoting a teacher because of years of service but because of what the teacher can offer... In our minds

we decide that a teacher can offer something after he/she becomes head of department (Principal, Traditional High School).

The principal further explained that she uses a simple strategy in promoting teachers, which involves identifying subject teachers who are willing to make a difference and asking these teachers to understudy the head of department. She argues that since the understudy post does not carry any form of remuneration some teachers are not interested.

The principals of all three schools had established their own criteria in selecting teachers. Interestingly, while the principals of the technical and upgraded schools explain their criteria, it appeared that the final decision was theirs, while the principal in the traditional high school, referred to 'we' in making decisions. This 'we' concept, suggests some agreement with others, and therefore some level of objectivity in the selection process.

Conversely, it would appear that the other two principals acted more autocratically in administering the promotion process. This argument is consistent with the view that principals may promote a teacher, if the teacher satisfies the criteria of the principal (Fletcher-Campbell, 2003). Fletcher-Campbell, (2003, p. 6) further argues that:

Young staffs were often earmarked for promotion by virtue of their performance in the classroom, combined with their willingness to take on additional tasks.

Whilst the reasons for promoting teachers in Jamaican secondary schools may vary from school-to-school and even within schools, it stands to reason that principals may not always select the most competent teacher for the job. According to Glover *et al.*, (1998) not all heads of department are promoted

because they are expert teachers; sometimes promotion may be strategic or personal. Fletcher-Campbell (2003) states that a principal may act strategically by promoting a teacher who has the ability to build the department's team, or strengthen the school's culture.

On the other hand, promoting a teacher because he/she is supportive of the principal's policies may be viewed as satisfying one's own personal agenda. The opposite may also exist, where a teacher is not promoted because he/she presents some challenge to the principal's leadership.

Promoting or failing to promote teachers because of personal reasons may undermine the effectiveness of the organisation. Schools are highly bureaucratic organisations (Hoy & Miskel, 2001) and therefore operate on predetermined guidelines. Therefore, how teachers are promoted reflects the level of bureaucracy and underpins adherence to professional standards. The absence of bureaucratic principles and professional standards in the promotion process may challenge the power relation between principal and heads of department.

The interview data collected from principals and heads of department revealed that the process of promoting teachers was inconsistent across all three school types and also across departments in particular schools. Although principals in all three school types explained that seniority was no longer a criterion for promotion, the interview data revealed otherwise. The interview data indicated that heads of department were promoted through various means, including seniority, consensus, default and orchestration. These promotion processes will be further discussed.

Seniority

The question of seniority seems to be a strong determinant of promotion among some department heads in all three school types. The traditional view of promotion tied to a teacher's years of service was detected.

I have worked in the department for a long time and at one point all the older teachers had left and when the principal wanted a new head, since I was the only senior person in the department, I was appointed to the post (Head of Mathematics, Technical High School).

In another school, the head of department explained that the previous head of department had left and the principal wanted a senior person to fill the vacancy, so she was shifted to the physics department.

I was head of another department for about ten years and then the principal shifted me to the physics department. I think she wanted someone who was experienced, so she chose me (Head of Physics, Traditional High School).

The fact that a large number of the heads of department had worked in their schools for over fifteen years may have been one of the reasons some were selected for the head of department position. In this case, we can understand why seniority could have been used as a promotion criterion. However, selection based on seniority is a poor method of promoting teachers since it does not ensure that the most qualified teacher is promoted.

Nonetheless, no system of promotion is foolproof and there are no guarantees that the best person will be placed in the position even after the most rigorous recruitment

process. A transparent selection process for a formal position reduces the risk of the least qualified person getting the position and provides a sense of objectivity in the promotion process. Also, an objective promotion process reduces the fear among colleagues that the head of department may not be objective, especially in matters relating to the principal.

Consensus

Another means through which teachers are promoted was consensus. The head of department in one school explains:

The previous head of department recommended that I act in her position and the other teachers in the department agreed (Head of Business, Upgraded High School).

Whilst consensus is a more collaborative approach to promoting a teacher, it also acknowledges the fact that the teacher most favoured may not be the most suitable.

On the other hand, a collective decision suggests acceptance of, and support for the incumbent. Popularity, however, may not necessarily be associated with effectiveness. While consensus can be seen as advantageous in getting a greater degree of support from department members, it may have its drawbacks. It may cause both the department members and the principal to expect the department head to offer them some privileges in exchange for their support.

The notion of the leader and subordinates exchanging favours is a common practice in organisations and is referred to by different names including the 'Leader Member Exchange Theory' (LMX) Robins (2001). The theory involves the leader offering certain privileges to selected members of staff in exchange for special benefits.

Default

Promotion by default was also common in some schools. One head of department explains how she was promoted:

There was a shift in our staffing... a teacher went off on study leave...the head of department was promoted to vice-principal and I was chosen head of department. I am not sure what was used to measure my performance (Head of English, Technical High School).

A similar situation was observed in another school where the principal handed the position to the teacher because she happened to be there and seemed most suitable for the job.

She describes the experience:

I was called to the principal's office one day and told that Miss X was leaving and they needed someone who could manage, and since I was the only person there at the time, I got the job (Head of History, Upgraded High School).

Another head of department in the same school shared a similar experience. She explains:

I was told that the principal wanted to see me and I went and he told me that this person is leaving and that he sees me as someone whom he thinks is capable of doing the job. I was then asked if I was willing to take it on and I said yes. And that is how I became head of department (Head Home Economics, Upgraded High School).

In the traditional high school a similar situation is revealed. The head of department explains:

Well I don't think it was a selection process per se. When I came in this department, the head of department was going off on pre-retirement leave and the other five teachers who were here previously had all left, so I was the only one person left to fill the vacancy (Head of Religious Education, Traditional High School).

The problem with this form of promotion is that the person who is promoted might not be suitable for the post. Unlike consensus and seniority based promotion, which suggest some form of experience and group acceptance, promotion by default offers very little evidence of the incumbent having sufficient prior experience and knowledge of the requirements of the post. Also, there is no indication of the department's acceptance of the prospective leader. Being in the right place at the right time, should hardly account for one getting promoted to a senior position in a school.

Orchestration

The final process of promotion identified from the interview data was orchestration. This process of selection is akin to succession planning; see for example, Rhodes & Brundrett, (2005). Nurturing teachers for specific positions is also discussed by Gronn & Lacey (2004). However, they view positioning more as a case of aspirant leaders demonstrating their ability to fulfil the requirements of the intended post.

Placing a teacher in an acting capacity to understudy the head of department may also be referred to as 'growing your own' (Fletcher-Campbell, 2003). Orchestration was observed in both the technical and traditional high schools. Two principals and two heads of department mentioned instances where orchestration was used as a promoting strategy. One head of department in the technical high school had this to say:

When I came to the school I was placed in the lower school and then my HoD (Head of Department) was promoted to vice principal and the assistant head was asked to be the HoD. I was then asked to serve as deputy to the HoD. This lasted for five to six years. My HoD eventually resigned and I was asked to take up the position of HoD (Head Home Economics, Technical High School).

The principal in the traditional high school who used the process of orchestration for promoting teachers explained that the teacher had to be carefully selected and was then nurtured to fulfil the expectations of the role.

I usually observe the teacher to see how she operates and if she's committed, then I would ask her if she would join us (Principal, Traditional High School).

The principal further explained that although the teacher is asked to join the middle leadership team, the position is unofficial and offers no remuneration and therefore only those who are willing are asked to participate. She explained that the Education Regulations of Jamaica determine the ratio of subject teachers to middle leaders. However, she added that because the school is a very large one, they need the additional help.

I explain to them that the post is unofficial and there is no remuneration, but if they are interested and willing, the experience will help them in the future (Principal, Traditional High School).

The principal also explains that when the school has some extra money, for example, profits from a fund raising venture, these teachers are given a bursary. Such benefits she sees as an incentive for them.

The strategy of pre-selecting and training teachers for certain positions is a management strategy common in industry. Pre-selecting and training teachers for positions in schools is not new. Taylor (1992) describes how in some schools in England, the headteachers identified teachers who appeared more willing to develop their abilities as leaders and were offered the post on that basis. In some small schools in UK, headteachers sometimes “grow” their own heads of department (Fletcher-Campbell, 2003). One of the features of orchestration is that teachers may not be paid during their training period, as was observed in the traditional high school.

Orchestration offers several advantages for both the individual and the school. Fletcher-Campbell (2003) explains that one benefit of orchestration to the school was value added. The individual would most likely get the post should the post-holder leave and that offers continuation within the department. Having a person familiar with the directions of the department eliminates the need for the incumbent to spend time understanding the sociology of the department members. Also, the prospective head of department would have had prior knowledge and experience in the role expectations and therefore might be better able to meet the challenges involved in leading the department.

One limitation to orchestration as a process of promoting teachers is the fact that it preselects teacher leaders before the time they are actually needed. Therefore, while teachers are ear-marked for certain positions, other more recent members of staff who might be more capable of leading the department may be over looked.

Exemplary Leadership

Leadership is acknowledged as an important feature of the role of the head of department (Bennett, 1995). Therefore, heads of department are expected to exhibit exemplary behaviour both to members of their department and to others within the wider school community (Sammons *et al.*, 1997). The leadership dynamics which head of department display relate to the level of self confidence they take to the post, along with the personal skills they might have acquired. Also, how they espouse leadership may be influenced by the department size (Busher & Harris, 1999) and its influence. The leadership role of the head of department can be a challenging experience for many reasons, including the fact that heads of department are expected to monitor their colleagues. Such monitoring process is a task they find quite uncomfortable (Glover *et al.*, 1998). Teachers expect their heads of department to be teachers and not leaders charged with the responsibility of monitoring their performance (Earley & Fletcher-Campbell, 1989).

Using a single questionnaire, subject teachers were asked to rank their perceptions of their heads of department leadership role. From the quantitative data, it was observed that teachers (N=202) across the six schools were satisfied with the professional leadership of their department head. A mean score of 2.1 was recorded from a possible score of 3.0, which represents a very high degree of satisfaction with the effectiveness of the head of department. Several sub-themes emerged from the data which demonstrate the head of department leadership qualities, namely, planning ahead, accessing additional training and delegating to team members. These areas are discussed in relation to the three school types.

Head of department plans ahead

Subject teachers across all three school types felt that their heads of department exercised professional leadership in different ways. For example, 74% of subject

teachers in the technical and upgraded high schools felt that their heads of department planned ahead. The response in the traditional high school was much higher, being 82%. Whilst the overall percentage that disagreed was insignificant, only 9.7%, nearly a quarter of the teachers, 24.1%, were undecided, as indicated by table 5.1. This lack of response could be viewed as an indication of their indecisiveness.

Table 5.1 Teachers were asked whether their heads of department planned ahead (N=202)

	School Types			
Scale	Technical	Upgraded	Traditional	Total
Strongly Agree	32.2%	31.0%	41.1%	34.3%
Agree	42.5%	43.1%	41.1%	42.3%
Undecided	12.6%	24.1%	17.9%	17.4%
Disagree	8.0%	1.7%	-----	4.0%
Strongly Disagree	4.6%	0%	-----	2.0%

Planning is a key ingredient of professional leadership within the department. Such planning involves, strategic, long term and short term plans that incorporate all members. The high percentage of favourable responses suggests that heads of department are involved in various aspects of departmental planning, which is in keeping with their professional leadership role. However, the extent to which subject teachers are involved in different aspects of planning is questionable.

Heads of department refusal to delegate

Teachers across all three school types felt strongly that their heads of department are reluctant to delegate responsibilities, see table 5.2. Over 70% of the teachers in both the technical and upgraded high schools felt that their heads of department were not delegating enough responsibilities. A similar view was shared by over 89% of the teachers in the traditional high schools.

Table 5.2 Heads of department refusal to delegate

	School Types			
Scale	Technical	Upgraded	Traditional	Total
Strongly Agree	36.0%	26.8%	44.6%	35.9%
Agree	40.7%	46.4%	44.6%	43.4%
Undecided	10.0%	25.0%	5.4%	14.6%
Disagree	5.8%	1.8%	3.6%	4.0%
Strongly Disagree	3.5%	---	1.8%	2.0%

One important aspect of leadership is delegating responsibilities to subordinates or team members. The act of delegating demands the head of department understanding what and how to delegate (James-Reid, 2001), since only some aspects of the head's of department leadership role can be delegated. Furthermore, while the task can be delegated, the responsibility remains with the head of department. Delegating involves deploying teachers in positions that they can manage, and also providing the opportunity for the teacher to develop additional leadership competencies.

Deployment as an area of responsibility within the head of department professional leadership role is sometimes difficult to execute. This is primarily because subject teachers have their preferences for grade levels or classes, timetabled for specific times

of the school day, for example, early morning, mid day or the afternoon. Senior members of the department are usually more vocal with their preferences and tend to put added pressure on heads of department, especially when the head is relatively new in the position.

Delegation on the other hand offers numerous advantages to both the head of department and team members. One advantage of heads of department delegating to teachers is that they would have more time to attend to other aspects of their professional leadership roles, especially those that are not easily delegated. This is very important since many heads of department complain about the lack of time to execute their numerous functions. Brown (2000) holds the view that heads of department sometimes carry a heavy workload, largely due to their reluctance to delegate. Delegating tasks to teachers provides the opportunity for the head of department to assess the skills of the teacher with the aim of providing support to him or her.

Delegating tasks to members of the department serves as a useful strategy of empowerment, especially for teachers new to the department. Teachers develop a sense of loyalty to their department. Completing a task can create a feeling of satisfaction and instil a sense of pride in one's own accomplishment. Also, teachers are able to develop new skills while refining those they already possess. How teachers perform in their delegated roles will provide the opportunity for the head of department to assess the teacher's capabilities, in light of future assignments.

While delegating to team members has numerous advantages, some heads of department are reluctant to delegate. This may have resulted from the fear of subject teachers not completing a task properly, resulting in the head of department being viewed as ineffective. This conclusion seems logical, especially where heads of department assigned additional workload to themselves, rather than to other teachers. Pounder (1999) explains that there are three groups of teachers: one group will ensure

that the task is properly done; the second will not be concerned about the task and the third, while overzealous, might not have the competencies or the time to complete the task effectively.

The challenges to delegate are issues that heads of department need to confront, but also an indication of the complexity of their professional leadership role, which can be even more challenging for those new to the post (Bullock *et al.*, 1995) or insecure in the position. This, therefore, means that all heads of department need to be trained in various aspects of leadership, such as communication.

Communication

Another theme that emerged from the data which highlighted the professional leadership of heads of department was their level of communication. Communication is “a process by which information is exchanged between individuals and groups, through a common system of signs and behaviours” (Pang, 2003, p.117). Communication serves as the glue which holds the department together therefore, the success or failure of the organisation is dependent on the communication process (Hargie, Dickson & Tourish, 1999).

Subject teachers across the six schools agreed that their heads of department used effective communication strategies within their departments. The interview data identified examples when both formal and informal communication strategies were used with members of their departments, (See Appendix G). Formal strategies included regular department meetings, written notices and verbal requests. There were also cases where heads of department held informal discussions with teachers, mainly to provide feedback on their performance or on issues relating to the performance of students.

The level of communication which developed between heads of department and their teachers is referred to as “collegial communication” (Butt & Retallick, 2000, p. 23). Collegial communication strengthens the department’s effectiveness and offers the members a greater sense of confidence, growth and the desire to achieve. The level and type of communication varied across the three school types. A strong level of informal communication was prevalent in the traditional high school where teachers were able to meet at break times or between classes.

We are always meeting so they are always having mini-department meetings (Head of Chemistry, Traditional High School).

This head of department has created a cohesive group and members seem to share a common bond which is very good for teachers and students in the department. A cohesive work group thrives on open and effective communication.

A similar situation was observed in the technical high school.

We all meet one day of the week to have lunch together and this allows us to share what is happening in our classes or anything generally (Head of Home Economics, Technical High School).

The head of department further commented that the central location of the department’s staff room was an asset for the members because it provided them with somewhere close to meet and discuss various issues informally.

The positive communication that existed among heads of department and teachers in their department could have resulted from the level of openness shared. It appears that when the head of department is open to discuss issues with members of the department, there is a close bond. The willingness of the head of department to admit to failure, mistakes, and problems within the department can be viewed as a mark of a

truly professional person, one likely to receive much respect from subordinates (Savage, 1989). This was the case in the technical high school where the head of the home economics department explained that the members were aware of her limitations.

Teachers in the department are aware of the fact that the principal is autocratic and likes to have things done his way. Therefore, the fact that the department was unable to carry out some of its plans was not seen as ineffective leadership from the department's head (Head of Home Economics, Technical High School).

Communication at the department level is very important since it impinges on all aspects of work involving the department members. Also, communication at the individual and wider school levels can be challenging. For example, while the head of department is the team leader, he/she also has to relate to each teacher and offer the kind of support they need. The department head also has to establish effective communication with the department team, offering effective leadership. On a wider level, the head of department provides the link between the department and the senior management team. A two-way communication network is established and supported by the department head.

However, at each level there are challenges to effective communication. For example, differences may exist between the individual's and the department head's perceptions, or between that of the head of department and members of the senior management team. In any event, both parties would have developed strategies to ensure that a free communication network exists. Effective communication is not something easily achieved in all situations, as was explained by one head of head of department.

This head of department who was very unhappy with the level of communication between herself and the principal in the upgraded high school explained:

I am more concerned with how the principal communicates with me. He usually uses other persons to relate information to me. I have spoken to him about this but he has not changed (Head of Home Economics, Upgraded High School).

It appears that there is a poor level of communication between the principal and this particular member of staff. This may be reflective of the level of respect the principal has for this head of department. Respect for subordinates is among the many qualities of a good principal (Melenyzer ,1990). A lack of respect for the head of department may affect his/her sense of empowerment and generally undermines his/her political power within the department and across the school generally. This situation is one that could breed micropolitical conflicts since members of either side may be constantly trying to find ways of increasing their political advantage or avoiding situations in which they can be undermined.

One head of department from the upgraded high school indicated that she was very tactful when handling certain issues, for example, schemes of work. She explained that when schemes of work were due, she would announce this generally in her department meeting, reminding staff that this was a requirement from the Ministry of Education. The department head considered this approach more objective since she could not be accused of 'hitting' on a specific member of staff. This argument supports Aubrey-Hopkins & James (2002) view that, sometimes a departmental approach is more effective than speaking directly to the individual teacher, who might feel pressured by the head of department.

In the traditional high school, one head of department explained that she would casually remind staff about their schemes of work or the examination questions that are to be prepared and sent to the office. She would conclude her remarks by reminding colleagues that 'we can't afford to have the department looking bad'. This head uses the department spirit which members are willing to support. However, this strategy would only be effective in a situation where teachers work collaboratively. Developing and maintaining a vision of their department is a positive strategy. According to Busher & Saran (1994), the head of department's role includes both vision building and vision sharing among the department team. The challenge of developing effective communication within the department emphasises the complexity of the role of the academic middle leader, who not only initiates but also gets others to share this new vision.

The communication process offers several advantages to the department, including transmitting facts, exchanging information, influencing others and sharing the successes of the department (Bolman & Deal 1984). However, communication should be managed or regulated (Pang, 2003). For example, members at the same levels should have access to the same communication, thus, developing a sense of trust that will allow others to share power and work collectively at achieving the department's goals (Hackman, 1994). Furthermore, the use of small talk is also a powerful tool in building trust among colleagues in school (Harris, 1996).

Leading the Department's Team

Another aspect of the professional leadership role of the head of department is to organise, manage, and lead a team of teachers (Turner, 1996). Team leadership involves distributing aspects of the department's workload to members, based on their abilities and interests (Bell, 1992). The leader identifies the objectives to be achieved and mobilises the resources both, human and physical to that end (Kerry & Murdoch, 1993). Team development is being promoted as the means through which schools can

achieve positive outcomes (Bell, 1992) and is even being considered as the way forward in the management of schools in the future, (Ridden, 1992). Changes in how principals facilitate teams in school are also being promoted (Walker, 1994).

Heads of department in their interviews commonly referred to 'we', which suggests group cohesion. Heads of department by their position are team leaders. However, leading teams in schools demands some understanding of the mechanics of team leadership and their empowerment. One head of department explained how she empowers her department team.

I try to empower my teachers by using various strategies, for example, allowing different members to chair our department meetings. Sometimes I give them areas to research and present to the group at our meetings. When they return from conferences or individual training, I usually ask them to share the new knowledge with the other members of the department (Head of Business, Upgraded High School).

Another head of department noted:

I show them that I believe in them and try to identify potential conflicts before they reach crisis level. This involves keen observation of the teacher's work attitude with a view of identifying when help is needed. I try to reinforce the idea among the teachers that we operate as a team and when one cannot attend a class or will be absent, we should try and assist where we can (Head of Science, Technical High School).

Another had this to say:

The teachers in the department are close and tend to work together freely. We are always sharing ideas. You could say that we work as a team (Head Home Economics, Upgraded High School).

Another explained:

The strength of my department is the unity, I guess because we are a large department and we have to teach the whole school. We have meetings every month. We try to assist each other. We share ideas and we are able to tell each other what happens in our classes (Head of Language, Technical High School).

Heads of department in all three school types indicated the significance of team development and how they are using their department's team. Strategies to develop departmental teams varied across the three school types. For example, frequent informal meetings and the sharing of materials and ideas were quite common.

The Monitoring Role of the Academic Middle Leader

Another aspect of effective leadership was the monitoring of department members. The monitoring role of the head of department is widely acknowledged (Aubrey-Hopkins & James, 2002) and is also very important in facilitating change and improvement in students' performance (Connolly *et al.*, 2000; Sammons *et al.*, 1997). The growing importance of the head of department's role is recognised in the standards developed for heads of department in secondary schools in England (Teacher Training Agency, 1998). Additionally, the leadership role of heads of department is widely acknowledged in policy documents (National College for School Leadership, 2001). Among the many important areas is the monitoring role of the head of department.

The interview data indicated that heads of department across the three school types used various strategies in monitoring teachers; some examples are presented.

One head of department explained:

Well, I tell the teachers when I am coming to observe their classes. Also I check their lesson plans on a weekly basis (Head of Home Economics, Technical High School).

In another school, the head of department stated:

I check lesson plans that are different from what I am teaching. When I am preparing for my lessons, I prepare for all the other teachers of that grade. Fortunately for me, I teach years 9, 10 and 11, so whatever I teach, my teachers teach as well. We give tests and homework across the board, so I always know where the others are in that sense (Head of Chemistry, Traditional High School).

Another said:

Random checks of students' books enable me to see what is being taught and also how those particular students are performing. I can also check up on homework assignments that teachers are giving. Teachers who do not give homework or mark students' books are reported to the principal (Head of Business, Technical High School).

One concern is the selective monitoring of teachers. It was observed that in some cases teachers who were older or more experienced were not likely to get their plans checked

or have their lesson deliveries assessed. It would seem that the new teachers were the ones getting most attention.

Another head of department described her approach:

The principal has advised me that for the older teachers, I should not really pressure them. The new teachers are the problem, but in most cases I really don't have a problem with lesson plans. The few who give problems I usually explain what I expect from them (Head of History, Upgraded High School).

Heads of department are aware of their monitoring role and have developed various strategies to achieve effectiveness in this area. The head of chemistry indicates that she works closely with her teachers in developing lesson plans. The fact that she writes lesson plans for the teachers in the department is commendable. However, this does not help other teachers to develop their own competencies in writing lesson plans. Also, she runs the risk of having subject teachers expecting future heads of department to write their lesson plans. On the other hand, writing the lesson plans for the department allows her to monitor what the other teachers are teaching.

It was also observed that there was selective monitoring of teachers, based on the directive of one principal. The experienced teachers were not closely monitored as were the new teachers. This is quite unfortunate because although the more experienced teachers know the content and the methodology, they are sometimes not as highly motivated as the new teachers, and therefore may not offer the students opportunities for effective learning.

The monitoring of teachers is mandatory in secondary schools in Jamaica (Education Act of Jamaica, 1980). Heads of department in secondary schools in Jamaica are frequently reminded by their principals that lesson plans are to be checked. Subsequently, heads of department have to submit teachers' marked lesson plans to their vice principals.

The observation of the head of department monitoring role are to some extent consistent with the findings of Wise, (1999) and Earley and Fletcher-Campbell (1989), who believe that an important aspect of the academic middle leader's role is the monitoring of teachers. However, no distinction was made between the monitoring of older teachers as against younger members of the department and the challenges the former offers heads of department.

Summary

In this section, the professional leadership roles of heads of department were identified and discussed based on the findings from the quantitative and qualitative data. It was observed that heads of department are aware of their professional leadership roles, displaying exemplary leadership, and are critical of the promotion process used in their schools. Heads of department are also engaging in the monitoring of their teachers, using various strategies in communicating effectively and leading teams in their departments.

SECTION TWO

Challenges to Heads of Department Professional Leadership Role

Although heads of department have accepted their professional leadership role, they are confronted with various challenges. This section discusses the challenges heads of department are experiencing in their professional leadership role including, challenge to the promotion process, challenges in leading the department's team, challenge to the monitoring role of the academic middle leader, lack of time, work overload, managing across the two shifts, and heads of department level of preparation.

Challenges to the Promotional Process

Whilst teachers in the Jamaican secondary school context gladly accept the coveted position of department head, the unsystematic selection process may give rise to leadership problems at various levels. At the personal level, the head of department may not be emotionally ready for the level of responsibility that comes with the position. Schmidt (2000, p. 840) states:

The ascent into department headship emphasised the hierarchical boundaries between teachers and department head and this exacerbates the department head's sense of insecurity, isolation and aloneness.

The position of head of department may seem a lonely one for the newly appointed teacher, since he or she would have left his/her comfort level (the classroom) to take on a leadership role. Perhaps, compounding this problem is the issue of role ambiguity (Brown *et al.*, 2000). According to Schmidt (2000) teachers who lead from the middle are exposed to a role that is difficult, and surrounded by ambiguity. The ambiguity of the role is also complicated by the absence of a job description (Brown *et al.*, 2000). The

survey data collected from teachers (N=202) across six high schools in this study indicate that seventy percent of the teachers in these schools were not given any form of job description. The absence of a job description perhaps provides the opportunity for principals to delegate more work to subject teachers and heads of department.

The nature of the promotion process poses another concern. If there is no systematic process to ensure that the teacher promoted has all the necessary competencies to lead, the effectiveness of the leadership offered at the personal, interpersonal, department, school and the wider community levels may be questioned. It is argued that the head of department contributes to the overall achievement of students (Sammons *et al.*, 1997) and also the effectiveness of the school (Harris *et al.*, 1995)). Therefore, teachers who are selected for the heads of department position should have professional leadership competencies.

Furthermore, the situations in schools both locally and internationally are challenging. Miller (1990), in discussing some of the challenges secondary schools in Jamaica face alludes to the fact that teachers must be prepared for the task of empowering students and offering professional leadership. Other researchers share similar concerns, for example, Noremore (2004), argues that schools in the UK are indeed challenging to manage today. He explains:

Today's principals face more complex expectations forged by a very different student population and a new generation dissatisfied with the educational status quo (Noremore, 2004, p. 2).

The need for heads of department to be skilled in similar competencies as principals is acknowledged through the work of Jirasinghe & Lyons (1995) who have researched the management competencies of 225 headteachers in England and have subsequently developed a typology of the headteacher's management competencies. In their typology

Jirasinghe & Lyons identified five competence areas that the principals should have. These competencies include professional and technical knowledge, planning and administrative processing, dealing with people, managing the political environment and having personal skills. The head of department, by nature of the important role he/she performs in secondary schools, should also be enabled to develop similar competencies.

Finally, the promotional process may also be seen as fraught with favouritism (Blase, 1988). The issue of favouritism is an extant in some schools in Jamaica, and goes beyond the promotional process. Favouritism is discussed later in Chapter Seven, under the theme *micropolitics*.

Challenges in Leading Teams

Although team leadership offers positive merits, there are challenges in leading teams in secondary schools (O'Neill, 2000). Variables such as lack of time, work overload and poorly clarified roles can undermine the team's effectiveness (Chrispeels & Martin 2002). Findings from the interview data are that some teachers refuse to accept the authority of their head of department because of age differentiation. She explained:

We work as a team, however, there are a few members who want to resist because the head is young and also, because they were here some years before (Head of Business, Technical High School).

A teacher's length of service in the department along with differences in age between the department head and department members are possible factors undermining team effectiveness. Teachers, who had a relatively long period of service at the school, were

the ones that offered a greater level of challenge to the department leadership. It was also not unusual for new teachers to challenge the authority of the department leadership.

In the upgraded high school one head of department commented:

The members are not close and come together when there is a need; this makes it very difficult for me because it seems that there is no unity in the department (Head of History, Upgraded High School).

This is not a unique problem. Research has proven that in some schools, departments may experience conflicts (Brown & Rutherford, 1999), resulting in them becoming ineffective. The department comprises teachers who must collaborate in achieving the agreed objectives. This, however, is impossible if members maintain their individualism. Moreover, this makes the forging of the department team even more challenging. However, challenges to the department head as team leader has long been recognised see for example, (Torrington & Weightman, 1989). Therefore, heads of department need to develop specific skills to lead their teams. Recognising the skills needed for team leadership, Briggs (2005) posits:

A supportive team is thus essential to effectiveness and, for some managers, to their personal well-being, but in managing the team they not only have to draw upon a full range of interpersonal skills, but to keep this aspect of their role in balance with other responsibilities (Briggs, 2005, p.37).

In the statement, Briggs (2005) alludes to the personal challenges the head of department is likely to experience in the role. This indicates that leading the department

team could pose leadership problems for department heads. Glover *et al.*, (1998) note that the leadership of teams may also be undermined by administrative demands from the top.

The heads of department in the case schools recognised that they had many different roles as team leaders, one of which is empowering team members. Some heads of department explained that among the strategies they used to empower teachers are, rotating persons who chair department meetings and having members research topics that they later present to the department. The head of business in the upgraded high school further explained that teachers who attend conferences are expected to share the new knowledge with the group. Some heads of department also sent constant reminders to senior team members to assist others and share their ideas. These strategies have proven to be quite effective in building the strength of the department team.

Challenges to the Monitoring Role

Although heads of departments are expected to execute their monitoring role, there are obstacles. Turner (1996) indicates that some heads of department were judged to be ineffective because they were not visiting teachers' classes or doing other tasks that were assigned to them. The research data from the three case schools indicate that heads of department are aware of, and are willing to perform their monitoring role but are being challenged in different ways.

In one case study school, heads of department were experiencing some resistance from the older members of staff who are reluctant to write lesson plans.

Completing lesson plans was a major challenge. Teachers who have been here longer are the ones reluctant to complete lesson plans (Head of Business, Upgraded High School).

While the department structure presents a united front to outsiders, there are internal issues of politics and power between heads of department and teachers (O'Neill, 2000). Similarly, Sparkes, (1990) spoke about how the decisions within the department are shaped by power, conflict and resistance between the department head and other members of staff. Such resistance can be viewed as a situation in which a senior or longer serving member of the department, opposed being monitored, especially by a head of department who might be chronologically younger. Resistance from these teachers can be interpreted as blatant threats to the head of department's power and authority and are therefore likely to create challenges in offering effective leadership.

Lack of Time

It has been established that the time available for heads of department to manage their departments effectively is inadequate (Cockfort Report, 1982). This has been confirmed by more recent research including Earley & Fletcher-Campbell (1989), Glover *et al.*, (1998) and Wise (2001).

From the heads of department interview data, it was observed that department heads in the different school types were teaching beyond their required numbers of hours and these varied among school types and even between departments in each school. The number of contact hours assigned to heads of department is regulated (Education Regulation, 1980). However, the fact that some heads of department prefer to take on the additional classes, rather than timetabling another teacher, confirms Timperley & Robinson's (2000) view that teachers have contributed to their own workload problem.

One head of department explained:

Based on the number of hours that I teach, it is very difficult for me as head of department to do supervision of my teachers effectively. Also, because I

have to prepare for my students sitting the Caribbean Examinations (CXC), it reduces my time, and so I hardly have enough time to do supervision, which has to be done (Head of Religious Education, Traditional High School).

Another commented:

It is almost impossible....there are things that I should be monitoring that are being neglected. For example, I should be going to classes to see what the teachers are doing but I haven't had the time to do that, so I have to depend on the teachers going and doing a proper job on their own (Head of Physics, Traditional High School).

This head of department lamented that teachers need support in the classroom, especially the new teachers. Another constraint on heads of department time management is the number of teachers they supervised, (see Appendix G). Department heads in both the traditional and technical high schools supervised teachers across two shifts. This not only increased the number of teachers under their supervision, but also added further challenges to the department's head to develop appropriate strategies to offer effective leadership across both shifts.

Monitoring teachers is a challenging task for heads of department. These findings are consistent with those of Wise (2001) who noted, for example, that one way in which heads of department in schools in England monitored teachers was through the checking of students' books. Also, Wise & Bennett (2003) in their research on middle

leaders in secondary schools in England found that the time available to complete their numerous tasks was inadequate. Wise & Bennett, noted:

The main problem facing middle leaders is that the expectations and realities of the role are not matched by time made available (Wise & Bennett, 2003 p. 9).

Although various strategies are being used to execute their monitoring role, insufficient and inadequate monitoring of subject teachers is a feature of the academic middle leaders' dilemma in the case study schools in Jamaica. This is consistent with the findings of Wise (2001), in her study of middle managers and headteachers in three case study schools. Wise (2001, p. 340) concludes that academic middle leaders are doing 'very little supervision of curriculum implementation'. The problem of time constraint is even more apparent in schools that operate the two shifts system.

Work Overload

An area which impinges on the head of department's ability to function effectively is managing the workload. Wise & Bush, (1999) have indicated that middle leaders are challenged with the workload they are assigned. The demands on the academic middle leader to complete the numerous assigned tasks, forces some to develop their own strategy in getting the work done. Some prefer to do the work themselves rather than delegating it to others to ensure that it is properly done (Fletcher-Campbell, 2001; O'Neill, 2000). The academic middle leaders' work, although not well defined in the literature, includes some general tasks. The areas of responsibility identified in the Jamaican context are quite similar to those in the British context presented by Turner (1996; 2000) and Earley and Fletcher-Campbell (1989). The areas include:

- routine administration and organisation of the department;
- planning of pupil's experiences

- monitoring and evaluating the work of the department
- liaison with other departments, with the pastoral staff, the senior management and with outside agencies (Turner 2000, p.214).

Whilst these areas may be described as the roles and functions of heads of department in secondary schools in England, some department heads in the case schools in Jamaica have indicated additional responsibilities. From the interview data five categories were identified which comprised: teaching, administration, supervision, extracurricular and coordinating special functions (see Appendix H). All teachers in secondary schools in Jamaica are expected to perform any additional task assigned to them by their principal (Education Act of Jamaica, 1980). This gives principals the power to assign additional tasks to some members of staff. Assigning additional work, however, should not be misinterpreted as distributed leadership. According to Arrowsmith (2005), distributed leadership involves principals giving teachers increased responsibilities and the authority to effectively execute their leadership functions.

To some extent, heads of department who appear more willing and who may be recognised for doing a task well are more frequently assigned additional work. Department heads in all three school types indicated that their workload had increased over time. In the upgraded high school, one head of department explained that she operated in both a top management and middle management position, whilst another explained that she provided multiple leadership functions. Another head of department indicated that she was responsible for handling disputes in the absence of the principal and vice principal, while another indicated that she held several posts concurrently which included, head of department, grade coordinator and form teacher. She also indicated that initially she did not vet lesson plans nor was she involved in teacher evaluation.

One head of department noted:

We are given different levels of responsibility and some of us are more willing or less likely to say no, so we are always getting more areas of responsibility (Head of Chemistry, Traditional High School).

Another explained:

I never did timetable for the department, also I was never required to organise the Caribbean Examination Council Examination (CXC) timetable (Head of Science, Upgraded High School).

In addition to the responsibilities identified above, some heads of department are also senior teachers and are therefore given additional responsibilities.

As a senior teacher I have special responsibilities which are different from the head of department responsibilities (Head of Religious Education, Traditional High School).

Heads of department have many responsibilities and these are determined by several factors. In some cases teachers who are referred to as senior teachers are given additional responsibilities. The Education Act of Jamaica, (1980) refers to the senior teacher's positions as a "Post of Special Responsibility". Senior teachers in Jamaican secondary schools are classified according to their senior teacher's position, which are Senior Teacher One, Two or Three. Senior teachers are remunerated based on their position.

Heads of department are engaged in many different activities, see (Appendix H). Additionally, because of the particular expertise of the department, sometimes further

tasks are given to that department; for example, in the upgraded high school, the home economics department oversees the planning for official functions. In the traditional high school, the religious education department organises Prayer Meetings and Fasting services for the school. These tasks are in addition to their defined role functions which include, monitoring teachers, leading the curriculum and providing general leadership for the department teams.

The problems relating to work overload that these heads of department are experiencing were not created by the role-holders themselves as Timperley & Robinson (2001) argue, but rather have been thrust upon them by their principals. Arguably, the increasing workload and variations in the nature of the tasks make the position of department head very challenging.

Managing Across the Two Shifts

Another area of professional leadership is the management of the department across two shifts. The skills that the head of department have to apply in managing across both shifts can be described as strategic thinking (Aubrey-Hopkins & James, 2002). This follows on the work of Turner and Bolam (1998), who has developed a model of the type of leadership the subject leader employs in leading and managing the department. Turner (2003) assessing the importance of the model to the head of department, argues that the model emphasises the “core task of leading and managing their department to bring about high standards of teaching and learning” (p. 210).

Heads of department in two of the case study schools developed appropriate skills to lead and manage their department across two shifts. Both the technical and the upgraded high schools operate a shift system (two schools using the same facilities at different times during the school day). The system forces heads of department to employ strategic thinking whilst carrying out their professional leadership roles. Among

the strategies heads of department identified, were working overtime, delegating some responsibilities to a teacher on the opposite shift and being timetabled across both shifts. The heads of department explained the strategies they used:

Sometimes I have to do some overtime in order to get the volume of work completed on time. This means coming to work earlier some days or staying back after school some evenings (Head of Business, Technical High).

Another argued:

Well, this is very difficult, even recently I was thinking about it at home and thought that for next year I will have to try for two things, for example working across the shifts about twice per week, although I don't know if the timetable will accommodate it. But that's a problem. What I do is to identify somebody who acts as a deputy head on the morning shift... She plays the role of head in my absence and when I am here I can delegate responsibilities to her. She is a senior teacher (Head Home Economic, Technical High School).

Another explained:

I try to get in early some days to see what is happening and to get the department matters on the early shift organised. Sometimes I get help from another teacher who is well respected by the members in the department. It is a challenge, but I am coping (Head Mathematics, Upgraded High School).

Another head of department noted:

It is very difficult for me. I am timetabled across the shifts but sometimes I cannot see the teachers who are on the morning shift because their classes are too early. I am thinking of having the principal shifting the home economics classes a little later in the day. (Head of Home Economics, Upgraded High School).

Clearly the heads of department are experiencing some challenges as they lead their departments. The fact that some heads of department have resorted to working overtime and others have indicated that they try getting to work earlier or staying back late, is evidence of the challenge they are experiencing. However, along with those strategies, heads of department are also delegating to teachers on the opposite shift.

One department head explains:

I try to cope by asking another teacher to assist, but I cannot give the teachers the support they need. I also find it difficult to see their classes and even to handle students' concerns on the other shift. (Head Science, Upgraded High)

Heads of department who work in schools where the two shift system operates are further challenged in both managing their departments and in finding the time to execute their professional leadership role. In a school with a relatively small student population the task might be manageable; however, in a large school managing the department might be more difficult with ten or more teachers across the two shifts. Heads of department in both the technical and upgraded high schools supervise a large number of teachers (see Appendix H) which adds to the challenges they experience at work.

Discussions with the principal of the upgraded high school indicate that sometimes heads of department are timetabled to work across both shifts. Whilst in theory this seems practical, in reality it puts heads of department under extra pressure because for them to offer effective supervision of teachers they would need to be at school when those teachers are there teaching their classes.

The effective leadership and management of their departments across the two shifts demand the exercise of various skills, namely distributing leadership to others (Smylie *et al.*, 2002). This leadership strategy is relevant to the two shift system, where a team member is relied on to manage and lead the department in the absence of the head of department. The leadership strategies that heads of department have developed to lead their departments across both shifts are clear examples of their ability to apply problem solving skills in the face of organisational challenges.

Heads of Department Level of Preparedness

It has been recognised that some heads of department are able to manage their departments competently without having any formalised training (Turner, 2000). Their ability to manage their department would suggest that they possess a range of competencies (Hamlin, 1990). However, in the absence of any formal training, Fletcher-Campbell (2003, p 11) noted that it was the “nurturing” middle leaders received which assisted them in their promoted positions. This nurturing is important to heads of department, especially those new in the position, mainly because the transition from classroom teacher to head of department comes with some challenges (Schmidt, 2000). The extent to which heads of department are challenged in their roles after promotion may have resulted from the lack of adequate training (Glover *et al.*, 1998). Similarly, Brown *et al.*, (2002), in their study of the professional development and management training’ needs of heads of department in secondary schools in the UK, argue that appropriate training needs to be developed for heads of department.

Heads of department received additional training in the position

The questionnaire data indicate the response of subject teachers to the question of whether their heads of department received training for the position. As indicated in table 5.3, over 50% of subject teachers in both the technical and upgraded high schools felt that their heads of department had received additional training. In the traditional high school 40.8% of teachers felt that their heads of department were exposed to some form of training. On the other hand, a relatively high percentage of the respondents from all three school types were undecided. The technical and upgraded high schools had a 34.5% and 39.6% respectively, while the traditional high school had the highest percentage of 51.9% of undecided responses. The high percentage of respondents who were undecided could be an indication that subject teachers were unsure whether their heads of department were trained for the position or if training was received some time after they were promoted.

Table 5.3 Heads of department received additional training for the position
(N=202)

	School Types			
Scale	Technical	Upgraded	Traditional	Total
Strongly Agree	20.2%	15.1%	16.7%	17.8%
Agree	32.1%	37.7%	24.1%	31.4%
Undecided	34.5%	39.6%	51.9%	40.0%
Strongly Disagree	4.8%	7.5%	5.6%	5.8%
Disagree	8.3%	0	1.9%	4.2%

The interview data across the three school types, indicated that of the fifteen heads of department interviewed, only two had previous experience as head of department. Those who spoke about being unprepared explained that, what was more frightening was the fact that no provision existed to help them cope with the challenges of the position. One of the considerations for promoting a teacher to the head of department position is experience in teaching within the department. Whilst heads of department are considered skilled in delivering the curriculum, they need to be effective in other areas. Hamlin (1990) claims that the academic middle leaders should not only have the leadership competencies necessary to lead their departments, but be skilled in other areas, for example, accessing funding from external sources. Hamlin's expectations of the academic middle leader appears unrealistic because research studies identified earlier in this chapter have discussed the fact that heads of department are engaging in too many non-teaching tasks and therefore have very little time to carry out aspects of their work.

On the other hand, Hamlin's claim forces us to recognise the enormous responsibility of department heads and why they need to be carefully selected for the job. One factor which has contributed to the ineffective leadership of heads of departments is the absence of good role models (Turner, 2000). Turner argues that the absence of effective role models have contributed to the lack of effective heads of department. One head of department actually noted that she had no one to model the leadership role.

On the issue of training, all but one head of department spoke about the benefits of training and the fact that even where this existed, it was inadequate or infrequent. In addition, the programmes offered were not in keeping with the needs of heads of department. This supports the view of Glover *et al.*, (1998) who argue:

The training offered to middle managers ...has been as a member of school-based 'hit and miss management' courses, offered as a basis for understanding increased responsibilities within the school (p, 289).

While the training identified above for heads of department may not apply in all cases, it nevertheless helps us to understand the extent to which heads of department are not being adequately prepared for their role.

Training offered to heads of department in the case schools for the most part was inadequate. One head of department explained:

When I was acting head of department, the Ministry of Education Youth and Culture, had a head of department training seminar in Brown's Town, St Ann, in September 2004. They have not had any since (Head of Business, Upgraded High School).

Another head of department commented:

We have summer workshops with the HEART Trust, the training included classroom management and leadership (Head of Mathematics, Technical High School).

Another head of department explained that she organized training for members of her department:

When a department meeting is scheduled, we would use a part of the meeting time to look at areas in which teachers are having problems, for example, lesson planning and evaluation (Head of Language, Technical High School),

One department head spoke about attending training organized through the Technical High School Improvement Project. This is a particular asset for the technical high

schools, where training is offered to the entire staff on issues relating to empowering staff at all levels. However, it does not provide specific training for heads of department.

According to Adey (2000, p. 422) “many new heads of department seem to be ill prepared for the role.” It was also noted that staff appointed to middle management roles may have the potential to do well but not the necessary skills to be successful initially and they tended to flounder.

On the other hand, some heads of department spoke about the positive leadership of their previous head of department and the steps they took in preparing them for the present position. The notion of heads of department acting as positive role models was also discussed by Turner (2000), suggesting that teachers are more motivated when they have a conscientious department head.

One interesting feature of the head of department’s position is the scope for continuous professional development. In the Jamaica context, heads of department enter the post with very little knowledge of the role (James-Reid, 2001). However, the incumbent is expected to learn many different skills and apply them as they execute their roles daily.

Heads of department indicated that several private organisations are involved in offering training, although such training programmes are for the general classroom teachers. However, in an interview with an Officer at the Ministry of Education Youth and Culture, Jamaica, it was discovered that the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture has started to provide training for heads of department in schools that are on the Reform of Secondary Education Programme (ROSE). A discussion of the ROSE programme is found in Chapter One. The ROSE programme provides formal training for heads of department; however, as with similar training programmes, the training offered to heads of department are not specific to their individual needs.

In addition, since September, 2006, the Ministry of Education has been providing training for high school principals, through the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica. The programme which is completed over twelve months is tailored specifically for the Jamaican context and it is hoped will be a positive source of empowerment for principals. It is hoped that a similar programme tailored for heads of department will be developed and implemented soon.

Summary

The chapter discusses the concept of professional leadership (Brown *et al.*, 1999) and the extent to which heads of department are offering strategic leadership (Turner, 2003; Davies, 2003) in their department and to a lesser extent, their school community. Various ways were identified in which heads of department in secondary schools in Jamaica are developing aspects of their professional leadership role. Among the themes that emerged from the data were the processes of promoting teachers to the head of department position (Fletcher-Campbell, 2003). It was discovered that in the absence of a systematic promotion process, principals in the three case schools have developed four common promotional processes namely, default, seniority, consensus and orchestration. The unsystematic promotion process, may have contributed to heads of department not feeling confident in their position.

Another area of their leadership role was the development of teams (O'Neill, 2000). Heads of department are aware of and are involved in offering effective leadership to their teams. However, some heads of department were being challenged by some senior teachers who were chronologically older than the head of department. It was subsequently recognised that the opposition heads of department received from senior teachers, borders on power politics within the department.

Various strategies were used in developing effective communication (Pang, 1999). The level of communication practiced was one involving trust and this contributed to a collaborative climate (Butt & Retallick, 2002) among members.

Heads of department were engaging in their monitoring role (Harris, *et al.*, 1995) which included checking teachers' scheme of work and observing their teaching. However, the monitoring of teachers was a major challenge (Wise, 1999) among heads of department. This was compounded by the lack of time heads of department had to complete their numerous tasks (Glover *et al.*, 1998).

In addition to providing regular professional leadership, some heads of department are expected to manage and lead (Turner & Bolam, 1998) across two shifts. Heads of department had to apply strategic thinking in managing and leading across the two shifts.

There were some concerns regarding the workload (Timperley & Robinson, 2000) of heads of department. It was argued that principals were eager to offer their heads of department more work, especially when the head of department was willing. The volume of work was compounded by the number of teachers some heads of department had to supervise and the number of sessions they taught.

The level of training (Brown *et al.*, 2002) heads of department received before and during their office are inadequate and inappropriate. In fact, heads of department indicated that no appropriate training programme existed. Heads of department have also explained that they were unprepared for the position and therefore struggled initially in the post.

Although challenged in many different ways, heads of department have remained committed to the empowerment of their teachers and the improved academic performance of their students.

CHAPTER SIX

DEPARTMENT CULTURE

Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the cumulative data collected from a survey of subject teachers (N=202) across six schools, semi-structured interviews with fifteen heads of department and three principals from the three case study schools. Also, observations of management meetings were conducted in the case schools. Under the theme Department Culture, five major sub-themes emerged, these are: initiating new members of staff, forging a collaborative department culture, developing a culture of care for students, demonstrating a culture of concern for others and the department culture continuum. Whilst the first four sub-themes present positive cultural dynamics, the fifth sub-theme discusses negative cultural types within the department.

An important feature of any organisation is its culture. Schein (1985, p.6) defines culture as:

The deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation that operate unconsciously, and define in a basic 'taken for granted' fashion an organisation's view of itself and its environment.

The culture that is created within the department is initiated by the department head. Harris (1999) argues that the head of department is very important in developing and maintaining the right kind of culture among members. Similarly, Pritchard *et al.*, (2005) argue that education leaders play a very important role as culture builders. However,

while department heads prefer individuals to support the common culture, this is not always the case. Members may display different kinds of subcultures (Hargreaves, 1995).

The presence of multiple subcultures (Bush, 1995; Morgan, 1997) can pose a problem for the head of department, especially if they are in opposition to the culture of the department (Owens, 1985). The head of department should therefore be able to recognise the different subcultures members bring to the department and tactfully influence both old and new members to recognise and support the department's culture. This would demand the head of department modelling the desired culture, particularly for teachers new to the department. In addition, the head of department needs to develop culture maintenance strategies to ensure that senior staffs in particular are embracing the culture of the department. Evidence of culture modelling that emerged from the data included: initiating new members of staff and forging a collaborative department culture. The features of culture maintenance identified in the data included heads of department demonstrating a culture of care as well as a culture of concern for students.

The data highlighted the existence of variations of culture among teachers, both those new in the position and those with extensive experience in the post. The nature of this culture dynamics which exists among members within the department can be represented along a culture continuum (Hargreaves, 1995, Morgan, 1997; Peterson & Deal, 1998). The continuum represents variations of types of subculture found in the case study schools. At one extreme is the dominant department culture which others are expected to embrace. At the other extreme of the continuum is found a toxic culture type that represents negativity in the department. Between these two extreme culture types are variations of subcultures which were identified as individualism, collegiality and contrived collegiality, following on Hargreaves (1995). The degree to which teachers vary from the dominant culture and display aspects of their subcultures

represents the challenges heads of department face in leading their departments. The ensuing discussion centres on the emerging sub-themes identified in the data.

Initiating New Members of Staff

New teachers bring new ideas and new energies to the department which must be harnessed (Harris, 2000). In addition, new teachers need to be exposed to the wide variety of tasks and rules (Flores, 2004) unique to their department. Therefore, initiating new members of staff is an important task of the academic middle leader. The initiating process is also part of the head of department culture modelling role. Failing to initiate new teachers may result in them displaying unfriendly tendencies within their departments.

From the quantitative data, subject teachers (N=202) from the six high schools, viewed their heads of department as very supportive of new members of staff, as indicated in table 6.1. Table 6.1 shows that 67% of teachers from the technical high school, 64% from the upgraded high school and 72.8% from the traditional high school felt, that their heads of department offered special attention to new members of staff. This included providing new teachers with information, support and a sense of belonging, which allowed them to develop commitment to the department. Ensuring that teachers have a sense of belonging and support, would allow them to be more open and willing to implement new ideas (Hopkins,1990).

Table 6.1 Heads of department provide extra support to new members (N=202)

Scale	School Types		
	Technical	Upgraded	Traditional
Strongly agree	29.5%	14.3%	27.3%
Agree	37.5%	50.0%	45.5%
Undecided	14.8%	28.6%	23.6%
Disagree	10.2%	5.4%	3.6%
Strongly disagree	8.0%	1.8%	0.0%

The Interview data collected from fifteen heads of department across the three case schools, point in the direction of heads of department developing various strategies in initiating new teachers in their department's culture. The strategies ranged from gentle persuasion to firm statements reiterating the Ministry of Education's mandate as it relates to teachers performing their ascribed roles. Heads of department from the three case schools shared their experiences.

I arrange to meet them (new teachers) early at the beginning of the term to discuss with them what the department is all about. I also ask them to say what role they can play in making the department better (Head of Mathematics, Technical High School).

Another head of department describes her experience:

I tell them of their responsibilities, explain the department's criteria for writing lesson plans, have frequent one – to –one meetings to discuss their progress and any difficulties they are experiencing in their content area (Head of Business, Upgraded High School).

I tend to give the new person a little more attention since she is not very clear in her teaching methodology (Head of Business, Technical High School).

In the traditional high school, the head of chemistry outlined how her enthusiasm for the subject and her commitment to her students acted as motivators and ensured that she assisted new members of her department.

I discuss ideas and tell them (new teachers) how I handle the students; especially where the class is mainly boys and boys tend to be more difficult to manage (Head of Chemistry, Traditional High School).

In the upgraded high school, one head of department mentioned encouraging the new teachers silently, and showing them that she cares. The head of department also explained that she enquired how the new teachers were getting along and whether they have any problems, especially in the area of lesson planning. Other heads of department shared the following views:

I try to encourage them silently; I show them that I believe in them and I do not wait until there is a problem to talk with them (Head of Business, Upgraded High School).

After a teacher is introduced as a member of the department, I would organize a meeting to find out what this new person has to offer (Head of History, Upgraded High School).

Heads of department implemented various strategies to initiate new teachers in the department. New teachers, whether experienced in teaching or new to the system, need to be properly inducted into the department's culture. This induction process provides the opportunity for the new teachers to learn about the department and its members, including the students. The induction process also reduces any anxiety the new teachers might experience in settling in the department.

Although heads of department indicated that they have not developed any elaborate system of initiating new teachers, they are aware of its importance. Heads of department showed concern for the new teachers and made every effort to assist them with their planning and methodology. Special tips were offered on how to relate to the students, especially the boys. The idea of organising socials for the new teachers with the teachers on both shifts was also mentioned. These strategies are part of the head of

department culture modelling role. Failure to initiate the new teachers properly may cause some to develop a culture of individualism (Hargreaves, 1994).

Stoll (1999) adds that the desired culture is more clearly demonstrated in how people work and relate with each other. However, William *et al.*, (2004) have added that new teachers who are encouraged and are provided with feedback, feel more supportive and are more comfortable in their schools. In order to ensure that new teachers maintain these positive attitudes, heads of department and other senior staff members would need to readily identify features of negative culture and develop appropriate remedial strategies.

Forging a Collaborative Department Culture

The department is a subsystem of the organization; therefore, the performance of its members has direct impact on the organizational efficiency. The head of department's role is to ensure that members work collaboratively toward the good of the department and ultimately the school. Angelides & Ainscow, (2000) claim that a collaborative culture creates a more productive school environment. A similar view is advocated by Hargreaves (1995). The level of social conversation (Brown & Rutherford, 1998), department members share, contributes to the cohesiveness among them.

Heads of department from the case schools identified various strategies they used to forge collaboration between members. Among these were, sharing materials, rotating the chair at meetings, meeting informally over lunch, recognising the efforts of teachers through department socials, and using a reward system. The location and layout of the department was also identified as a factor that could contribute to a collaborative culture. Heads of department shared their different views.

I ask them to share materials and sometimes at our meetings we have treats on special occasions like birthdays (Head of English, Technical High School).

Another teacher had this to say:

I have regular meetings and rotate leadership of these meetings. I also encourage members to share with each other (Head of Mathematics, Technical High School).

Sharing materials and resources is one way of developing a positive and collaborative department culture. The sharing of resources is a necessity in Jamaican schools. The limited availability of resources in secondary schools in Jamaica is a major challenge for most heads of department. Department heads have to be innovative when dealing with this issue. The problem of access to resources was experienced mainly in the technical and upgraded schools. The availability of resources in these schools is tied to many other issues. As was discussed in Chapter One, the nature of the school determines how it is perceived in the community and subsequently, the level of support it receives from the government, the Past Student Association, the Parent Teachers Association and the business community. For example, the traditional high school is viewed positively and therefore enjoys greater level of support, access to resources and materials.

Another factor which has contributed to the forging of a positive department culture is the location of faculty classrooms and departments. Heads of department made reference to the location of their departments and classrooms and how the location facilitated informal meetings.

One head of department expressed her view in this way:

I think my department is one that is closely knit because we share a room for ourselves, so that almost every day we have a department meeting. We are always discussing things (Head of Chemistry, Traditional High School).

The spirit of togetherness is a strong recipe for positive growth in the department. This can be fuelled by the design and location of the department. Nias, *et al.*, (1989) argue that buildings can impose situational constraints on teachers' interaction with others in their group. How buildings are designed and the extent to which such designs facilitate high levels of interaction among members within a department can influence the degree of collaboration possible. The head of department in the traditional high school recognised the fact that the opportunity for frequent informal meetings, contributed to the level of collaborative culture that have developed among members.

Another strategy used in forging the department culture was organizing social events for department members. One head of department in the upgraded high school explained that her department plans a number of events for teachers. Also, teachers are given tokens (gifts) on special occasions. In addition, students attached to the department are invited to share in some of the department's activities. This strategy, the department head argued, has helped students in the department to do well in their academic work. The following responses show the experiences of heads of department in attempting to forge department culture through social events.

We try to do things to foster good teacher-teacher relationships, for example the birthday club. We have lunch together at least once per week as you saw today and we work on projects together, for example, when we

have special functions like the Jamaica Night (Head of Home Economics, Upgraded High School).

Our department is unique because for the most part we have a spirit of togetherness; we recognise the efforts of our teachers towards the students in our department. We also recognise teachers on their birthdays (Head of Geography, Upgraded High School).

The strategy of organizing social events for teachers and students seems quite effective in developing a collaborative culture among department members as well as improving students' performance. Social events provide the opportunity for individuals to meet and share informally and at the same time build a bond of friendship and co-operation. Social events planned for departments have positive benefits in building a positive culture among department members. This confirms Harris (2000) view of effective department. Harris (2000) maintains that when a department engages in social events where teachers are free to talk and interact, strong collaborative bonds are created.

Another strategy which was quite unusual but which proved effective was the reward system, used in the technical high school. The head of department explained how this system worked:

I have this reward system in place; I have stars and smiling faces for my teachers... anything I ask a teacher to do and they do it willingly, I would reward them with a nice thank you note or a card from the department, and I find that it works (Head of Language, Technical High School).

This head of department has developed this reward system as a strategy for achieving a collaborative department and she is quite happy with the response from her staff. While one might argue that giving gifts to teachers for doing their jobs may have other

implications, on the other hand, the strategy has a positive effect on teachers' attitude and performance. Possibly, this practice conveys the message that one's work is appreciated. Flores (2004) argues that a key factor in fostering teacher and school improvement is the development of a collaborative effort among teachers. The building of a collaborative working arrangement between teachers can offer positive benefits to the organization (Hargreaves, 1999). He further adds that a collaborative culture includes teachers participating in working relations which are spontaneous, voluntary, development-oriented and unpredictable.

Developing a Culture of Care for Students

The questionnaire data from the six schools displayed in table 6.2 showed that heads of departments have high expectations of both staff and students. The level of expectation of heads of department was stronger in both the technical and traditional high schools. The tabular data indicates that 69% of teachers in the traditional and technical high schools perceived their heads of department as displaying concern for both staff and students, compared with 49% in the upgraded high schools.

Table 6.2 Heads of department exhibit high expectations of staff and students
(N=202)

Scale	School Types		
	Technical	Upgraded	Traditional
Strongly agree	23.3%	10.9%	32.1%
Agree	46.5%	38.2%	37.7%
Undecided	18.6%	36.4%	20.8%
Disagree	7.0%	10.9%	9.4%
Strongly disagree	4.7%	3.6%	.0%

The responsibility of the head of department extends beyond teachers to incorporate a commitment to students. The level of care heads of department display toward their students can have a positive effect on their learning (Harris, 1999).

The interview data from the three case schools provide examples of heads of department showing concern for students with special needs and referring them to individuals and agencies that can provide them with the necessary support and assistance. Heads of department made the effort to remind teachers of the importance of their students and consequently, how they should be treated. Overall, heads of department explained that they demonstrated love, cooperation, trust and respect for their students. The strategies they used in empowering students are outlined below.

We let the students know that we believe in them and they can make a difference if they too believe in themselves (Head of Science, Upgraded High School).

Although they (students) are not the brightest, we try to encourage them not only in the academics, but in other activities after school ...and sometimes they surprise us in how well they perform (Head of Language, Technical High School).

I usually remind teachers that it is the students why we are here and as a department, we want to be number one (Head of Business, Technical High school).

These department heads were rallying members not only to rise to the challenge of promoting high performance, but also to encourage students to strive for success by believing in themselves. This is a feature of the head of department culture maintenance strategy. Bennett & Harris (1999) recognize the school improvement effort

as including and developing a collaborative culture, setting high expectations for both staff and students, demonstrating consensus on values and support, and encouraging members to assume a variety of leadership roles. Harris (2000) concurs, noting that when students are encouraged to succeed, there is usually a higher level of performance. Knowingly or unknowingly, heads of department in the case study schools have accepted Harris' conclusion and are doing the same.

While heads of department were convinced that efforts were being made by teachers to assist students, they were also cognizant of challenges preventing students from succeeding. Among the factors heads of department identified as affecting students' performance were their socioeconomic background and their level of motivation.

Heads of department share their concerns.

A lot of our students are experiencing financial problems and this affects their attitude to school and their performance in class (Head of Business, Technical High School).

Before, we had students who were very motivated and positive but now they are not keen on doing their work and even homework is a problem with them (Head of Science, Traditional High School).

I think our teachers try to get the students involved in the lesson, but there are too many distractions and our students seem to be more eager for those things that are not really putting them anywhere (Head of Mathematics, Upgraded High School).

The strong culture of caring for their students is demonstrated by these heads of department. Although responses came from all three school types, the students in both the technical and upgraded high schools are in some ways more challenged

academically, since they are the ones less likely to get the financial and academic support they need from home. Also, the school type they attend may not have the quantity, quality and variety of resources needed to stimulate and support their academic pursuits. Therefore, in schools where resources are scarce, it is the teacher's level of commitment along with his/her creative capacity which will in some cases make the difference in students' learning.

Phipps (2002) study of students' performance in secondary schools in Jamaica revealed that teachers frequently offered free classes after school, on weekends and during the holidays to students from low socioeconomic background who are preparing to sit external examinations. However, as Harris (2000) notes, after schools have provided students with all the support possible, it is the students who must take responsibility for their own achievements. Certainly, students must also account for their own learning and should make every effort to succeed in school.

Developing a Culture of Concern for Others

A positive school culture is associated with increased student motivation and achievement. This may also extend to the positive attitudes teachers display towards students, senior staff and their colleagues (Barnett *et al.*, 2000). The task of the head of department is to ensure that members are embracing a positive culture. As Landford & Cleary (1995) suggest, the role of the leader is to sustain a vision of connectedness and ensure that stakeholders maintain their role. Heads of department from the case study schools indicated a culture of concern for staff and students. Several examples were observed.

One head of department explained:

Well I usually remind teachers that it is the students why we are here and as a department we want it to be number one. We let the students know that we believe in them and they can make it, if they too believe in themselves (Head of Geography, Traditional High School).

Others had this to say:

I find that sometimes new members of staff have different techniques that we can modify and use to make our students do better (Head of Home Economics, Technical High School).

Sometimes students are demotivated and I try to motivate them by sharing with them the objectives of the department (Head of Mathematics, Upgraded high School).

I sometimes would ask if they (teachers) need help in a particular area for example, lesson planning (Head of Business, Upgraded High School).

Researchers on school effectiveness and school improvement including Bennett & Harris (1999) argue that the type of school culture most effective in providing high expectation for students is one in which a high degree of care and concern is demonstrated. Similarly, Hargreaves (1995) opines that a sense of cohesiveness, harmony and spontaneity in relation to how members approach their work stems from how they relate to others within their groups. Heads of department are therefore forced to ensure that they continue to maintain the appropriate kind of culture they would want both staff and students to emulate.

Failing to maintain the appropriate culture may produce unfavourable cultural types in the department (Peterson & Deal, 1998). These culture types reflect how teachers think and behave and which impacts negatively on the department. These culture types can be presented on a continuum.

The Department Culture Continuum

Whilst most heads of department had positive experiences in forging a collaborative culture among members, several cases were observed where the efforts of heads of department to develop a collaborative department culture were to some extent undermined. The negative experiences which were observed across the three school types could be represented along a department culture continuum. The culture continuum which was mentioned earlier in this chapter provides the opportunity to view the range of subcultures existing within the department from the dominant culture (Hargreaves, 1995; Morgan, 1996) to a toxic culture (Peterson & Deal, 1998). The first culture type is described by this head of department.

I really don't do much in terms of orientation. They come to me to know what to teach and how long to spend on a topic (Head of Mathematic, Upgraded High School).

Teachers in this department are likely to develop a feeling of individualism (Hargreaves, 1995), resulting from the orientation approach of this head of department. Teachers develop various reasons for feeling and reacting indifferently to their departments. For example, new teachers who are unable to satisfy their basic need for acceptance, support and belonging may become withdrawn, developing a feeling of isolation. Subsequently, they develop a culture of individualism (Hargreaves, 1995). Some may align themselves to teachers with similar experiences, thus strengthening their level of

isolation from the main department group (Flores, 2004). Individualism among beginning teachers is potentially damaging (William *et al.*, 2001) to the department and ultimately the school.

Another culture type identified on the continuum and displayed by teachers in the case study schools occurred when isolated group of teachers displayed features of a balkanized culture (Hargreaves, 1995). The notion of new teachers developing a balkanized culture was also reported by (Flores, 2004). The findings from Flores' longitudinal study involving both teachers and principals in Portugal, indicated that ineffectiveness, balkanization, competition, and individualism were key issues which emerged and which subsequently led some teachers to take a "step-back attitude and a laissez-faire" perspective (Flores, 2004, p.305). Some of these teachers became isolated and tended not to engage in school projects.

We don't really socialize as a department. I think I get along with all the teachers but the teachers don't really get along well. We don't have a department spirit (Head of Mathematics, Upgraded High School).

Another form of culture type on the continuum observed was where heads of department were unable to sustain a collaborative culture among older colleagues in their departments. Stolp (1994) explains that sometimes older teachers are less likely to change, possibly, because of their perceived seniority status and their refusal to accept the authority of a younger person. Similarly, Reeves *et al.*, (2003) argue that senior members of staff find it sometimes more difficult to embrace changes since they are socialised in their old setting. Fink (1999) in his study of a failing school, argues that among the reasons the school failed was because older members in the department were unwilling to embrace changes. The kind of culture which these teachers produced was described as contrived collegiality (Hargreaves, 1995). Contrived collegiality is described as teachers working together because of administrative directive. This culture

type does not produce spontaneous interactions from and between members (Williams *et al.*, 2001) unless the teachers involved are friends or in the same in-group. One head of department made this observation:

Because you are younger than they are, they think you are not capable to lead (Head of Spanish, Traditional High School).

According to another head of department:

Overall, the members are not close and only those who work together actually have any form of relationship. For example, if a member of staff is absent, someone who is a friend of that teacher would try and assist, but otherwise, someone would have to be assigned (Head of Physics, Traditional High School).

This head of department works in a very large school that is divided into three sections. Teachers are therefore spread across three grade levels: grades 7 to 9, grades 10 to 11, and grades 12 and 13. This division of teachers into grade levels can challenge the opportunity for group cohesion and the forging of any bond between members in the department. Furthermore, the fact that no attempt is made to forge any form of group solidarity is cause for concern. The form of relationship hinges on a form of contrived collegiality (Hargreaves, 1994).

Managing across the two shifts, may have also contributed to contrived collegiality. The problem of providing professional leadership across the two shifts was discussed in Chapter Five. Heads of department from both the technical and upgraded high schools indicated the challenges they encountered in forging an effective department spirit among teachers across both shifts.

One head of department noted:

I think we have one big problem and that is really working closely together.

I think the fact that we are on two shifts is a problem (Head of Business, Technical High).

The shift system is one feature of the technical and upgraded schools which has created divisional issues. Subject teachers who do not feel supported by the head of department could develop nonchalant attitude.

In situations where teachers feel unsupported, they may develop hostility towards their head of department. This hostility may be displayed in teachers being uncooperative, constantly finding fault with nearly everything in the school and showing very little concern for the students. Deal & Peterson (1998) further argued that teachers who have developed this culture syndrome, are able to create various enclaves from which they launch assaults on the school system. Whilst there is no evidence of the extent of the teachers' hostility within the case study school, there is some concern around how they interact with others in their department and possibly with other members of staff.

Summary

The knowledge of school culture provides opportunity for the reflective academic middle leader to understand the complexities of school life and also to identify and develop strategies to achieve effectiveness in their schools. The extent to which this is being done consciously or unconsciously is not too difficult to determine. Given the fact that heads of department have indicated that they received very little training for the post, it would appear that they are using their initiative in developing and shaping their department's culture.

The discussion has given attention to heads of department engaging in culture modelling as well as culture maintenance. Culture modelling (Sergiovanni, 1995) is being demonstrated in how new teachers are being initiated into the department as well as the level of care demonstrated for teachers and students which are being demonstrated. Culture maintenance strategies were also identified among heads of department. These were particularly important in cases where older colleagues were unwilling to accept the leadership of a younger head of department. Concern for students' performance was identified as high on the heads of department agenda. One of the strategies heads of department developed to motivate students was to help them to believe in themselves. This was especially important for students in the technical and upgraded high schools.

The chapter concludes with a discussion on the department culture continuum (Bush, 2002; Morgan, 1996), which represented the various subculture types found across departments in the case study schools. The culture types which existed include monoculture (Bush, 2002), individualism, collaborative, contrived collegiality and balkanized culture (Hargreaves, 1995). The existence of various culture types within departments is an indication of the role heads of department are expected to play in developing and maintaining an effective department culture.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MICROPOLITICS

Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion on the issues and themes relating to Micropolitics that emerged from the combined data for the research “Navigating from the middle: enabling middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica”. Evidence of micropolitical interactions were found in the data derived from questionnaires, interviews conducted with heads of department and principals, and observations of management meetings conducted in the case study schools. This evidence includes the leadership styles of heads of department and principals, the shifting micropolitical orientation of principals, delayed promotion, lack of decision making, competition among heads of department and favouritism from principals.

Ball (1987, p. 247) argues, “what happens inside schools cannot be totally understood without accounting for the environment in which schools operate.” The environment in school is practically defined by the actors and the relationship between them. Anderson (1991) describes the relation between principal and teachers as a political one. The political interactions between teacher and administrator is one way of explaining how conflicting values, needs and agendas are played out in schools (Marshall, 1991) and is referred to as micropolitics. Similarly, Achinstein, (2002) argues that one way of viewing life in organizations is through micropolitical lenses. These micropolitical lenses illuminate issues in school, allowing those on the outside to see and sometimes understand the political interactions between individuals and groups in schools.

Although micropolitical interactions are constantly occurring in schools, they are not always easily observed. According to Blase & Anderson (1995) micropolitical

interactions are submerged, quiet, unstated and even unnoticed political acts that are seen as part of the everyday routine in schools. This suggests that both principals and teachers are consciously or unconsciously engaging in micropolitical interactions. Furthermore, these micropolitical interactions, which are seen as part of the everyday routine, are not allowed to disrupt the daily operations in schools.

Marshall (1991) adds that boundaries and turfs are constantly being politically negotiated between principals and teachers through informal negotiations. It seems that principals and teachers in their interactions are constantly vying for power of different sorts. In some cases, heads of department may want to have more involvement in decision making, while principals may want to restrict the power of heads of department to make decisions for their department and the school. Situations in which personal agendas are being promoted at the expense of others are likely to create micropolitical conflicts between principals and heads of department in schools.

As was mentioned earlier, the research data provided evidence of micropolitical interactions between principals and heads of department. These sub-themes included the leadership styles of heads of department and principals, the shifting micropolitical orientation of principals, delayed promotion, lack of decision making, competition among heads of department and favouritism from principals. The first sub-theme to be discussed is the heads of department leadership.

Heads of Department Leadership

Although principals are perceived as controlling the political power in schools (Malen, 1995), heads of department also have some power and are able to support or oppose the decisions of principals (Smylie, 1994). How heads of department exert their influence or react to their principals' controlling power may be an indication of their leadership style. From the questionnaire data, subject teachers (N=202) identified areas

in which their heads of department negotiated support for their department and also challenged unfavourable management decisions. These are discussed in tables 7.1 and 7.2.

Heads of department negotiate support for their department

Heads of department are not always able to negotiate with their principals, possibly because of the unspoken relationship between them. Some principals are set in their ways of thinking and may not readily accommodate the ideas and suggestions of others, especially when the person is below him/her on the organisational hierarchy. However, subject teachers in all six schools (N=202) indicated that under certain conditions, heads of department were able to negotiate support for their departments from the principal. Indications from the questionnaire data are that heads of department across the three school types displayed significant differences in whether they agreed that they negotiated support for their department. As indicated in table 7.1, the highest agreement rate was from the traditional high school, with 61.1%. The technical high school had a 58.6% agreement rate while the upgraded high school had the lowest agreement rate with 42.6%.

The relatively high percentage agreement rate from teachers in the traditional high school may be viewed as an indication of the level of political autonomy heads of department wield in these schools. As noted in Chapter One, the traditional high school is distinct from the other school types for different reasons including the nature of its academic programmes.

Table 7.1 Heads of department negotiate support for their departments
N=202

Scale	School Types		
	Technical	Upgraded	Traditional
Strongly agree	14.9%	9.3%	13.0%
Agree	43.7%	33.3%	46.1%
Undecided	24.1%	48.1%	27.8%
Disagree	13.8%	7.4%	11.1%
Strongly disagree	3.4%	1.9%	0.0%

Generally, heads of department are perceived as forward thinkers and as such are engaging in developing programmes beneficial to their staff and students. However, the level of negotiation may be more intense in the traditional high school because more programmes, both academic and extracurricular are likely to be offered in these schools, compared with the technical and upgraded high schools. Consequently, heads of department in the traditional high school may be more involved in negotiating with their principals for the materials needed and or permission to launch particular programmes. This, however, does not mean that heads of department in the other school types do not negotiate support for their department.

The practice of middle leaders negotiating for their departments, supports Busher's (2006) findings from a study of middle leaders in secondary schools in England. Busher (2006, p. 32) argues that "middle leaders in some secondary schools negotiated with their colleagues and senior management to implement preferred practices for teaching and learning". This experience is not uncommon in the Jamaican context, as was observed across the three school types where heads of department had to overcome challenges from their principals in implementing programmes they thought were in the best interest of their students, their department and ultimately the school. The head of department in one of the case study schools shared the following experience:

If I find that the (administration) is overworking my teachers, because sometimes they run extra classes or decide to offer a new subject, for example, integrated science and they are not employing any more teachers, then we have to quarrel about it until they find somebody to teach the new subject (Head of Chemistry, Traditional High School).

This head of department was adamant that the school's administration should employ additional staff to teach the new course. Indications are that this head of department is committed both to her teachers and the students in her department. Certainly, having to teach an additional subject would put some pressure on the teachers. Additionally, if the teachers are overworked, their students might not be able to perform well in their external examinations. Therefore, since the effectiveness of the head of department is measured by the performance of its students, efforts must be made to ensure that the appropriate resources are made available. Although negotiating for her department might not be an easy task, indications are that she is committed to supporting the members of her department.

Although heads of department are involved in negotiating for their departments there are challenges. The challenges appear more evident in the upgraded high schools where 48.1% of the respondents were undecided on this issue, compared with 31.8 % in the traditional high school and 24.1% in the technical high school.

One head of department explains the problem in the upgraded high school:

Well, to tell you the truth, I don't challenge him much. The problem is that I don't agree with the grouping of the students but he (the principal) is not one to take suggestions (Head of Mathematics, Upgraded High School).

The head of mathematics recognised that the principal is not one easily swayed from his opinion. She saw the grouping of students as a workable strategy that has provided favourable results in the past; however, the principal was not willing to sanction the continuation of that programme. What was disturbing was the fact that this head of department had no desire to negotiate on behalf of her students. This might have resulted from frequent conflicts with the principal or her acceptance of the idea that the decision of the principal was final.

The head of mathematics further declared that the principal tended to do things his way. She explains:

I also think that the principal is more concerned about keeping the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations. The school has a lot of plans in the pipeline but the principal is not saying much to staff. Sometimes when we request materials and give them the specifications, they will go and buy what they think and sometimes these can't work (Head of Mathematics, Upgraded High School).

The dilemma being experienced seems associated with the nature of the principal's leadership style. The leadership style of the principal is one in which the principal made decisions and handed these down to his staff. The fact that plans were in the pipeline but were unknown to the staff, suggested that staff were not party to the initial development of those plans. In situations where the principal does not show confidence in members of his senior staff, tensions could develop which ultimately, could breed micropolitical conflicts.

On the other hand, some principals might favour one department over another as will be discussed further in this chapter. The favoured departments might be treated differently in terms of the material support and political autonomy they enjoy. Knowledge of the

preferential treatment of particular departments would contribute to micropolitical issues among heads of department and also between some heads of department and their principal.

However, the fact that heads of department in the case schools are involved in some form of negotiations is a clear indication that they all have varying degrees of power which is evidence of micropolitical interactions in their schools. As Bacharach and Mundell (1995) explain, micropolitics is not all about conflict in school, that is order versus disorder, but a state in which order is constantly being politically negotiated. The creation of order however, is sometimes achieved at the expense of the other groups in schools. For example, both principals and heads of department will not always achieve their individual objectives; under some conditions one group will achieve its objectives at the expense of the other.

Heads of department challenge management decisions

Another example of the leadership style of heads of department was demonstrated in their decision to challenge management decisions. Teachers in both the technical and traditional high schools felt that their heads of department were able to challenge the decisions of management. By virtue of their position on the organizational hierarchy, heads of department have some access to power and this influences their decision making (Blase, 1991). Whilst heads of department are expected to develop strategies in the interest of students and teachers in their departments, principals may not readily embrace such visions of the head of department. Consequently, it would not be uncommon for the head of a large department who has a strong personality and a commitment to pursuing his/her department's agenda to challenge the principal's decision (Busher & Harris, 1999). This was observed in one of the case study schools. According to Marshall (1991), both principals and heads of department are constantly

negotiating over boundaries and turfs or programmes and activities in their schools.

One area which caused conflicts in the traditional high school was the selection of students for specific subject areas.

The head of physics explained:

I think the way students are selected for science is wrong, because those who come to science are not very motivated. What happens in some cases is that students who are unable to get into some areas are arbitrarily placed in science (Head of Physics, Traditional High School).

The practice of placing students in specific subject areas has been a concern among teachers in schools. Phipps, (2002) in his study of students' performance in secondary schools in Jamaica, discussed the negative effects of arbitrarily placing students in various subject areas. He further adds that the process of placing students in subject areas is not foolproof and students who were unsuccessful in getting their desired places are arbitrarily placed in other areas where available space existed. The practice, however, created various issues relating to staff and students. For example, Phipps, (2002) argues that a high percentage of these students tend not to do well and sometimes teachers become frustrated with students' negative attitudes.

While many heads of department opposed the placement practice, some school administrators found it useful since it allowed every student to be seen as belonging to a specific academic area. Clearly, the head of the physics department was unhappy with the selection practice being used in her school but seems unable to do anything about it. This might have resulted from the head of department's fear of reprisal from her principal (Vann, 1999). While it was not ascertained if this practice was common to all subject areas, it appeared that the principal's decision on the matter was not accepted by at least this department head and might have created micropolitical conflicts.

It does appear unusual for a principal who was described as practicing a facilitative leadership style to be contributing to micropolitical issues. However, it was recorded in the case schools that principals are not fixed in their leadership styles, but are likely to change styles whenever it suited them.

While the principal in the traditional high school was viewed as displaying facilitative leadership tendencies, the principals in the technical and upgraded high schools, were referred to as maintaining a manipulative leadership style. The leadership of principals is discussed under the sub-theme principals' leadership style.

It can be argued that the extent to which heads of department negotiate or challenge their principals' decision may result from whether the principal is viewed as displaying manipulative or facilitative leadership tendencies. A facilitative principal is someone who is more willing to accommodate the views of other leaders within the school. The manipulative principal on the other hand, is more likely to oppose suggestions from teachers.

The reforms in education, along with contemporary developments in British schools, are advocating a distributed form of leadership (Frost & Harris, 2003) which demands principals sharing power with others in their schools. Whilst this is the ideal situation, principals are reluctant to devolve power to teachers (Storey, 2004), thus forcing heads of department to challenge their principal's decisions at times.

Principals' Leadership Styles

In all three schools the heads of department indicated that the style of leadership their principals displayed added to or created conflict between them. The role of the principal is very important in schools. Bush & Jackson (2002) posit that there is a strong link

between the leadership of the principal and the motivation of teachers. Bush and Jackson have also added that good leaders set clear goals for their organizations and create a sense of shared mission. On the other hand, not all principals are willing to share power (Muijs, 2003) or accept any change in the in top-down leadership model (Muijs & Harris, 2003).

Heads of department in the case study schools related incidents which assisted in determining the leadership style of their principals. From the combined data identified earlier, indications are that two distinct leadership styles existed among the principals in the three case schools. These leadership styles are manipulative and facilitative. Evidence of the manipulative leadership style of the principals was observed in the upgraded and technical high schools, while the facilitative leadership style was observed in the traditional high school.

Heads of department in the technical and upgraded high schools complained that the principals failed to provide them with support for plans that they initiated. One head of department described how she had to 'fight' to get the principal to allow her to organise a special programme for students sitting the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC).

The heads of department in the traditional high school did not identify any example of the principal not facilitating their plans. In fact, the head of the religious education department mentioned that her principal readily allowed teachers and students from her department to support an out- reach programme in a volatile community in Kingston, the island's capital city.

Additionally, some heads of department from the upgraded and technical high schools explained that their principals failed to treat them as leaders within their schools, which would enable them to command respect from their peers and subordinates.

One head of department from the upgraded high school shared her experience.

In September the principal employed a new teacher for the department and I met her at the general assembly, when she was being introduced to the school, and I think that was very poor of the principal (Head of Home Economics, Upgraded High School).

In the technical high school one head of department had this to say:

I feel frustrated, for example, when a teacher who is not a specialist is taken from another department to teach biology to the CXC level and that teacher cannot offer the guidance students need, which is frustrating for me as HoD. If I had been consulted, I would have been able to look around at the staff in the department and possibly switch classes with another teacher who has more experience (Head of Science, Technical High School).

The department unit in schools is the head of department's domain and an area in which heads of department exercise some autonomy. However, from the statement of this head of department, she was not allowed to exercise control over the deployment of teachers in her department. However, in an interview with the principal, he indicated that his policy is one in which heads of department were allowed to deploy teachers as they saw the need. This appeared contradictory: he was saying one thing and yet doing the opposite. The principal further stated that his intension was to secure more power in the leadership and management of his school. This strong desire for power is evidence of the principal's style of leadership, and one that could only be described as manipulative.

He argued:

What I have been trying to do in recent times is to take over the functions of the school board, which would allow me to appoint some persons.....To a large extent, we try to incorporate the heads of department and the vice principals in this process (Principal, Technical High school).

The functions of the school board include overseeing the appointment and promotion of teachers. The principal's attempt to take over the functions of the school board can be perceived as usurping power from that assigned body, and further suggests the manipulative nature of this particular principal. In the interview with the principal, he further explained his policy as it related to the development of the school.

Well..... I came with a particular vision... to run a school that was technically competent to produce students that could function anywhere in the society. Now I don't know if my vision is necessarily different from persons who I came here and saw... It took me a good amount of time, two to three years to build their confidence...for them to accept what I am about in terms of what I brought to the table. Actually, many of them saw me as a young inexperienced person not having much experience to transform the institution... But of course I came here with a document, my vision...and from time to time I share it with them for them to get some idea of where I am going. I still find some of them difficult, but for the most part I think we are moving in the right direction...I expect them to see it my way soon (Principal, Technical High School).

Clearly, the evidence indicates that this principal operated with a single vision. He saw himself as having the vision for the school and the members of his staff merely supporting that vision. Visionary leadership according to Hallinger & Heck (1996)

strongly relates to effective leadership. However, vision building demands principals diagnosing the status of the school, identifying critical areas and developing an action plan along with his staff. Davies (1998) adds that new principals in particular, should not take a pre-developed action plan of how things are going to be done. Vision building involves including others, and the time to make the vision a reality. The action of the principal of the technical high school supports a principal who is confident in his own abilities. His leadership style is therefore not one open to accommodating the views of others but a manipulative style of leadership. Furthermore, as indicated in table 7.2, the principal's relatively short experience in the position, may have contributed to the personality trait he displayed.

In the traditional high school the principal adopted a more facilitative approach to leadership. She discussed how her staff contributed to the school development plan.

She explained:

We have just completed the school's development plan. It took a while but we managed to complete it, we took information from the general staff meetings and senior teachers' meetings, then we formed a committee to complete the final product. I involved everybody taking part. Heads of departments had meetings among themselves and therefore they had their input (Principal, Traditional High School).

This principal has developed a holistic approach to the direction of her school, involving members of her staff through various strategies. Arguably, her approach was one more likely to foster increased support from her staff. The leadership style she displayed may have been attributed to her years of experience in the position, see table 7.2 found later in this chapter.

Whilst the principals in all three school types operated in distinct leadership styles, heads of department in all three school types complained about the shifting leadership style of their principals. The data indicate that the principal in the traditional high, who was identified as facilitative by some heads of department, shifted her leadership style occasionally. Similarly, in the technical high school, the principal who was referred to as manipulative shifted when it suited him. The shifting micropolitical orientation of the principals posed some challenges for heads of department. The shifting micropolitical orientation of principals is explained later along with Figure 7.2, which is related.

While heads of department declared their concern with the shifting leadership style of their principals, the literature offers some opposing arguments. For example, Day, (2002) reporting on a study of 10 successful, experienced headteachers working in challenging situations, argues that multiple rather than single forms of leadership were more effective. Using this argument, it would seem that the ability of principals in both the technical and traditional high schools to shift between leadership styles should be advantageous to effective leadership in their schools.

It is also being argued that the approaches to leadership are changing. The form of leadership being advocated in England and other western countries is distributed leadership or shared leadership. Briggs *et al.*, (2006) note:

Shared leadership within their schools enabled heads not only to 'spread the load' of school improvement initiatives, but to empower, develop, and where necessary 'win over' staff members (Briggs et al., 2006, p. 19).

Whilst distributed leadership is being promoted as the way forward, there are still challenges to how principals can implement it, as is the case with two of the principals of the case study schools that were reluctant to distribute power. Effective leadership

means allowing others to share leadership that is, having the confidence to plan and execute an idea. According to Kirkham (2005, p.153)

One way of becoming a good leader and manager is to have to lead and manage something, something real which has an impact on learning not only by the individual participant, but also on the way in which those work in the school subsequently function.

Principals, therefore, need to empower their heads of department, if they are to develop the competencies of an effective leader. Whilst the management of their curriculum area is evidence of autonomy, Gold *et al.*, (2003) claim that increased autonomy given to heads of department will boost their confidence and also influence the perception of them in the eyes of other members of staff.

According to Blase (1991) principals who tend not to be supportive of their heads of department may be seen as manipulative. Blase (1991) further noted that a manipulative principal is unsupportive and will attempt to control teachers in different ways including limiting their involvement in decision making. The strategy of controlling teachers will cause some heads of department to develop protective or combative strategies. Consequently, the principals' leadership style will contribute to micropolitical activities in school.

Heads of department in this study who were allowed to share in leadership spoke with confidence and pride. For example, the head of chemistry in the traditional high spoke about how she was able to advise the vice principal when teachers were to be allowed to teach higher or lower grades. As Gold *et al.*, (2003) explain, when principals allow their academic middle leaders room to develop, high respect and regard are felt for those principals.

However, there were incidents of negative attitudes from a few heads of department. One indicated that she was not leading; she was just ensuring that the department functioned and students were able to get the attention they needed. Although this head of department had reasons to be disgruntled, having been in an acting position for several years, she recognised her leadership responsibility to the members and students of her department. Marshall, (1999) commented that despite the conflicts in schools between teachers and principals, both groups continued to plan accordingly for the good of students.

The Shifting Micropolitical Orientations of Principals and Heads of Department

From the research data, it appears that both heads of department and principals operated within defined micropolitical orientations. The micropolitical orientation of principals could be described as manipulative on one hand or facilitative on the other. Manipulative oriented principals use a range of overt strategies as well as indirect and subtle ones (Anderson, 1991) to influence the behaviours of heads of department.

The micropolitical orientations of heads of departments operate in direct relation to that of the principal (Blase & Blase, 2002). Heads of department interactions with facilitative principals tended to evoke an open and diplomatic political stance. This was the experience among some heads of department in the traditional high school where teachers were listened to, and felt a part of the decision making process. Consequently, they developed a harmonious and cooperative working relationship with their principal (Blase, 1996).

On the other hand, teachers' interactions with manipulative principals resulted in a protective stance, as was the case in both the technical and upgraded high schools, where heads of department identified protective strategies such as confrontation and avoidance (Blase & Blase, 2002) in relating with their principals. Protective strategies

were used as a weapon against attacks from their principals. Both principals and heads of department in the three school types showed tendencies of both micropolitical orientations.

Case 1. Manipulative Principal

This was how one head of department described the micropolitical orientation of her principal.

She explains:

I did not try to oppose the principal. I knew he was a one-man show. When I returned from my study leave, one of the first things I did was to organise a meeting with the parents who had children sitting the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), but the principal would not have it. I had to fight to get it done. I soon discovered that he did not like challenges and was more willing to agree with my plans when they were launched as his ideas, so I did just that. We still have issues, but I think I know how to get around him (Head of Home Economics, Technical High School).

This principal seemed to have shifted from his manipulative paradigm to a more open and facilitative one (see figure 7.1). This shift was based on the perceived threat the head of department offered. But the principal did not give in easily, as the head of department explains; she had to fight to have the principal sanction her plans. Perhaps more importantly, the head of department became aware of his particular weakness,

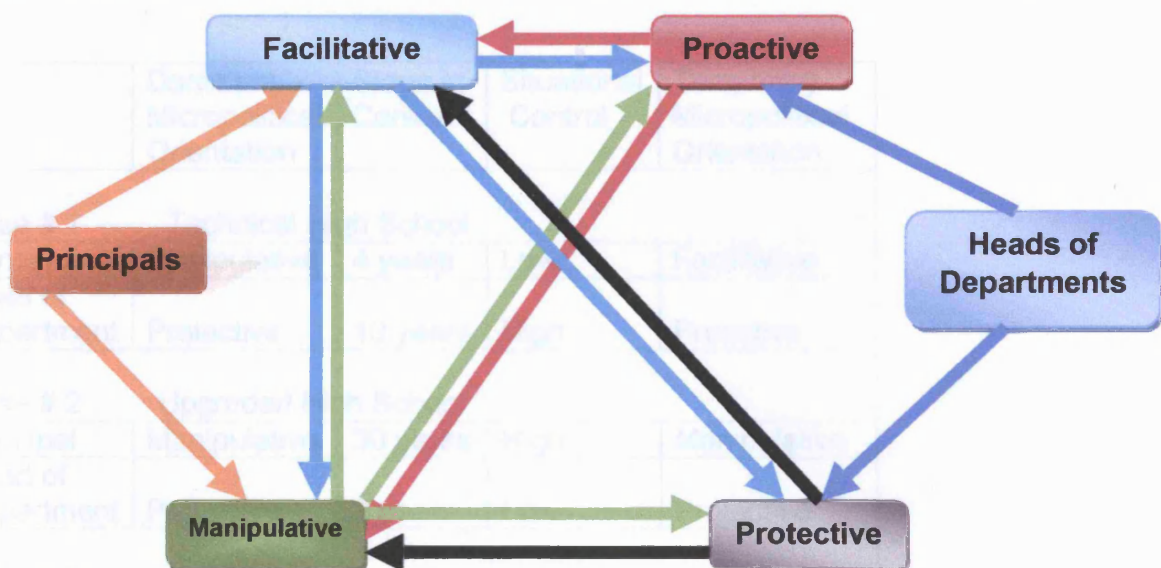
which was having the plan launched as his idea. Having recognised this tactic, the head of department might decide to use it again when the situation warrants it.

Figure 7.1 The shifting micropolitical orientations model

are intimidated by various factors within their schools including: teachers who are assertive, intelligent, innovative and educated. Several factors have emerged from the research data that might have accounted for the shifting micropolitical orientations of principals, namely: the stage in one's career, the head of department's situational control and the professional and technical competence of the individual (see table 7.2).

Shifting Micropolitical Orientation Model

Table 7.2 Factors influencing a shift in the micropolitical orientations of principals



The shifting micropolitical orientation model, describes principals alternating between the two paradigms which are facilitative and manipulative. Of significance was the fact

that a principal can shift from a predominant paradigm, even a manipulative principal. The shifting of the principals' micropolitical orientation, suggests that heads of department do have some influence on the decisions of principals and as such can be described as 'influencing upwards'.

Blase,(1991) argues that some manipulative principals are intimidated by various factors within their schools including: teachers who are assertive, intelligent, innovative and educated. Several factors have emerged from the research data that might have accounted for the shifting micropolitical orientations of principals, namely: the stage in one's career, the head of department's situational control and the professional and technical competencies of the individual (see table 7.2).

Table 7.2 Factors influencing a shift in the micropolitical orientations of principals

	Dominant Micropolitical Orientation	Stage in Career	Situational Control	Temporary Micropolitical Orientation
Case # 1 Technical High School				
Principal	Manipulative	4 years	Low	Facilitative
Head of Department	Protective	10 years	High	Proactive
Case # 2 Upgraded High School				
Principal	Manipulative	30 years	High	Manipulative
Head of Department	Protective	3 years	Low	Protective
Case # 3 Traditional High School				
Principal	Facilitative	32 years	High	Manipulative
Head of Department	Proactive	3 years	Low	Protective

In Case 1 described above, it appears that the principal's level of confidence may have been threatened by a comparison between the length of his teaching career and that of members of his senior staff. It seems that this principal, who had only been in office for four years, felt threatened by the fact that many of the heads of department had teaching careers extending thirty years. Another challenge for this principal was the educational level of some heads of department. Although the principal held a Master's Degree, other members of his senior staff also had Master's degrees in other areas, for example, Organisational Studies.

Compounding these challenges, some members of the senior staff also commanded the respect and support of staff, students and some parents. Additionally, the head of department in question also displayed skills in organising programmes aimed at supporting and developing positive attitudes in students.

Case # 2 Manipulative Principal

At another school a manipulative principal remained resolute in his decision not to promote teachers on the basis of their years of service.

He had this to say:

Teachers believe that the head of department position should go by years of service or favours..... (Manipulative Principal)

This principal defended his policy on the promotion of teachers, stating clearly that teachers who showed commitment to the students and the wider school community were the ones likely to be promoted. In this case the principal did not shift from his predominant orientation.

The principal's decision to remain firm on his promotion policy may have resulted from several factors. Firstly, he was very confident in his position, having already completed over thirty years in teaching, while the acting heads were, in his opinion, unqualified for the position. Secondly, the principal had situational control and this further reinforced his confidence level, See Table 7.1

Case # 3 Facilitative Principal

In another school a principal who was considered by the staff to be facilitative proved to be manipulative sometimes to selected members of her senior staff.

She said:

I know that I should just let her do her thing, but I know she cannot manage, so I ensure I attend department meetings (Facilitative Principal).

In this case the principal shifted from being of a facilitative micropolitical orientation to a manipulative one, (see Table 7.2). The change in the micropolitical relationship stemmed from the view held by the principal, that the head of department was not capable of managing the department. The fact that the head of department may have been inexperienced in the position and may have also lacked the ability to offer effective leadership could have contributed to the view held by the principal. However, the fact that the principal had been at the school for over thirty years and was very experienced in school leadership may have contributed to the shift in her micropolitical orientation.

Usurping the head of department's position clearly produced feelings of disempowerment and subtle micropolitical conflicts. One might argue that a more transformational type principal would try to empower the head of department rather than undermine the individual in the position. However, the poor behaviour of some principals is not new. Brown & Rutherford (1999) argue that head teachers may develop decision-making processes that seemed on the surface to be participatory, but are only aimed at getting greater acceptance of decision and greater teacher satisfaction. Also, "principals may be reluctant to extend genuine influence to teachers, assuming that they do not have the expertise to make valuable contributions, or because they do not trust them to make decisions that are in the best interest of the school" (Brown & Rutherford, 1999, p.319).

However, as was indicated in the data, the unsupported nature of two of the principals in the case schools, towards their heads of department clearly demonstrates their shifting micropolitical orientation. Consequently, heads of department in these schools have developed opposing micropolitical orientations (Blase & Blase, 2002). Therefore, heads of department are likely to shift according to the micropolitical orientation of their principals.

Problem of Delayed Promotion

There were concerns of delayed promotion among three teachers in the upgraded high school. They were disgruntled over the fact that they had remained in an acting position for between seven and nine years. Two of the three teachers explained that they had arranged with their teacher's union, The Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA), to intervene on their behalf. The issue of delayed promotion was recognised by the

principal in the upgraded school as a concern. In defense of refusing to promote the three acting heads of department, the principal explained his position.

When I came here I found the person acting who had a certificate in teaching from a teachers' college but that person could not manage the programme in the department (Principal, Upgraded High School).

This principal indicated that some of the teachers promoted to acting head of department position were not sufficiently qualified to lead a department.

He explained:

In the Home Economics department the teacher in charge is acting and she is disgruntled because I have not made her permanent, but there is a reason for that; the previous principal had placed her friends in certain posts. I have not removed them as yet (Principal, Upgraded High School).

This principal explained that the position of head of department should not go by years of service or by favours. He further argued that the teachers who have been acting are not sufficiently qualified, do not display the level of interest in the school and the students, and do not have sufficient workload commensurate with the position. Additionally, he noted that some heads of department were reluctant to seek further training. He was adamant that the teachers should not only be competent to lead their departments but also should show commitment to the students and the school. The heads of department who were complacent were unlikely to be promoted.

However, the disgruntled acting heads of department have referred the matter of their delayed promotion to their teachers' union, the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA) with the hope of arriving at some amicable agreement.

The practice of having teachers in an acting position for example 'acting head of department' is in breach of the Education Regulation Act, 1980. The act clearly states that... "An acting appointment shall not exceed three years, unless the School Board in any particular case other-wise recommends" (Education Act of Jamaica 1980, p. 51, section 4.3) such actions. Furthermore, the teachers complained that they were not being paid in their acting position. This was another breach of their legal right. Teachers are expected to receive all the benefits and privileges commensurate with the position, except increments (Education Act of Jamaica, 1980).

The principal further expressed his view concerning senior posts as they relate to heads of department.

He stated:

The post of senior teacher is one for which you must be recommended. That means that although a teacher is made head of department she/he might not be considered for the senior post. The senior position means that you are not just a head of department but that you supervise at least four other members of staff, that you are involved in extracurricular activities and that you show commitment to the school. Therefore, a teacher who supervises two or three teachers cannot be considered as a senior teacher (Principal, Upgraded High School).

While there are some truths in what this principal has said, the issue concerning the senior teacher's position is not clear. Information from senior officers of the Ministry of Education indicates that a teacher should not be placed in the position of head of department and not be considered a senior member of staff. The argument does seem plausible given the fact that the role of the head of department is crucial to the effectiveness of the department (Brown & Rutherford, 2002). In addition, the head of department performs many functions including, supervising department members, liaison with external organisations, keeping the school abreast of changes in the content

area and organising internal programmes including extracurricular activities for students. The varied levels of involvement of heads of department clearly place them in a position of leadership within schools.

The principal of the upgraded high school felt that the position of head of department should be considered based on the number of teachers a head of department supervised.

He had this to say:

The head of department with only three teachers in that department would be marking only three lesson plans while another head of department might be marking twelve plans (Principal, Upgraded High School).

This argument is plausible; however, there is also the fact that a head of department in a secondary school in Jamaica has other responsibilities including coordinating extracurricular activities, supervising the book rental scheme, or supervising the tuck-shop.

There is need to question the role of the principal in empowering his staff. One could argue that the three teachers should not have been allowed to be in an acting role for over five years. The principal, on the other hand, should be more of a transformational leader, empowering members of his team.

The action of the principal may be viewed as a typical case of abuse of power (Blase & Anderson, 1995) where a principal exercises control over certain decisions and behaves in an autocratic way. The principal's actions may also be viewed as an aspect of the dark side of leadership (Blase & Blase, 2002) where some principals display behaviours

that would suggest covert or overt abuse of their teachers, as in the case of delayed promotions in the upgraded high school..

Involvement in Decision Making

Decision-making at the department level is one area which contributes to micropolitics in schools. It has already been noted that some headteachers are reluctant to increase their heads of departments' participation in decision-making because they are not seen as having the expertise or likely to act in the interest of the school (Brown *et al.*, 1999). Failing to allow heads of department to participate in decision-making may be interpreted as a form of discriminatory treatment by some principals, especially those who advocate power sharing, delegation and participatory management (Wallace & Hall, 1994).

Whilst heads of department recognise that they are not participants to all areas of decision-making, there are some issues which are within their domain to which they can make meaningful contribution within the department context and the wider school community, as was revealed in the interview data collected across the three case study schools in Jamaica.

The experiences of heads of department in relation to their involvement in the decision making process varied across the three school types. Department heads in the traditional high school enjoyed some level of involvement in decision-making, although this was confined to certain departments. In the newly upgraded high school, department heads complained of not being allowed to participate in the decision making process.

Some heads of department interviewed in the technical high school felt that they occupied the position but had no share in the power.

Formerly, you would have the opportunity to ask questions to find out the capabilities of the teacher, but you still didn't have the choice to decide where to place the teacher. Basically, the deployment of teachers is left totally up to the principal and vice principals (Head of Science, Technical High School).

It seemed that the lack of involvement in decision-making among heads of department was not uncommon in this school.

I am not involved in the decision making process in the school. This is not unique to me; I think it is right across the board. In the department, I have the power to make decisions about the curriculum; we do not need the principal's ok on that. We also have the right to decide on the type of materials we would like the school to buy, but we are not involved in the general management of the school (Head of Business, Technical High School).

It appeared that some heads of department were only involved in routine aspects of decision-making and were therefore mere pseudo-participants in the decision making process (Spaulding, 1997). The fact that some department heads were not allowed to share in the decision making process contributed to micropolitical conflicts between the principals and their department heads.

In the upgraded high school, some heads of department felt that the decisions concerning recruitment and timetabling of teachers should be within their portfolio. However, although they were invited to sit on the interviewing panel, they did not have a voice.

I am not really involved. I am aware that I am supposed to be involved because it is on my job description, but I am not allowed to participate. The only time I can remember being involved is on one occasion when the vice-principal interviewed a teacher (Head of Home Economics, Upgraded High School).

Another head of department in the same school shared a similar experience.

I am not really involved in making decisions for the school. In the department, I am involved in some things like staffing. I am involved in making a budget and submitting this to the bursar (Head of Mathematics, Upgraded High School).

The politics of school level decision-making makes the context of schools even more political, since heads of department feel that their right to share in the decision making process of the school is being denied (Lindle, 1999). For example, one head of department in the technical high school, explained that although she sat on the interview panel, she did not have a voice as she was not seen as part of the decision-making process. Another head of department explained that the principal did the employment and deployment of staff without consultation.

She explained:

This is another sore point; I am not involved in the decision-making. The principal does the employment and deployment of staff without consultation and it is wrong. It is a wrong practice and he knows it (Head of Home Economics, Technical High School).

The principal in the technical high school offered similar arguments to the principal in the upgraded high school. It was felt among them that many of the teachers in senior leadership positions were unsuitable to lead.

There needs to be a change in their [heads of department] leadership; some of the persons who are leading these departments really can't. Many of them had obtained the position through long service (Principal, Technical High School).

In the traditional high school, it appeared that some heads of department were more involved in the decision making process than their counterparts in the other two school types. The level of involvement some heads of department in the traditional high school experienced might have resulted from the confidence the principal had in them. When asked about their involvement in the decision making process, two heads of department shared similar experiences. One explained that she sometimes suggested movement among teachers.

Yes, to a certain degree, I am involved in the decision making, for example, the teacher who I had teaching a year 9 class, was moved up because I thought that she needed the experience, so I spoke to the vice-principal about moving her to the upper grades (Head of Chemistry, Traditional High School)

Another head of department explained:

I am part of the decision-making body. As a senior teacher, we have monthly meetings and sometimes we have meetings with the principal. We are free to express ourselves in those meetings and also, we help in the decision making (Head of Religious Education, Traditional High School).

There were two heads of department from the traditional high school who were not happy with how their principal handled some issues relating to their decision making function.

One explained:

Sometimes we are asked to assess teachers and after we do the assessment and think that the weak teacher would be asked to leave, we return in September to see them still on the staff (Head of Geography, Traditional High School).

Another teacher noted:

I recall that there was a time when if you were being employed, they would ask the department to meet these persons first to ensure the persons were sufficiently capable of managing the job... But that is not the case, I have had situations where a teacher is sent to me and then I discover that she cannot manage the class she has to teach (Head of Physics, Traditional High School).

These heads of department in the traditional high school were dissatisfied that their role as it related to teacher assessment and the selection of teachers is not clear. Heads of department are expected to assess teachers (Education Act of Jamaica, 1980). However, although the head of department may, after assessing a teacher, find that teacher unable to teach the subject, and recommend that his /her employment be terminated, the final decision lies with the principal. In situations where the principal

acts contrary to established principles, heads of department would feel a sense of disempowerment and subsequently develop micropolitical strategies to counter the principal's attitude.

Competition among Heads of Department

Competition in schools is sometimes used as a strategy by school administrators to wage one group against another (West, 1999). Competition among department heads was not uncommon across all three schools. A small number of heads of department in both the upgraded and technical high schools indicated that their principals discreetly encouraged competition among departments. The shift system has also contributed to competition.

One principal noted:

It's a necessary evil, since it allows students to get the opportunity of a high school education. On the other hand, it carries numerous weaknesses including preventing the development of extra curricular activities and also encouraging competition among staff and students across the shifts (Principal, Upgraded High School).

This nature of competition was also observed in one senior management meeting. The principal made several comments about one particular department and indicated that he wished the others would follow. The strategy used by the principal is primarily aimed at encouraging other departments to move their departments' performance forward. This is not an unusual strategy used by principals. Glover *et al.*, (1998) explain that in England, in an attempt to achieve the requirements of the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), principals inadvertently caused heads of department to develop competition among themselves.

West (1999, p.193) argues:

As groups become more committed to their own goals and norms, they are likely to become competitive with one another and may seek to undermine their rivals' activities thereby becoming a liability to the organisation as a whole.

The problem of competition may not only be between departments but also within a department, as is the case in the schools that operated a shift system. The shift system may be a contributor to this type of competition. Teachers in the shift schools complained that the school operated as two schools and both students and teachers were in competition. This can be perceived as departments in secondary schools vying for status and scarce resources (Ball, 1987). Subject departments are sometimes viewed as being divided, in conflict, and displaying antagonist features (Connelly *et al.*, 2000).

Additionally, departments may be strong or weak (Sammons *et al.*, 1997) and the relationship between the head of department and the principal may be poor (McCartney & Shrag, 1990). The strength and size of the department may determine the extent to which the head of department will need to engage in manoeuvres to access resources for the department.

Favouritism

Although this was not a common theme emerging from all three schools, there were indications of favouritism in the traditional high school. Favouritism is defined as "the inequitable use of authority and power, particularly by school officials, for the purposes of protection and control" (Blase, 1988, p 152).

The practice may also be used by some principals to develop and retain the commitment of staff, as existed in one case school. The principle mirrors closely the exchange theory where certain privileges are offered to selected members of staff in return for their unconditional loyalty.

In the traditional high school one head of department alluded to instances of favouritism.

Well, I think that the principal is open to our suggestions but sometimes she is not fair. She tends to take the suggestions from certain members of her senior staff. In fact, I think, really, she has favourites or she allows some persons to have their way. That grieves me and we discuss it in our senior teachers meetings, but nothing has changed (Head of Physics, Traditional High School).

This head of department's comments are a clear indication of how she felt about some teachers getting special treatment. The inclination for some heads of department to be treated special, may also include their involvement in decision-making and being consulted on some issues. In addition, the favoured teacher would quite likely enjoy greater freedom, a desirable timetable and given first preference to seminars.

In the same school, another teacher explained that she was part of a group of seven teachers who were able to influence the principal's decisions. When asked why she thought the principal had this positive attitude towards her, she explained:

After 30 years, I definitely think I have some influence on the decisions the principal makes. The principal is someone who came up through the ranks'. She wasn't always the principal (Head of Chemistry, Traditional High School).

The experience of this head of department epitomized the complexity of micropolitics. While some heads of department were only allowed to make decisions within their departments, this head of department had the power to influence decisions at the very top. The power to influence the principal's decisions was indeed a privilege that contributes to micropolitical issues in the school. Adding to the complexity of micropolitics is the fact that this head of department might be seen as managing upwards.

A subtle form of favouritism might have existed in the technical and upgraded high schools. The heads of department in these school types did identify issues of some departments being favourably treated. This related mainly to access to and availability of material and resources in departments. The practice of favouritism can have a negative effect on teachers' motivation and subsequently, their involvement in their department and ultimately school wide activities. The potential also existed for tension and conflicts to be created between the principal and the head of department and also among heads of department who may or may not be getting special favours from their principal.

Summary

This section discusses the issues contributing to micropolitics across the three school types. The political nature of schools (Linden, 1999) forces both principals and heads of department to engage in micropolitical interactions. However, these interactions are unseen by those not involved. Heads of department and principals in the case study schools experienced subtle micropolitical interactions, some of which contributed to micropolitical conflicts. One concern was the leadership styles of their principals and their shifting micropolitical orientations which conversely forced some heads of department to develop combative strategies. The leadership style of principals is partly

influenced by their power base (Johnson *et al.*, 1998). However, principals do have the capacity to act positively towards heads of department and this determines whether they are referred to as effective or ineffective leaders (Blase and Blase, 1996). Heads of department developed various tactical manoeuvres to cope with the unfavourable attitudes of their principals.

The problem of delayed promotion was observed among three teachers in one particular school type. Their rejection of the principal's decision forced them to refer the matter to their teacher's union. However, the principal had developed his criteria on how teachers are promoted. One area that was common to all heads of department was their involvement in decision making. While Weiss (1993) argues that teachers are sometimes reluctant to participate in the decision-making process, this was not the case among these heads of department in the three case schools. Although some heads of department were involved in the decision-making process, those in the traditional high school seemed to have had greater involvement.

However, the fact that some heads of department in both the technical and upgraded high schools complained about their token participation, is an indication of their willingness to be more involved. It is clear, therefore, that heads of department in the case schools are not passive leaders, willingly accepting management decisions (Smylie, 1994), but have agency and as such exert their influence through micropolitical strategies.

In the traditional high school, while some heads of department were involved in decision-making, there were two heads of department who thought that their decisions were not important, especially on issues relation to teachers' assessment.

Department heads in the technical and upgraded high schools believed that their principals encouraged competition among departments. There was also one example in

which the head of department was seen as influencing the decisions of the principal which can be referred to as managing upwards. The experiences of heads of department have bred political conflicts between principals and heads of department and also within the middle leadership realm. Clearly, the decision to have persons other than the principal making decisions in schools (West, 1999) has created new conflicts between some stakeholders. However, amidst the presence of micropolitical conflicts in schools, principals continue to lead, teachers to teach and students to learn (Ball, 1987).

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Overview of the Research

This research entitled, 'Navigating from the middle: enabling middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica', was designed to examine the role and functions of academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica. More specifically, it sought to explore how academic middle leaders in three distinct types of secondary schools were consciously or unconsciously using their knowledge of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics in achieving effectiveness in their schools. Four research questions guided this enquiry. These are:

- What constitutes the academic middle leader's roles and functions in Jamaican secondary schools?
- What are the major challenges and conflicts confronting academic middle leaders whilst executing these roles and functions in secondary schools in Jamaica?
- What leadership strategies do academic middle leaders employ to enable them to achieve effectiveness in schools?
- To what extent are academic middle leaders able to effect change and contribute to a positive department culture?

The research was conducted using a combined methods approach, incorporating case study research and survey technique, which therefore provided both qualitative and

quantitative data. The use of mixed methodologies offered several advantages for the study including triangulating the research data. Several instruments were used to gather the data namely:

- Questionnaires administered to 202 subject teachers in six secondary schools representing three distinct school types, which are the technical high school, upgraded high school and the traditional high school. The six schools were selected from both rural and urban areas across the island of Jamaica.
- Semi-structured interviews conducted with fifteen academic middle leaders from the three distinct school types, which also formed the three case study schools.
- Semi-structured interviews conducted with all three principals of the case study schools.
- Observations conducted of senior management meetings in the case study schools.
- Unstructured interviews with officers from the Ministry of Education, Jamaica.
- Analysis of documentary data including school handbooks, minutes of meetings, and reports from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture.

Categorizing the Data

In an attempt to have a deeper understanding of how academic middle leaders were executing their roles and functions in secondary schools in Jamaica, the combined data were analysed under three broad categories, namely, professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics. The emergent themes were discussed under the relevant categories. From each category, a number of sub-themes were identified and discussed. Two additional sub-themes which emerged from the analysed data and which are presented in this chapter are 'positioning heads of department in secondary schools in Jamaica' and 'the levels of challenges confronting academic middle leaders'. These areas are presented in the section labelled 'discussions of findings'.

DISCUSSIONS

Positioning Heads of Department in Secondary Schools in Jamaica

Heads of department play an important role in the overall effectiveness of their department and by extension, their schools (Glover *et al.*, 1998; Harris, 2000; Sammons *et al.*, 1997). In the Jamaican context, the head of department position is an area of special responsibility (Education Act of Jamaica, 1980) and as such carries additional remuneration. Teachers who are promoted to the head of department position satisfy certain criteria, namely, experience in delivering the subject content, knowledge of the pedagogical skills relevant to the delivery of the subject and the ability to lead the department. In some Jamaican high schools, heads of department are expected to actively participate in extracurricular activities.

The findings of the research indicate that heads of department in the case study schools in Jamaica are offering exemplary leadership to both staff and students. There were instances when heads of department planned and executed programmes to inform students and their parents on issues relating to the upcoming Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). On other occasions, heads of department devised a strategy of grouping students, giving those with the ability to pursue several subjects, the opportunity to do so.

Heads of department practised strategic thinking (Davies & Davies, 2004) in leading their departments, especially where they had to manage across the two shifts. The two shifts system is a feature existing in two of the three case study schools. Among the strategies heads of department used in offering effective leadership for their departments across the two shifts were delegating aspects of their leadership role to a senior member of the department on the other shift and working across both shifts.

Heads of department were also keen on culture building by forging a collaborative department culture. This was achieved through the application of various strategies including the use of department socials and special treats for teachers on their anniversaries, birthdays, and other special events. One head of department developed a reward system which proved very effective in increasing teachers' sense of commitment and also their desire to work together for the good of their department. New teachers were allowed to feel a sense of belonging and were constantly supported in both content and pedagogy.

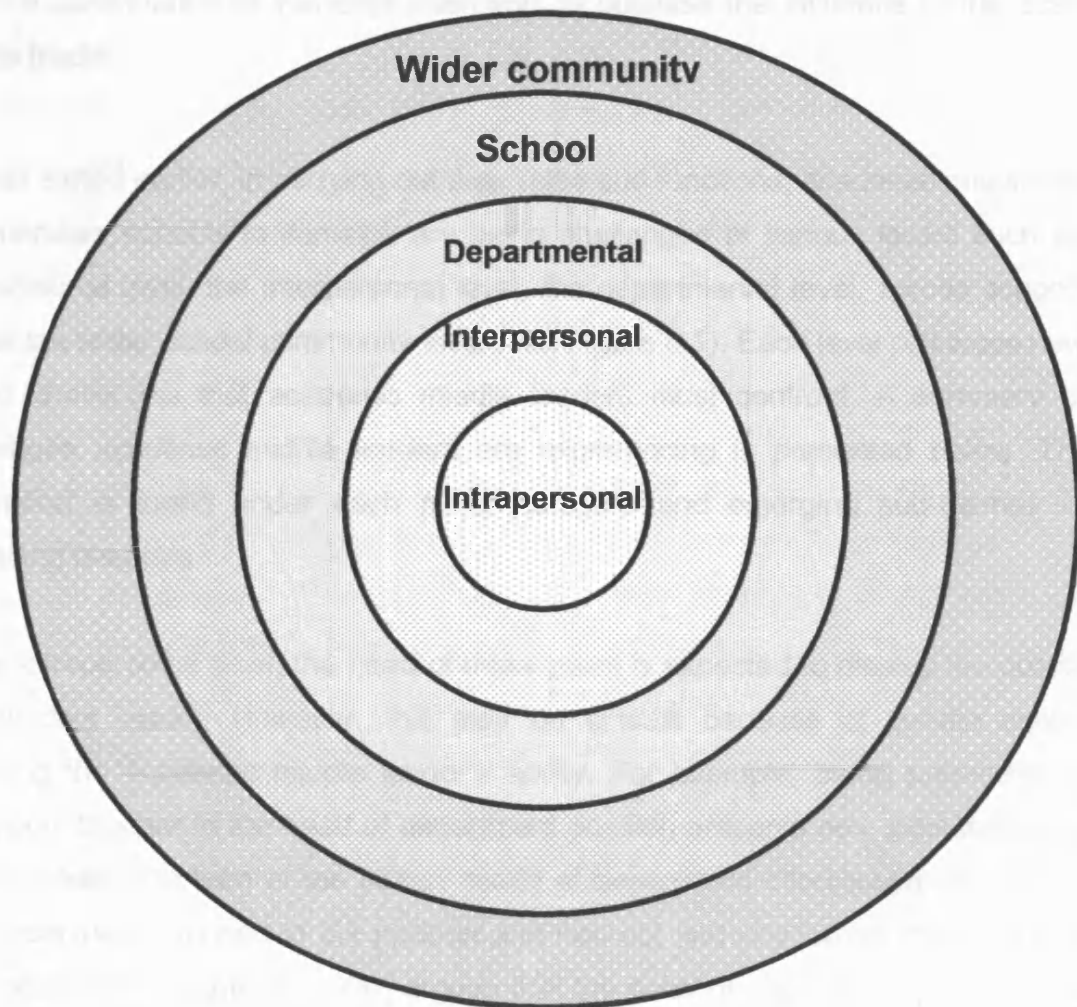
Tactical manoeuvres were developed by heads of department in order to cope with the shifting micropolitical orientations of their principals (Marshall, 1991). Some heads of department engaged in scanning their micropolitical environment in order to pre-empt attacks from their principals, especially those who are manipulative. Heads of department were also able to alternate their micropolitical orientations between proactive and protective strategies in relation to their principals.

Heads of department in the case schools were recognised for their level of professionalism, expert knowledge of the subject and their resilience amidst challenges. Therefore, although heads of department in secondary schools in Jamaica may lack the training required for the position, they are not daunted and continue to navigate from the middle.

Levels of Challenges Confronting Academic Middle Leaders

The data indicate that while academic middle leaders are aware of their roles and functions and are offering leadership in their departments, they are confronted with various challenges. Drawing on the data, a model is presented identifying the challenges facing the academic middle leader at five different levels, namely: the intrapersonal level, the interpersonal level, the departmental level, the school level and the wider community level (see Figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1 Levels of Challenges Confronting Academic Middle Leaders



In order to perform their roles and functions effectively, middle leaders need to have at their disposal a repertoire of strategies to negotiate these challenges. In developing such strategies, they apply their knowledge of professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics. Their ability to exert influence in their position, is also affected by other variables including their experience in the position, the level of support they

received from senior teachers and the nature of the particular context being managed. The concept of the zone of optimal influence is introduced to describe a situation in which a combination of variables interplays to optimise the influence of the academic middle leader.

As was stated earlier, in carrying out their roles and functions, academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica are being challenged at various levels such as, the intrapersonal level, the interpersonal level, the departmental level, across school level and at the wider school community level (see Figure 8.1). Each level produces new and varied challenges that academic middle leaders must confront. A summary of the challenges academic middle leaders are experiencing is presented below. The full discussion is found under each major category and emerging sub-themes in the preceding chapters.

At the intrapersonal level, the head of department is expected to display the qualities of an effective leader. However, this may be difficult because of certain challenges inhibiting the academic middle leader's ability. For example, being promoted from a classroom teacher to the head of department position presents new expectations of the middle leader. Thirteen of the fifteen heads of department interviewed, described how they were inexperienced in the position and had not had any formal training in leading their department. Schmidt (2000) argues that the head of department position poses a challenge for some heads of department. Adey (2000) also speaks about heads of department lacking the skills to lead and therefore struggle in the position. It seems that heads of department desire to lead effectively is primarily affected by inherent weaknesses in the individual, compounded by the lack of appropriate training.

The extent to which heads of department are able to lead effectively is dependent on the skills at their disposal. Some heads of department interviewed explained that although they were new in the position, they were able to offer quality leadership to the

department because of their previous experience. One particular head said that the members of the department supported her during her formative stages in the role.

At the interpersonal level the head of department is expected to offer leadership to individual members of the department. Some heads of department complained about the challenges they encountered from individual members of their departments. For example, one head explained that some senior members of the department were inclined not to comply with certain directives, including writing their schemes of work.

At the department level, some heads of department spoke about the challenge of getting members of their departments to work collaboratively. Forging a collaborative spirit was difficult for several reasons. In some cases, teachers who were members of the department for a longer period were not supportive of younger members or those new to the department. Also, some teachers who taught the upper grades acted superior to those teachers who taught the lower grades. There were cases where teachers felt isolated from the other members of their department and some also became indifferent to members in their department.

Some heads of department from the traditional high schools also explained that delegating to department members was sometimes problematic because they feared the task might not be properly done. Some heads of department felt that they were not being supported in their position by the principal and this undermined their ability to be effective.

At the school wide level, the heads of department complained about issues which created conflict with their principals and proved challenging for them. One head spoke about a poor level of communication with her principal. An issue affecting all the heads of department was the shifting micropolitical orientations of their principals and how that affected their ability to perform effectively in their departments. The problem of

competition among departments was also mentioned. Heads of department also questioned their exclusion from real decision making. The problem of delayed promotion was also noted by three heads of department, who felt that they could not command the level of respect from colleagues because of the uncertainty of their position.

At the community level, heads of department from the technical and upgraded high schools spoke about the shift system and how it affected their ability to offer effective supervision of teachers, especially those teachers who were on a different shift from that of the head of department. Some heads of department complained about some students not being interested in learning and therefore did very little to excel in their academic work. The performance of students reflects generally on the department and ultimately on the head of department. When the performance is poor, it can have a negative impact on the head of department.

In response to these challenges, academic middle leaders in varying degrees develop strategies utilising their knowledge of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics. Additionally, they will also draw on other senior members for support and the experiences they acquired before or during the position.

The next sub-section presents the four research questions and a discussion on the sub-themes emerging from the data.

FINDINGS

Four research questions guided this research inquiry. The findings of the research are therefore discussed under these four questions.

Question one: What constitutes the academic middle leader's roles and functions in Jamaican secondary schools?

Teaching Role

Academic middle leaders in the case study schools are engaging in their teaching role. From the interview data, it was observed that the heads of department in the case study schools were teaching between twelve and thirty-four sessions per week. In some cases heads of department were teaching more than the required number of sessions.

Monitoring Role

Academic middle leaders were engaging in various aspects of their monitoring roles in the case study schools in Jamaica. These include supervising teachers through the observation of their lessons, the examination of their schemes of work, and conducting formal and informal meetings with individual teachers about the progress of their work and the performance of students. This is consistent with the findings of Earley & Fletcher-Campbell (1989); Glover *et al.*, (1998); Wise (1999). On the other hand, of the fifteen academic middle leaders interviewed, none indicated a reluctance to monitor the classes of their colleagues. This is inconsistent with the findings of Earley & Fletcher Campbell (1989) and Glover *et al.*, (1998). The monitoring role of the academic middle

leader is a stated requirement in the Education Act of Jamaica and enforced by members of the senior management teams in schools. Therefore, the fact that academic middle leaders are willingly engaging in the monitoring of teachers may be as a result of the policy directive from the Ministry of Education, and not necessarily their desire to do so.

Team Leadership

The academic middle leaders in this study have demonstrated that leading the department's team in secondary schools in Jamaica is both challenging and rewarding. Heads of department were engaging in a variety of tasks relating to the leadership of their department's team, namely, leading communication initiatives within the department and between the department and senior management; developing a collegial climate, monitoring change, and leading initiatives aimed at improving teachers' performance and raising the achievements of students. One could therefore argue that heads of department in the case study schools in Jamaica are therefore playing a key leadership role.

Whilst academic middle leaders are maintaining their team leadership role, this is being done with very little thought of team leadership. For example, of the fifteen heads of department interviews conducted, only three department heads actually referred to their department as a team. Most used the word 'we' indicating a collective unit. This suggests that these academic middle leaders in the case schools have not fully grasped their role as team leaders and possibly their participatory role in influencing whole school issues. This is consistent with the findings of Adey & Jones (1998) who commented on heads of department's inability to think and plan strategically for whole school changes.

Within their departments, however, academic middle leaders operated at various levels and applied a range of strategies in empowering team members and motivating the department's team. Heads of department spoke about rotating the chair of meetings, having members delivering mini presentations, sending teachers to conferences, having teachers sharing information with other members of the team and identifying and developing teachers who have the capacity and willingness to lead.

Delegating within the Department

Heads of department in the technical and upgraded schools were more engaged in delegating within their departments. This resulted partly from the fact that in both the technical and upgraded high schools, heads of department are forced to supervise teachers across both shifts. This particular task is difficult and one strategy heads of department have developed is delegating areas of responsibility to another teacher on the opposite shift.

In the traditional high school, it was observed that the heads of department were less likely to delegate aspects of their role to other members of staff. This may have resulted from the fear heads of department had in teachers not completing a task properly.

Question Two: What are the major challenges and conflicts confronting middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica?

Lack of Time

Heads of department in the case study schools were being challenged in several ways. An immediate challenge was the lack of time to perform their numerous roles and

functions. It was observed that heads of department were carrying out many tasks in addition to their teaching and monitoring role (see Appendix H). Heads of department complained that because of the numerous tasks they had to perform in addition to their teaching and monitoring roles, they were unable to find the time to offer teachers the level of support they needed.

Some complained about not being able to supervise teachers, especially those new in the post. Other heads of department explained that they were not able to sit and observe a complete lesson and that this was unfair to the teachers.

The Shift System

Heads of department in schools that operated a shift system were at a disadvantage because in most cases they were not able to offer direct supervision to their teachers. This resulted in heads of department developing various strategies to overcome this particular difficulty. Among the strategies they used was attending school earlier before the beginning of their shift, or staying back at the end of the shift. The idea of working across shift was also used, but was not very effective. In most cases, the heads of department resorted to delegating aspects of their role to a senior teacher on the opposite shift.

The shift system also contributed to fragmentation across the two schools on opposite shifts. Heads of department alluded to the principals encouraging competition between the shifts, which undermined the spirit of collaboration between similar departments in the same school.

Principals' Leadership Styles

Heads of department across the three case schools spoke about the leadership of their principals who were described as manipulative or facilitative. Some heads of department spoke of the lack of support from their principals. Others spoke of the principal's reluctance to have departments organizing events involving the whole school. There was also a lack of respect from principals for some heads of department. The poor level of communication between principal and heads of department was also mentioned. Teachers also complained about the lack of resources and the need for the principal to be open when discussing issues relating to the school and their department's budget.

The shifting micropolitical orientation of the principals of the traditional and technical high schools was also noted. Heads of department in these schools explained that their principals tended to shift from one micropolitical orientation to the other when it suited them. For example, in the technical school, the principal who operated within a manipulative orientation sometimes shifted to being facilitative. Similarly, the principal of the traditional high school who was facilitative, sometimes shifted to being manipulative. The shifting micropolitical orientation of the principals forced heads of department to develop combative strategies in order to survive the conflicting leadership styles of their principals.

Decision-Making

Heads of department in all three school types explained that their principals in varying degrees used protective strategies which prevented them from having any meaningful input in the decision-making process. They argued that even when their principals invited them to sit on interview panels, their opinions were not readily considered. In the

traditional high school only one head of department spoke positively about her involvement in decision-making; all the others indicated that they participated in discussions and made decisions jointly, but these were in most cases not carried through.

In the upgraded and technical high schools, seven of the ten heads of department explained that they were hardly encouraged to share in the decision-making process. The principals in both schools, who were identified earlier as being of manipulative tendencies, tried to make decisions on their own. The principal of the technical high school, who one head of department referred to as 'a one man band' had explained that he was trying to appoint teachers without the involvement of the school board. One head of department in the same school noted that in one year the school board reprimanded this principal, forcing him to re-interview the teachers in the presence of the vice-principal.

The fact that teachers are not allowed to share in the decision making process, especially when they know that this is a part of their leadership role, contributed to micropolitical conflict between the principal and department heads.

Challenge to the Head of Department Leadership

Heads of department found leading their departments challenging. This resulted from several factors. Foremost was the way in which some heads of department were promoted. In the absence of a system of promoting teachers, principals used a haphazard promotion system that varied across school types and included such strategies as seniority, consensus, default and orchestration. Whilst the process may have been different, only orchestration offered any opportunity for training prior to being promoted. The fact that principals in some cases promoted teachers for personal reasons was not uncommon. However, the promotion process placed teachers in a position in which they were unable to manage effectively.

Also, the nature of the promotion process may have resulted in some heads of department being treated with little or no respect by their principal. For example, in one school the head of department told how the principal communicated with her through another member of staff. Another head of department explained to her department that she cannot make and carry through her decisions because the principal will not allow her to do so. The lack of respect some heads of department obtained from their principals serves to dis-empower them and create tension in their schools.

On the other hand, all three principals cited examples of heads of department lacking the competencies to offer effective leadership of their departments. This may have contributed to some principals' reluctance to offer some heads of department a greater degree of responsibility in decision-making.

Delayed Promotion

Three heads of department in the upgraded high school expressed concern about their insecure tenure. They complained that they have been in an acting position for between five and nine years. On the other hand, the principal of the upgraded school felt that he was acting in the interest of the students and the school in delaying the promotion of these teachers. The principal argued that teachers who are promoted must show commitment to both the students and the school. Additionally, the teacher must be competent to lead her department. This issue of delayed promotion is a contributor to the micropolitical conflict between the principal and the three acting heads of department.

Work Overload

Heads of department spoke about the amount of work they were expected to do. This was more prevalent in the traditional high school. One head of department identified the many different areas in which she was involved; these included organising prayer meetings, offering classes on weekends and preparing seminars for parents. It was also observed that some heads of department assigned additional classes to themselves, rather than offering these to other teachers.

Level of Preparation

Another challenge confronting academic middle leaders was their level of preparation and training. The position of head of department in secondary schools in Jamaica is a privileged one and teachers would hardly refuse the opportunity to lead their department. However, no system exists to prepare teachers for the role and even when placed in the position, the provisions for training are grossly inadequate. It seems that in the case study schools, teachers who became heads of department were expected to model the role of their predecessor. However, not all heads of department were good role models. This, therefore, presents a dilemma for heads of department, having the responsibility to lead but not having the training to execute the leadership role effectively.

Of the fifteen heads of department interviewed, thirteen spoke about the challenge of being a middle leader, especially in the absence of any immediate form of training. The lack of training caused department heads some stress, as there were uncertainties in executing their roles. In all three case study schools, there was a need for training and professional development. Although training is necessary for heads of department in all three schools, there is a more urgent need in the upgraded high school. This is because the school was upgraded from an All-Age school to a High school, with little attention being paid to developing the leadership capacity of teachers (Morris, 1998).

Subsequently, teachers promoted to the head of department position lacked both the technical and human skills necessary to lead a department. Furthermore, the low competency level of heads of department, may have contributed to the principals' reluctance to promote teachers from their acting positions or to involve heads of department in the decision making process.

The Jamaican government has recognized the need for training at all levels of the secondary school education system and has developed various programmes. One such programme is the Secondary School Enhancement Programme, which started in 2002 and aimed at improving the quality of education in the upgraded high schools (Economic and Social Survey Jamaica, 2002). There is also the Leadership Development workshop for principals, vice principals and selected teachers. The Ministry of Education Youth and Culture along with the Human Employment and Resources Training (HEART) Trust / the National Training Agency (NTA), and the Technical High School Development Project (THSDP) have formed a joint venture programme. The programme is aimed at empowering all levels of staff in the fourteen technical high schools across the island (*Economic and Social Survey Jamaica*, 2002).

More recently the government has awarded scholarships to principals of primary schools to pursue training in Educational Leadership in Canada. The Ministry of Education is also sponsoring the training of secondary school principals on a one year programme in School Leadership, at the University of The West Indies. Also, the Professional Development Unit (PDU) at the Ministry of Education has developed and is conducting training of heads of departments (Economic and Social Survey Jamaica, 2002). However, given the limited resources, it is unlikely that teachers in the four hundred and twenty public secondary schools across the island will all benefit.

Another recent initiative is the Support Programme for heads of department who worked in schools that are on the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) programme. A

discussion of the ROSE programme can be found in Chapter One. The training of heads of department who work in ROSE schools is part of the initiative to empower teachers in these schools. However, there is some concern with regard to the extent the programme will provide training for all heads of department in the ROSE schools. Also, to what extent are the heads of department provided with any form of follow-up support after the initial training has been completed.

Question Three: What leadership strategies do middle leaders employ to enable them to achieve effectiveness?

Strategic Thinking

Academic middle leaders displayed strategic thinking in executing their leadership role. This may have resulted from the vast experience of most of the heads of department. Twelve of the heads of department have been teaching for between twelve and thirty one years. Also, nine of them have had between ten to fifteen years in the position of head of department. Heads of department explain that at times they apply various strategies in order to achieve success for the department. One head explained how she identified teachers who needed experience in teaching at various levels and indicated to the vice principal when such teachers should be moved. The department head also explained that teachers are aware of this system, and the movement between class levels is not seen as a promotion or demotion.

Motivating Teachers

Another head of department spoke about effectively motivating her department's team. She explained that she applied various strategies to involve the members in leadership and also to build commitment in the department. Among the strategies she used were

rotating the department chair, having members preparing and delivering mini presentations, and also giving members including new teachers, areas of responsibility. Heads of department in the technical and upgraded schools identified teachers who were respected by other members of the department to coordinate the department on the opposite shift.

In cases where teachers were challenging the leadership, heads of department would remind them of the Code of Regulation and that her job was to ensure that the principles of the code were adhered to.

Demonstrating Care and Concern for Staff and Students

Heads of department in all three school types demonstrated care and concern for both staff and students. Efforts were made to recognise the contribution of teachers on special occasions, for example, Teachers' Day. New teachers were guided in how to relate to students, especially where the class consisted mainly of boys. Students were given special attention and teachers were involved in the department's social activities. Teachers were encouraged to assist students in achieving not only in their academic work, but also in their extra-curricular activities.

Navigating their Micropolitical Environment

Heads of department in the case schools are aware of the issues between the principals and themselves which created micropolitical conflicts. They have also developed manoeuvres to combat attacks from their principals. One head of department discovered that the principal preferred to have plans launched through his office and the head of department seems quite happy with this strategy. Another head of department recognised that she was able to influence her principal in some areas of decision making.

Question Four: To what extent are middle leaders able to effect change and contribute to a positive school culture?

Change Agents

Academic middle leaders were observed as not contributing to any significant changes in their school. Incidents of programmes implemented were mentioned, but these were not supported by the principal and were never allowed to continue. In the upgraded high school one head of department spoke about how she rearranged the sitting of internal examinations to allow students more time to have class revisions after the holidays, but it was disallowed after one examination sitting. Another head of department described how she organised the grouping of students in years based on ability. She explained that the programme worked, but it was not allowed to continue. She said no reason was given when it was stopped. Generally, it would seem that heads of department are not given the opportunity to implement change and even when this is done and proves successful, the principals are not usually supportive.

Culture Modelling and Culture Maintenance

An important aspect of the middle leader's role is culture modelling and culture maintenance. The modelling role included heads of department ensuring that new members of staff were initiated and provided with the support they need to become effective in the department. Heads of department indicated that new teachers bring a wealth of knowledge and experience which has to be harnessed and fashioned into the form that will work for the good of the department. Subsequently, the new teachers must be guided and supported in their subject's knowledge and pedagogy. Also, they will need to be given minor areas of responsibilities in their department.

Culture maintenance was particularly concerned with ensuring that older colleagues in the department continued to embrace the popular culture within the department. Heads of department explained that the strategy they used included making requests publicly so that all teachers were seen as equal. Also, in some cases, the head of department used terms such as 'we' to suggest a group effort. In one school the head of department prepared and shared lesson plans with all her teachers. Efforts were made to encourage students to think positively about themselves and strive to achieve their best.

Forging a Collaborative Department Culture

Heads of department were aware of the need to develop a collaborative approach in how teachers operated. A number of strategies were identified which were used in forging a collaborative department culture. These included:

- Having treats at department meetings
- Recognising teachers' birthdays and other events with tokens
- Using the 'we' concept when referring to the department
- Having members contributing to a department fund for their benefit
- Constant reminders to teachers that 'its the students why we are here'
- Rotating the chairing of department meetings
- Developing a reward system involving the use of stars and smiling faces
- Allowing teachers to prepare and present on various topics at department meetings
- Requiring teachers to share information gathered at conferences.
- Having lunch together at least once per week
- Exchanging gifts at Christmas and hosting activities involving students in the department.

Heads of department also explained that the location of the department staff-room allowed members to see and meet and talk regularly, and this helped to create a positive air within the department and amongst members.

The Department Culture Continuum

There were examples of heads of department explaining that their departments were not united and no spirit of collaboration existed within the team. One head of department explained that the teachers all got along well with her, but they did not get along together. The possible causes for the lack of cohesion in the departments varied across the three school types. In one very large school, the department head blamed the physical layout of the school, which separated the teachers from each other and made any form of group contact difficult, but not impossible. In another school, the department head spoke about the senior members of the department who sometimes were uncooperative and preferred to remain outside of the group.

The variations in teachers' attitude are represented on a department culture continuum. Heads of department identified five different culture types that existed among both new and old members. These culture types include monoculture (Morgan, 1996), individualism, contrived collegiality, balkanisation (Hargreaves, 1995) and toxic culture (Peterson & Deal, 1998).

Limitations of the Research

This research was a small-scale study, and like any research of its kind, has its limitations. The research design involved six schools which comprised three distinct school types in Jamaica. The population consisted of two hundred and two teachers, fifteen heads of department and three principals. The data collected therefore cannot be seen as representative of secondary schools in Jamaica. This, therefore, questions the extent to which the findings can be generalised to the wider school community. Also,

the research focused on only three school types. There is need to explore the conditions in other types of school in an effort to understand if the findings are similar.

The research involved a significant number of females. All heads of department interviewed were female. Whether this has any significant effect on the finding is worth exploring. The use of a tape recorder may have intimidated some heads of department, especially because of the potentially intrusive nature of the topic.

Strengths of the Research

As was discussed in Chapter One, no empirical research has been conducted on academic middle leaders in secondary schools in Jamaica. The absence of a body of literature and evidence through research, make this study of special importance to educational practitioners in Jamaica.

Firstly, the research utilized a combined methodological approach incorporating survey and case study, which added credibility to the data and the subsequent findings. Analysis of the data on all three schools provided issues which were common to all three schools or common only to two; additionally, some issues were unique to one particular school.

Academic middle leaders play a pivotal role in school improvement and effectiveness and therefore, the area of academic middle leadership within the Jamaican context should be explored in an effort to develop strategies for improved effective leadership and ultimately improved students' performance in Jamaican secondary schools.

The Government of Jamaica is reorganising the island's education system. Unlike previous reforms, the current reform is taking a holistic approach at developing education at all levels. This research is therefore timely, since it offers the opportunity

for policy makers to examine issues pertinent to developing the middle leadership realm of school leadership. Among the issues identified in the study are:

- The need for training of middle leaders and principals
- The need to develop a clear policy on promoting teachers
- The re-examination of the shift system to determine if it has outlived its usefulness
- The need to create more equity among the three school types, in relation to teaching resources and physical infrastructure.

Within an international context, the research has added to a robust body of empirical work on middle leaders. However, the research was done in Jamaica, which makes it unique since it provides the opportunity for the world to hear the voices of other middle leaders within this cultural context.

Secondly, this research highlighted the various levels of challenges middle leaders are confronting as they execute their roles and functions and therefore whilst different from previous work done by Busher & Harris, (1999), Wise (1999) and Glover *et al.*, (1998), complements them, since it illuminates other aspects of middle leadership.

Thirdly, a tripartite leadership model was developed to explore how academic middle leaders in three distinct types of secondary schools in Jamaica executed their roles and functions. The research, therefore, adds a new dimension to the existing body of empirical work on academic middle leaders, since it examines middle leadership using a tripartite leadership perspective, which combines professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics. Looking at middle leadership through three related strands, provides a new way of exploring the middle leadership realm of school organization.

Exploring the challenges confronting middle leaders has opened up another dimension of viewing academic middle leaders. A survey of existing research on similar topics done by Busher & Harris, (1999), Glover *et al*, (1998) and Wise (1999) has identified many approaches to examining middle leadership. It is hoped that this research will add to that body of empirical knowledge.

Conclusions

Using a tripartite leadership model consisting of professional leadership, department culture and micropolitics, the research explores how academic middle leaders in three distinct types of secondary schools in Jamaica are accomplishing their roles and functions. The findings indicate that although the academic leadership position carries numerous challenges, consciously or unconsciously, academic middle leaders have developed various tactical manoeuvres to combat the challenges they are experiencing or are likely to experience from principals, colleagues, senior teachers and new members of staff. As such, they are able to navigate from the middle, enabled by their ability to apply the skills they have acquired.

Special Note

**Page 298 missing from
the original**

Reference List

- Achinstein, B. (2002). Conflict Amid Community: The Micropolitics of Teacher Collaboration. *Teachers College Record*, 104(3), 421-455.
- Adey, K. (2000). Professional Development Priorities: The Views of Professional Middle Mangers in Schools. *Educational Management and Administration*, 28(4), 419-431.
- Adey, K., & Jones, J. (1998). Developing Needs of Middle Managers: The View of Senior Mangers. *Journal of In-Service Education*, 24(1).
- Allix, N. (2000). Transformational Leadership: Democratic or Despotic. *Educational Management and Administration*, 28(1), 7-20.
- Anderson, G. (1991). Cognitive Politics of Principals and Teachers: Ideological Control in an Elementary School. In J. Blase (Ed.), *The Politics of Life in Schools; Power, Conflict, and Cooperation*. London: Sage.
- Anderson, K. (2004). The Nature of Teacher Leadership. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 15(1), 97-113.
- Angelides, P., & Ainscow, M. (2000). Making Sense of the Role of Culture in School Improvement. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 11(2), 145-163.
- Aubrey-Hopkins, J., & James, C. (2002). Improving Practice in Subject Departments: The Experience of Secondary School Subject Leaders in Wales. *School Leadership and Management*, 22(3), 305-320.
- Augier, F., Gordon, S., Hall, D., & Reckford, M. (1971). *The Making of the West Indies*. London: Longman Group.
- Bacharach, S. B., & Mundell, B. L. (1995). Organisational Politics in Schools: Micro, Macro and Logics of Action. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 29(4), 423-452.
- Ball, S. J. (1987). *The Micropolitics of the School: Towards a Theory of School Organisation*. London: Methuen.
- Barnett, K., McCormick, J., & Conners, R. (2000). Leadership Behaviour of Secondary School Principals, Teacher Outcomes and School Culture. *The Australian Association for Research in Education Annual Conference*. Sydney.
- Barth, R. (1990). *Improving Schools from Within*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bassey, M. (1999). *Case Study in Educational Settings*. London: Open University Press.
- BBC Education News. (2004). School Failure Rate Increasing. Retrieved 19. 01, 2004, from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/low/education/3401097.stm>
- Beatty, B. (1999). Feeling Like a Leader: the Emotions of Leadership. *The Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association*. Montreal.
- Belbin, M. (1981). *Management Teams: Why They Succeed or Fail*. London: Heinemann.
- Bell. (1992). *Managing teams in Secondary Schools*. London: Routledge.
- Bell, J. (2000). *Doing your Research Project* (Third ed.). Buckingham: Open University.

- Bennett, N. (1995). *Managing Professional Teachers; Middle Management in Primary and Secondary Schools*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Bennett, N. (2005). Power, Structure and Culture: an Organisational View of School Effectiveness and School Improvement. In A. Harris & N. Bennett (Eds.), *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. London: Continuum.
- Bennett, N., & Harris, A. (1999). 'Hearing Truth from Power? Organisational Theory, School Effectiveness and School Improvement'. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 10(4), 533-550.
- Bennett, N., Wise, C., Wood, P., and Economou, A. (2003). *The Role and Purpose of Middle Leaders in Secondary Schools*. London: National College for School Leadership.
- Black, C. (1973). *A New History of Jamaica*. London: Collins Clear Type Press.
- Blase, J. (1991). The Micropolitics of Closed School Principals. *Education and Urban Society*, 23, 356-378.
- Blase, J., & Anderson, G. (1995). *The Micropolitics of Educational Leadership: From Control to Empowerment*. London: Cassell.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2002a). The Dark Side of Leadership: Teacher Perspectives of Principal Mistreatment. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38(5), 671 -727.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2002b). The Micropolitics of Instructional Supervision: A Call for Research. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38(1), 6-44.
- Bodgan, R., & Biklen, S. (1998). *Qualitative Research for Education* (Third ed.). London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Bolam, R., & Turner, C. (1998). Instructional Leadership: The Role of Heads of Subject Departments in British Secondary Schools, *Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association*. San Diego.
- Borg, W., & Gall, M. (1989). *Educational Research: An Introduction* (Fifth ed.). New York: Longman.
- Brannen, J. (2003). Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches: an Overview. In J. Brannen & T. Coram (Eds.), *Mixing Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Research*. Hants: Ashgate.
- Brannen, J., & Coram, T. (Eds.). (2003). *Mixing Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Research*. Hants: Ashgate Publishing.
- Brewer, J., & Hunter, A. (1989). *Multimethod Research* (Vol. 175). London: Sage.
- Briggs, A. (2005). Middle Managers in English Further Education Colleges: Understanding and Modelling the Role. *Education Management Administration and Leadership*, 33(1), 27-50.
- Briggs, A., Bush, T., & Middlewood, D. (2006). From Immersion to Establishment: The Challenges Facing New School Heads and the Role of New Visions in Resolving them. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 36(2), 257-276.
- Briggs, A. R. J. (2003). Finding the Balance: Exploring the Organic and Mechanical Dimensions of Middle Manager Roles in English Further Education Colleges. *Educational Management and Administration*, 31(4), 421-436.

- Brown, M., & Rutherford, D. (1998). Changing Roles and Raising Standards: New Challenges for Heads of Department. *In School Leadership and Management*, 18(1), 75-88.
- Brown, M., Rutherford, D., & Boyle, B. (2000). Leadership for School Improvement: The Role of the Head of Department in UK Secondary Schools. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 11(2), 237-258.
- Bryman, A. (2000). *Quantity and Quality in Social Research* (Vol. 18). London: Unwin Hyman Ltd.
- Bryman, A. (2001). *Social Research Methods*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bullock, K., James, C., & Jamieson, I. (1995). An Exploratory Study of Novices and Experts in Educational Management. *School Leadership and Management*, 23(3), 197-205.
- Burgess, R. (1982). Multiple Strategies in Field Research. In R. Burgess (Ed.), *Field Research: A Sourcebook and Field Manual*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Burgess, R. (1984). *In The Field: An Introduction to Field Research*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Bush, T. (2002). Organisational Culture and Strategic Management in Educational Management. In J. Lumby & D. Middlewood (Eds.).
- Bush, T. (2003). Middle Level Leaders Thinkpiece.
- Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2003). *School Leadership: Concepts and Evidence*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.
- Bush, T., & Jackson, D. (2002). A Preparation for School Leadership: International Perspective. *Education Management and Administration*, 30(4), 417-429.
- Busher, H. (2001). Managing Change: A middle Leader Perspective. In M. Calvert, J. Harvey & B. Cole (Eds.), *Managing Change*. Sheffield: Phillip Armstrong.
- Busher, H. (2002). Ethics of Research in Education. In M. Coleman & A. R. J. Briggs (Eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Busher, H., & Bernard, B. (2003). The Crux of Leadership: Shaping School Culture by Contesting the Policy Contexts and Practices of Teaching and Learning. *Educational Management and Leadership*, 31(1), pp 51-65.
- Busher, H., & Blease, D. (2000). Growing Collegial Cultures in Subject Departments in Secondary Schools. *School Leadership and Management*, 20(1), 99-112.
- Busher, H., & Harris, A. (1999). Leadership of School Subject Areas: Tension and Dimensions of Management in the Middle. *School Leadership and Effectiveness*, 19(3), 305-317.
- Busher, H., & Saran, R. (1994). Towards a Model of School Leadership. *Educational Management and Administration*, 22(1), 5-13.
- Butt, G., & Lance, A. (2005). Secondary Teacher Workload and Job Satisfaction: Do Successful Strategies for Change Exist? *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 33(4), 401-423.

- Butt, R. & Retallick, J. (2002). Professional Well-being and Learning: A Study of Administrators-teacher Workplace Relationships. *Journal of Educational Enquiry*, 3 (1), 17-34
- Campbell, A., & Fiske, D. (1959). Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait - Multimethod Matrix. *Psychological Bulletin*, 56, 81-105.
- Campbell, H. (2004, 5, September). Blame Game. *The Sunday Gleaner*, pp. 6A, 7A.
- Capel, S., Leask, M., & Turner, T. (2000). *Learning to Teach in the Secondary School* (Second ed.). London: Routledge.
- Cardno, C. (2002). Team Learning: Opportunities and Challenges for School Leaders'. *School Leadership and Management*, 22(2), 211-223.
- Cassell, C., & Synmon, G. (Eds.). (1994). *Qualitative Methods in Organisational Research: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage.
- Cheng, Y. (1993). Profile of Organisational Culture and Effective Schools. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 4(2), 85-110.
- Chrispeels, J. & Martin, K. (2002). Four School Leadership Teams Define Their Roles Within Organisational and Political Structures to Improve Student Learning. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 13(3), 327-365.
- Chrispeels, J., Castillo, S., & Brown, J. (2000). School Leadership Teams: A Process Model of Team Development. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 11(1), 20-56.
- Clement, C. (2003). Connecting School Principals, School Culture and School Improvement. *Leading and Managing*, 9(2), 112-116.
- Cockroft Report (1982) Mathematics Counts*, London HMSO
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2003). *Research Methods in Education* (Fifth ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.
- Connolly, M., Connolly, U., & James, C. (2000). Leadership in Educational Change. *British Journal of Management*, 11(1), 61-71.
- Corbett, H. (1991). Community Influence and School Micropolitics. In J. Blase (Ed.), *The Politics of Life in Schools: Power, Conflict, and Cooperation* London: Sage.
- Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social Research: Theory Methods and Techniques* London Sage.
- Cranston, N. (2005). Enhancing the Effectiveness of Senior management Teams in Schools. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 33(1), 79- 91.
- Creswell, J. (1994). *Research Design: Qualitative and quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Creswell, J. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. London: Sage.

- Davies, J. B., & Davies, B. (2004). Strategic leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 24 (1) 29-38.
- Davies, S. (1998). Taking aim of leadership. *Thrust for Educational Leadership*, 28(2).
- Davis, R. (2004). Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica: A Transformed Educational System (pp. 1-90): Jamaica Printing Office.
- Deal, T., & Peterson, K. (1999). *Shaping School Culture: The Art of Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Denison, D. (1990). *Corporate Culture and Organisational Effectiveness*. New York: Wiley.
- Denzin, N. (1970). *The Research Act in Sociology*. London: Butterworth.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research*. London: sage.
- Durrant, J., & Holden, G. (2006). *Teachers Leading Change; Doing Research for School Improvement*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Earley, P. (1990). 'Piggy in the Middle: Middle Management in Education. *Educational*, 176(10).
- Earley, P., & Fletcher- Campbell, F. (1989). *The Time to Change: Department and Faculty Heads at Work*. Windsor: NFER and Routledge.
- Economic and Social Survey Jamaica*. (2005). Kingston, Jamaica: The Planning Institute of Jamaica.
- Education Act of Jamaica. (1980). Printing Office. Kingston Jamaica
- Ehrich, L. C., & Cranston, N. (2005). Developing senior management teams in schools. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 32(1), 21-31.
- Evans, H. (2001). *Inside Jamaican Schools*. Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press.
- Field, A. (2005). *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. London: Sage.
- Fink, D. (1999). Deadwood Didn't kill Itself: A Pathology of Failing Schools. *Educational Management and Administration*, 27 (2), 132-141.
- Firestone, W., & Louis, S. (1999). School as Cultures. In J. Murphy & K. Louis (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Educational Administration* (Second ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Fletcher-Campbell, F. (2003). Promotion to middle management: some practitioners' perceptions. *Educational Research*, 45(1), 1-15.
- Flores, M. (2004). The Impact of School Culture and Leadership on New Teachers' Learning in the Workplace. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 7(4), 297-318.
- French, W. L. & Raven, B. (1968). Basis of Social Power. In D. Cartwright & A zander (Eds.), *Grouping Dynamics: Research and Theory* (Third Ed.).pp 259-269). New York: Harper and Row.
- Frost, D., & Durrant, J. (2002). Teachers as leaders: exploring the impact of teacher-led development work. *School Leadership and Management*, 22(2), 143-161.

- Frost, D., & Harris, A. (2003). Teacher leadership: towards a research agenda. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(3), 497-498.
- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a Culture of Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (1992). *What's Worth Fighting for in Schools*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Gehrke, N. (1991). Developing teacher leadership skills. *ERIC Digest*, 5.
- Gilchrist, C. (2005, 28 February). Bursar's President Cites Anomaly in Schools' Funding. *The Daily Observer*, p. 4.
- Glover, D., Gleeson, D., Gough, G., & Johnson, M. (1998). The Meaning of Management: The Development Needs of Middle Mangers in Secondary Schools. *Educational Management and Administration*, 26(3), 279-292.
- Glover, D., & Miller, D. (1999). The Working Day of the Subject Leader and The Interruptions on Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools. *Research in Education*, 62, 55-67.
- Gold, A., Evans, J., Earley, P., & Halpin, D. (2003). Principled Principals? Vale-Driven Leadership: Evidence from Ten Case Studies of 'Outstanding' School Leaders. *Educational Management and Administration*, 31(2), 127-138.
- Gorard, S., & Taylor, C. (2004). *Combining Methods in Educational and Social Research*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Gratz, L. (1998). *The Micropolitics of Special Education in Three Minnesota Districts.*, University of Minnesota, Minnesota.
- Greenfield, W., JR. (1991). The Micropolitics of Leadership in an Urban Elementary School. In J. Blase (Ed.), *The Politics of Life in Schools: Power Conflict, and Cooperation* (pp. 161-183). London: Sage.
- Gronn, P. (1999). *The making of educational Leaders*. London: Cassell.
- Gronn, P. (2000). Distributed properties: a new architecture of leadership. *Educational Management and Administration*, 28(3), 371-338.
- Gronn, P., & Lacey, K. (2004). Positioning Oneself for Teaching: Feelings of Teachers on Teaching: A survey of the Teaching Profession Vulnerability Among Aspirant School Principals. *School Leadership and Management*, 24(4), 405-424.
- Gunter, H. (2002). *Leaders and Leadership in Education*. London: Paul Chapman.
- H., M., I., Wales. (1991). A Survey of Mathematics in Key Stage 3 in the Secondary Schools in Wales: Cardiff, Welsh Office.
- Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. (1996). Reassessing the Principal's Role in School Effectiveness: A Review of Empirical Research (1980-1995). *School Leadership Quarterly*, 32(1), 5-44.
- Hamlin, B. (1990). The Competent Manager in Secondary Schools. In *Educational Management and Administration*, 18(3), 3-10.
- Hammersley, M. (2003). Deconstructing the Qualitative-Qualitative Divide. In J. Brannen & T. Coram (Eds.), *Mixing Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Research*. Hants: Ashgate.
- Hammersley, M., & Gomm, R. (Eds.). (2000). *Case Study Method*. London: Sage.

- Hannay, L., & Ross, J. (1999). Department Heads as Middle Managers? Questioning the Black Box. *School Leadership and Management*, 19(3), 345-358.
- Hardy, M., & Bryman, D. (2004). *Handbook of Data Analysis*. London: Sage.
- Hargie, O., Dickson, D., & Turish, D. (1999). *Communication in Management*, Gower. Aldershot
- Hargreaves, A. (1995). *Changing Teachers, Changing Times: Teachers' Work and culture in the Postmodern Age*. London: Cassell.
- Harris, A. (2001). Building the Capacity for School Improvement. *School Leadership and management*, 21(3), 261-269.
- Harris, A. (2004). Distributed Leadership and School Improvement: Leading or Misleading. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 32(1), 11-24.
- Harris, A. (2006). Opening Up the 'Black Box' of Leadership Practice: Taking a Distributed Leadership Perspective. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 34(2), 37-45.
- Harris, A., & Bennett, N. (2005). *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. London:
- Harris, A., & Day, C. (2003). From Singular to Plural? Challenging the Orthodox of School Leadership. In N. Bennett & L. Anderson (Eds.), *Rethinking Educational Leadership* (pp. 89-99). London: SAGE.
- Harris, A., Jamieson, I., & Russ, J. (1995). A Study of Effective Departments in Secondary Schools. *School Organisation*, 15(3), 283-299.
- Harris, A., & Muijs, D. (2002). *Teacher Leadership: a review of research*, Nottingham. London: National College for School Leadership.
- Harrison, W., & Lembeck, E. (1996). Emergent teacher leaders. In A. Moller & M. Katzenmeyer (Eds.), *Every Teacher is a Leader: Realising the Potential of Teacher Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hitchcock, B., & Hughes, D. (1995). *Research and the Teacher: A Qualitative Introduction to School-based Research* (Second ed.). London.
- Hopkins, D. (1990). The International School Improvement Project (ISIP) and Effective Schooling: towards a synthesis. *School Organisation*, 10(2 & 3), 179-194.
- Hopkins, D., & Jackson, D. (2002). 'Building the Capacity for Leading and Learning'. In A. Harris, C. Day, M. Hadfield, A. Hargreaves & C. Chapman (Eds.), *Effective Leadership for School Improvement*. London: Routledge.
- Hoyle, E. (1986). *The Politics of School Management*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Hsieh, C., & Shen, J. (1998). Teachers', Principals' and Superintendents' Conceptions of Leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 18(1), 107-121.
- Hughes, J., & Sharrock, W. (1997). *The Philosophy of Social Research* (Third ed.). London: Longman.
- James-Reid, O. (1982). Training School Principals: a Timely Plea. *Caribbean Journal of Education*, 9(3), 229-242.

- James-Reid, O. (2001). *Teaching its Management and Function* (Revised ed.). Kingston: LMH Publishing.
- Jirasinghe, D., & Lyons, G. (1995). Management Competencies in Action: A Practical Framework. *School Organisation*, 15(3), 267-281.
- Johnson, B. (2004). Local School Micropolitical Agency: An Antidote to New Managerialism. *School Leadership and Management*, 24(3), 267 - 286.
- Johnson, P., & Short, M. (1998). Principal's leader power, teacher empowerment, teacher compliance and conflict. *Education Management and Administration*, 26(2), 147-159.
- Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (1996). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Leadership development for teachers*. London: Thousand Oaks, Sage.
- Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (2001). *Awakening the sleeping giant: helping teachers develop as leaders* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Kenneth, L., Begley, P., & Cousins, P. (1992). *Developing Expert Leadership*. London: Falmer Press.
- Kerry, T., & Murdoch, A. (1993). Education Managers as Leaders: Some Thoughts on the Context of the Changing Nature of Schools. *School Organization*, 13(3), 221-230.
- King, R. (1987). The Jamaica Schools Commission and the Development of Secondary Education. In R. King (Ed.), *Education in The Caribbean: Historical Perspectives* (Vol. 14, pp. 88-108). Kingston: University of the West Indies.
- King, R. (1998). Educational Inequality in Jamaica: The Need for Reform. *Institute of Educational Reform*, 1, 43-58.
- kirk, J., & Miller, M. (1986). *Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research* (Vol. 1). London: Sage.
- Kirkham, G. (2005). Leading and achieving a learning school through developing middle leaders. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 28(2), 151 - 163.
- Kuhn, S. (1962). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago.
- Kumar, R. (1999). *Research Methodology: A step- By-Step for Beginners*. London: Sage.
- Lam, S., Yim, P., & Lam, T. (2002). Transforming School Culture: Can True Collaboration be Initiated? 44(2), 181-195.
- Lambert, L. (1998). Building leadership capacity in schools. *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development*.
- Lambert, L. (2003). Leadership redefined: an evocative context for teacher leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 23(4), 421-430.
- Lashway, L. (1996). Educational management. *Eric Digest*, 105.
- Lashway, L. (2003). Distributed leadership. *Clearing House on Educational Management*.
- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (1997). Explaining variations in teachers' perception of principals' leadership. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 35(4), 312-331.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

- Lindle, J. (1999). What can the Study of Micropolitics Contribute to the Practice of Leadership in Reforming Schools? *School Leadership and Management*, 19(2), 171-178.
- Livesy, C. (2003). Social Research in Education. Retrieved 23/02/ 2004, from www.sociology.org
- Louis, K., & Marks, H. (1996). Teachers' Professional Community in Restructuring Schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 33(4), 757-786.
- MacBeath. (1999). *Effective School Leaders: How to Evaluate and Improve your Leadership Potential*. London: Prentice Hall.
- MacBeath. (2003). The Alphabet Soup of Leadership. *Inform Newsletter of Leadership for Learning: The Cambridge Network*.
- Malen, B. (1995). The Micropolitics of Education: Mapping the Multiple Dimensions of Power Relations in School Politics. In J. a. L. Scribner, D (Ed.), *The Study of Educational Politics*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Manley, M. (1974). *The Politics of Change: A Jamaican Testament*. London: Andre Deutsch.
- Marshall, C. (1991). The Chasm Between Administrators and Teacher Cultures. In J. Blase (Ed.), *The Politics of Life in Schools: Power, Conflict and Cooperation*. London: Sage.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1999). *Designing Qualitative Research* (Third ed.). London: Sage.
- Mawhinney, H. (1999). The Problems and Prospects of Studying the Micropolitics of Leadership in Reforming Schools. *School Leadership and Management*, 19, 159-170.
- May, T. (2001). *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*. Buckingham: Open University.
- McCartney, C., & Shrag, F. (1990). Departmental and School Leadership in Promoting Higher-Order Thinking. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 22(6), 529-543.
- Melenyzer, B. (1990). Teacher Empowerment: the Discourse, Meaning and Social Actions of Teachers, *National Council of States on In-service Education*. Orlando, FL.
- Mercer, D., & Ri, L. (2006). Closing the Gap: The Role of Head of Department in Chinese Secondary Schools. *Education Management Administration and Leadership*, 34(1), 105-120.
- Merriam, S. (1988). *Case Study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach*. California: Jossey-Bass.
- Miller, E. (1984). *Educational Research: The English Speaking Caribbean*. Ottawa, Canada.: International Development Research Centre (IDRC-TS46E).
- Miller, E. (1985). Nature and Needs of Educational Administration in the Commonwealth Caribbean. *Caribbean Journal of Education*, 12(1 and 2).
- Miller, E. (1987). Church State and Secondary Education in Jamaica (1912-1943). In R. King (Ed.), *Education in the Caribbean: Historical Perspectives* (Vol. 14, pp. 109 - 144). Kingston: University of the West Indies.

- Miller, E. (1990). *Jamaica Society and High Schooling*. Kingston: Institute of Social and Economic Research: University of The West Indies.
- Miller, E. (1999). *Educational Reform in Independence Jamaica*. USA: Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development.
- Miller, S. (2002). *Teacher leadership for effective schools*. Oregon: Oregon Education Association.
- Ministry of Education and Culture. (1993). *Reform of Secondary Education*: Ministry of Education, Jamaica.
- Ministry of Education and Culture. (1999). *Education: The Way Upward. A Green Paper for the Year 2000*.
- Ministry of Education Youth and Culture. (1999). *Education: The Way Upward. A Green Paper for the Year 2000*.
- Ministry of Education Youth and Culture. (2001). *The Way Upward. A Path for Jamaica's Education at the Start of the New Millennium*. Kingston: Ministry of Education and Culture.
- Ministry of Education Youth and Culture. (2004). *Teacher Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure Handbook*. Kingston: Ministry of Education.
- Moller, J., & Eggen, A. (2005). Team leadership in upper secondary education. *School Leadership and Management*, 25(4), 331-347.
- Morgan, G. (1996). *Images of Organisation*. London: Sage.
- Morley, L. (2000). The Micropolitics of Gender in the Learning Society. *Higher Education in Europe*, 25(2), 229 - 235.
- Morris, H. (1998). Technical and Vocational Education at the secondary Level in Jamaica. In R. King (Ed.), *Institute of Education Annual* (Vol. 1, pp. 110-127). Kingston: Institute of Education, University of the West Indies.
- Morrison, K. (1998). *Management Theories for Education*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Muijs, D., & Harris, A. (2003a). Teacher leadership-Improvement through empowerment. *Educational Management and Administration*, 31(4), 437-448.
- Muijs, D., & Harris, A. (2003b). Teacher leadership: principles and practice. from www.gtc.org.uk
- Myers, S. (1989). Reading Performance of Jamaican Grade Six Students. *Caribbean Journal of Education*, 16(3), 130-171.
- National College for School Leadership. (2001). Leadership Development Framework. 2001, from <http://www.ncsl.org.uk/index.cfm?pageid=ldfintro>
- Naylor, P., Gkolia, C., and Brundrett, M. (2006) Leading from the middle: an initial study of impact., *Management in Education*, 20 (1) 11-16
- Neufield, B. (1985). *Organisations in Action: High school teachers' effort to influence their work*. Chicago: American Educational Research.
- Nias, J., Southworth, G., & Yeoman, R. (1989). *Staff Relations in the Primary School*. London: Cassell.
- Normore, A. (2004). Recruitment and selection: Meeting the Leadership Shortage in One Large Canadian School District. *Canadian Journal of*

Education Administration and Policy(30).

- O'Neill, J. (2000). 'So that I can more or less get them to do things they really don't want to': Capturing the 'situated complexities' of the Secondary School Head of Department. *Journal of Educational Enquiry*, 1(1).
- Observer, J. (2001). Concerns for Education. *Jamaica Observer*.
- Oduro, G. (2004, 16-18 September). *Distributed leadership in schools: what English headteachers say about the 'pull' and 'push' factors*. Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, University of Manchester.
- Office of Standards for Education. (2003). *School Performance*. London: HMSO.
- Oppenheim, A. (1992). *Questionnaire Design, Interviewing and Attitude Measurement*. London: Pinter Publisher.
- Owens, R. (2001). *Organisational Behaviour In Education: Instructional Leadership and School reform*. USA: Allyn and Beacon.
- Pang, N. K. (1992). School Climate: a discipline view. A paper presented at the 7th Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Council for Education Administration. Hong Kong, August 17-21.
- Peterson, K., & Deal, T. (1998). How Leaders Influence the Culture of Schools. *Educational Leadership*, (56).
- Phipps, L. (2002). *Factors influencing the performance of students pursuing home economics in comprehensive high schools in Jamaica.*, University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, Kingston.
- Pinchot, G., & Pinchot, E. (1994). *The End of Bureaucracy and the Rise of the Intelligent Organisation*. San Francisco: Bennett Koehler.
- Popkewitz, T. (1984). *Paradigm and ideology in educational research*. London: Falmer Press.
- Pounder, D. (1999). Teacher Teams: Exploring Job Characteristics and Work-Related Outcomes of Work Group Enhancement. *Education Administration Quarterly*, 35(3), 317-348.
- Pritchard, R., Morrow, D., & Marshall, J. (2005). School and District Culture as Reflected in Student Voices and student Achievements. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 16(2), 153-177.
- Prosser, J. (1999). The Evolution of School Culture Research. In J. Prosser (Ed.), *School Culture*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Punch, K. (1998). *Introduction to Social Research: qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Punch, K. (2005). *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (Second ed.). London: Sage.

- Reeves, J., Turner, E., Morris, B., & Forde, C. (2003). Culture and Concepts of School Leadership and Management: Exploring the Impact of CPD on Aspiring Headteachers. *School Leadership and Management*, 23(1), 5-24.
- Ridden, P. (1992). *School Management: A Team Approach*. Sydney: Ashton.
- Robbins, P., & Alvy, H. (1995). *The Principal's Companion: Strategies and Hints to Make the Job Easier*. Thousands Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc.
- Robbins, S. (1998). *Organisational Behaviour: concepts, Controversities, application*. Upper Saddle, NJ.: Allyn and Beacon.
- Sale, J., Lohfeld, L., & Brazil, K. (2002). Revisiting the Quantitative -Qualitative Debate: Implications for Mixed Methods Research. *Quality and Quantity*, 36, 43-53.
- Salomon, G. (1991). Transcending the Qualitative-Quantitative Debate: The Analytic and Systemic Approaches to Educational Research. *Educational Research*, 20(16), 10-18.
- Sammons, P., Thomas, S., & Mortimore, P. (1997). *Forging Links: Effective Schools and Effective Departments*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Sarantakos., S. (2005) Social Research. Palgrave Macmillian, New York, (Third ed.)
- Scheerens, J., & Bosker, R. (1997). *The Foundation of Education Effectiveness*. London: Pergamon.
- Schein, E. (2004). *Organisational Culture and Leadership* (Third ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schmidt, M. (2000). Role theory, emotions, and identity in the department headship of secondary schooling. *Teacher and Teacher Education*, 16, 827-845.
- Schofield, J. (2006). Increasing the Generalizability of Qualitative Research. In R. Gomm, M. Hammersley & P. Foster (Eds.), *Case Study Methods*. London: Sage.
- Shen, J. (1998). Do teachers eel Empowered. *Educational Leadership*, 55(7).
- Silins, H., & Mulford, B. (2003). 'Leadership and School Results' *International Handbook of Educational Administration*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Silins, H., & Mulford, B. (2004). Schools as Learning Organisations: Effects on Teacher Leadership and Student Outcomes. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 15(3-4), 443-466.
- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Doing Qualitative Research* (Second ed.). London: Sage.
- Simpson, T. (2005, March, 28). Invest More in Education. *The Gleaner*, p. 7B.
- Slater, L. (2005). Leadership for Collaboration. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 8(4), 321-333.
- Smylie, M. (1994). Redesigning Teachers' Work: Connection to the Classroom. *Review of Research in Education*, 129-178.
- Smylie, M., Conley, S., & Marks, H. (2002). Shaping Leadership in Action. In J. Murphy (Ed.), *The Educational Leadership Challenge: Redefining Leadership for the 21st Century*. Chicago: Chicago Press.
- Southworth, G. (2002). Think Piece from NCSL. *Times Educational Supplement*, 6.

- Spaulding, A. (1997). Life in Schools- a Qualitative Study of Teacher Perspectives on the Politics of Principals: Ineffective Leadership Behaviours and their Consequences upon Teacher Thinking and Behaviour. *School Leadership and Management*, 17(1), 39-55.
- Stoll, L. (1999). School Culture: Black Hole or Fertile Garden for School Improvement? In J. Prosser (Ed.), *School Culture*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Storey, A. (2004). The Problem of Distributed Leadership in Schools. *School Leadership and Management*, 24(3), 249-265.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research* (Second ed.). London: Sage.
- Taylor, P. (1992). Striking a Better Balance. *The Times Educational Supplement*.
- Teacher Training Agency. (1998). *National Standards for Teachers*. London: Teacher Training Agency.
- Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2003). Major Issues and Controversies in the Use of Mixed Methods. In C. Teddlie & A. Tashakkori (Eds.), *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research*. London: Sage.
- The Daily Gleaner. (1999, June 20). Big Challenge for Jamaica's Youth. *Daily Gleaner*, p. 1a.
- Thompson, M. (1997). Reading-Instruction in the Secondary School Motivating the Non-proficient Reader. *Torch*, 34, 22-35.
- Timperley, H., & Robinson, V. (2000). Workload and the Professional Culture of Teachers. *School Management and Administration*, 28(1), 47-62.
- Turner, C. (2000). Learning about Leading a Subject Department in Secondary Schools: Some Empirical Evidence. *School Leadership and Management*, 20, 299-313.
- Turner, C. (2003). A Critical Review of Research on Subject Leaders in Secondary Schools. *School Leadership and Management*, 23(2), 209-227.
- Turner, C. (2004). The Influence of the Subject Head of Department Working in Secondary Schools on the Quality of Teaching and Learning: Some Reflections on a PhD Investigation, *British Educational Leadership Management and Administration Society*. Yarnfield Park Training and Conference Centre, Stone, Staffordshire.
- Van Dalen, D. (1979). *Understanding Educational Research: An Introduction*. New York: Mc Graw-Hill.
- Vann, B. (1999). Micropolitics in the United Kingdom: can a principal be expected to be one of us? *School Leadership and Management*, 19 (2), 201-204
- Walker, A. (1994). Teams in schools: looking below the surface. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 8(7), 38-44.
- Wallace, M. (2001). Sharing Leadership of Schools Through Teams: A Justifiable Risk? In Vol. 29, no. 2, p. 153-157. *Educational Management and Administration*, 29(2), 153-157.

- Wallace, M., & Hall, V (1994). Synergy through team work: sharing primary school leadership, Paper presented at AERA, Annual meeting, San Diego.
- Wallace, M., & Huckman, L. (1996). Senior management teams in large primary schools: a head teacher's solution to the complexities of post-reform management. *School Organisation*, 16(3), 309-323.
- Waller, W. (1932). *Sociology of Teaching*. New York: Russell and Russell.
- Washington Post. (2004). School Administrators Don't Think No Child Left Behind, can work as written. 2004, from <http://home.nea.org/www/htm/mail.cfm?>
- Wasley, M. (1991). *Teachers who lead: The rhetoric of reform and the realities of practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- West-Burnham, J. (1997). *Managing Quality in Schools: Effective Strategies for Quality Based School Improvement*. London: Pitman Publishing.
- West, M. (1999). Micropolitics, leadership and all that... The need to Increase the Micropolitical Awareness and Skills of School Leaders. *School Leadership and Management*, 19(2), 189-195.
- Whittaker, T. (1995). Informal Teacher Leadership- The Key to Successful Change in Middle Level School. *NASSP Bulletin*, 35, 76-81.
- Whyte, M. (1990). *A Short History of Education in Jamaica*. Kingston: University Press.
- Williams, A., Prestage, S., & Bedward, J. (2001). Individualism to Collaboration: the Significance of Teacher Culture to the Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 27(3), 253-267.
- Wise, C. (2001). The Monitoring Role of Academic Middle Managers in Secondary Schools. *Educational Management and Administration*, 29(3), 333-341.
- Wise, C., & Bennett, N. (2003). *A Survey of Middle Leaders of Secondary Schools in England*. London: National College for School Leadership.
- Wise, C., & Bush, T. (1999). From Teacher to Manager: The Role of Academic Middle Managers in Secondary Schools. *Educational Research*, 41(2), 183-196.
- Witziers, B., Sleegers, P., & Imants, J. (1999). Departments as Teams: Functioning, Variations and Alternatives. *School Leadership and Management*, 19(3), 293-304.
- Wood, P., Bennett, N., Harvey, J., & Wise, C. (2004). Variabilities and Dualities in Distributed Leadership. *Education Management Administration and Leadership*, 32(4), 439-457.
- Yin, R. (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methodology* (Third ed.). London: Sage.

Appendix A

The Duties and Responsibilities of a Head of Department in a Public (state) Educational Institution in Jamaica

(1) A head of department shall:

- (a) assist teachers in planning the curriculum of the department for presentation to and discussion with the principal;
- (b) supervise the presentation of and the details of the courses of study offered within the department and of the examination or assessments for the department;
- © advise the principal in recommending appointments to the teaching staff of the department under their jurisdiction, and in allocating the work to the members of staff concerned;
- (d) call regular meetings of teachers in the department to consider matters relating to the department;
- (e) supervise and assist the teachers in the department in maintaining proper professional standards and in keeping adequate records of students' work and progress;
- (f) assist the principal in collaboration with heads of the other departments and other persons holding posts of special responsibility in general organization and management of the institution;
- (g) prepare an annual budget for supplies and equipment for the department and furnish the principal at the dates prescribed and in the manner prescribed, with the necessary budgetary information;
- (h) maintain and keep up-to-date an inventory of the equipment and supplies in the department;

- (i) be responsible for the maintenance and care of the equipment and supplies in the department;
- (j) teach during such periods as may be prescribed by the principal ;
- (k) perform such other tasks as may be determined from time to time by the principal, in addition to, or instead of duties and responsibilities already listed above.

(2)

In the case of a head of department who is librarian-in-charge in a second stage school or third stage public (state) educational institution, the general responsibilities shall include-

- (a) assisting the principal in formulating policy to make the library programme an educational force in the institution;
- (b) establishing, organizing and administering the library as an integral part of the programme of the institution with special reference to curricular needs
- © preparing library estimates and making recommendations for the funds needed to implement the school library programme;
- (c) preparing reports and making evaluation studies of the library's progress.

Appendix B

Research Protocol

Academic Middle Leaders Case Study

Rationale

Leadership in schools rests not only in the position of the principal at the helm but also amongst the teachers who operate from the middle of the school's hierarchy, who are referred to as middle leaders. The role of academic middle leaders is central to the effective management of secondary schools. Their role/functions are multidimensional and may include developing, shaping and implementing the curriculum, managing staff, forging a collaborative department culture, mobilising resources and maintaining effective relationships with students and members of the school's external environment.

Academic middle leaders are positioned within the decision making arm of management where they are able to contribute to the development of whole school policies. Their close relationship with colleagues, places them in a strategic position in which they can both cooperate with and negotiate between staff at all levels within the organisation, acting as the funnel through which senior management decisions are communicated. Schools which recognise the academic middle leadership position are more likely to achieve positive outcomes both in term of students' achievement and teacher performance.

Purpose of the research

To recognise the existence of academic middle leaders and to understand how they execute their roles and functions within the Jamaican secondary school context.

- To examine how academic middle leaders use professional leadership in effecting their leadership roles.
- To explore how middle leaders use their knowledge of school culture to develop effective departments.
- To identify and understand the political relationship (micropolitics) in schools and how academic middle leaders use micropolitical strategies to navigate between the different levels of management.
- To explore training and professional development opportunities aimed at empowering middle leaders to be effective in executing their roles.

The purpose is not to evaluate whether individual middle leaders are effective.

Definitions

Academic Middle Leaders

Academic middle leaders are defined as those teachers who have teaching responsibilities and who also supervise at least one other member of the academic staff. In the Jamaican context they include grade/year coordinators, subject/department coordinators, sixth form coordinators and guidance counsellors. The position may also include teachers who hold an administrative position but who do not supervise other members of the academic staff. These teachers would include, for example, the dean of discipline, and the work experience coordinator.

For the purpose of this research, academic middle leaders are those persons who function as heads of department.

Professional Leadership

This is the use of the bureaucratic structure to execute management responsibilities including decision-making, staff monitoring and team leadership.

School Culture

The common practices that are developed by individuals and institutions, shaping how people think and behaviour.

Micropolitics

The relationship between leaders at various levels within the school's organisational hierarchy. More specifically, micropolitics attempts to highlight how various management tools are utilised by leaders as they navigate up, down and between the different levels of management.

Brief methodology

A mixed methods approach incorporating self-administered questionnaires, interviews and observation of management meetings will be conducted in the three case schools.

- ❖ Audio-recorded interviews will be conducted with fifteen academic middle leaders. These interviews will explore the nature of their generic role/functions, the management strategies they employ in their professional role, their use of school culture as a management tool and how micropolitics is manipulated in school. Opportunities for training and development of the middle leader will also be explored.

- ❖ Interviews with three principals will assist in ascertaining their perceptions of how middle leaders use various strategies such as professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics in their day to day interactions with staff and senior management in schools, and to examine the availability of and access to appropriate training opportunities for middle leaders.
- ❖ Where possible, analysis will be undertaken of documents relating to individual school management structure, generic job description, school handbooks or other documents that display management protocol.
- ❖ All subject teachers and heads of departments will be asked to complete questionnaires.
- ❖ Access to a small number of management meetings that involve the principal and academic middle leaders will be requested.

The emergent qualitative and quantitative data will be used primarily to confirm the existence of middle leaders' position within the Jamaican secondary school context. Also, the analysis will provide clarification on the impact of professional leadership, school culture and micropolitics as tools of management used in achieving varying levels of effectiveness amongst academic middle leaders.

Lincoln Phipps

January 2005

Special Note

**Page 319 missing from
the original**

Appendix D

Questionnaire to subject teachers

Dear Colleagues,

I am a PhD student at the University of Leicester, England, conducting research on 'middle leadership' in secondary schools in Jamaica.

I am seeking your assistance in completing the following questionnaire.

The information you provide will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this research.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours truly,

.....
Lincoln Phipps

Centre for Educational
Leadership and Management,
University of Leicester,
England.

Shortwood Teachers' College
77 Shortwood Road,
Kingston 8.
Jamaica

SECTION A

Please place a tick in the appropriate boxes below.

1. My gender is

(a) Male ☐

(b) Female ☐

2	I have been a member of the academic staff for	
A	0-2 years	
B	3-5 years	
C	6-8 years	
D	9-11 years	
E	12 years and over	

3	My present qualification is	
A	Diploma trained	
B	Graduate trained	
C	Graduate pre-trained	
D	Pre-trained	
E	Certificate trained	
F	Others, please specify below	

4. My job title is:

.....

5. Do you have a job description?

(a) Yes ☐

(b) No ☐

6. What are your major non-teaching responsibilities?

- (c) _____
(b) _____
(c) _____
(d) _____
(e) _____
(f) _____

7a. To which department(s) do you belong?

- (a) _____
(b) _____
(c) _____

7b. If you are in more than one department, in which department are you timetabled to teach the most number of hours **or** to which are you more closely attached?

7c.	How many teachers are in this department?	
A	1-4	
B	5-8	
C	9-12	
D	13 and over	

SECTION B

For the following questions you are asked to tick the options on the scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree and 5 = strongly disagree.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
8. The head of department					
a. is democratic.					
b. communicates clearly with team members.					
c. does not unite the team in achieving department goals.					
d. is not consultative.					
e. leads by example.					
f. does not operate an open door policy with all members.					
g. is able to manage conflicts.					
h. is unable to defuse conflicts within the department.					
9. The head of department.....					
a. does not plan ahead.					
b. does not delegate responsibilities to team members.					
c. plays a key role in supporting members of the team./combine columns					
d. shares the department's strengths and achievements with the wider school community.					
a. encourages members to observe each other's classes.					
b. does not provide feedback on lesson planning methodologies					
c. does not set high expectations for the team.					
d. deploys teachers according to their abilities.					
e. provides extra support to new members in the					

department.					
e. provides extra support to new members in the department.					
f. disciplines team members when warranted.					
g. does not motivate team members to work hard.					
h. does not consult members in determining training needs.					
i. receives additional training for the position					
j. ensures team members have access to professional development opportunities.					
11. The head of department...					
a. does not communicate management's decisions clearly to team members.					
b. aligns the department's objectives with those of management.					
c. challenges management's decisions when these are counter to the interests of the department.					
d. does not negotiate support for the department with the principal.					
e. encourages members to participate freely in department meetings.					
f. does not support a co-operative/collaborative culture in the department .					
g. uses a variety of strategies to assess the performance of staff.					
12. The head of department					
a. ensures the availability of appropriate teaching materials.					
b. shares stories of the department's successes.					
c. organises social events, for example, birthdays, within the department.					
d. does not encourage teachers to share ideas and resources? Combine in one column					
e. exhibits high expectations of both staff and students.					
f. ensures the availability of adequate teaching materials.					

Appendix E

Principal's Interview Schedule

Principals were reminded of the introductory letter they had received earlier, outlining the aims and nature of the research.

Some questions were restricted to specific school types, based on the findings from the heads of department's interviews./interviews done with HODs

General Data on Principal

Name of principal

School type

Qualification

Student enrolment

No. of academic staff

No. of years in the position

Can you describe how you became principal?

Can you briefly discuss the academic programmes of your school?

Can you explain how subject teachers are promoted to the head of department position?

Can you discuss how you involved heads of department in macro and, or micro issues relating to the school?

What are the main non-teaching responsibilities of heads of department?

How have these changed over time?

What strategies do you use to monitor your teachers?

What are some of the challenges HODs experience in managing their departments?

What strategies do you use to ensure that you get the required level of support from departments?

What strategies do you employ to ensure that teachers and students are supported by their department?

Can you explain the strategies used to empower heads of department?

Can you comment on the level of interaction between departments?

What strategies are employed by HoDs to ensure that teachers are supportive of your decisions?

What are the main issues that have or could have caused tension between you and your HoDs?

What are some of the problems you have experienced in operating a shift school and how have you addressed these challenges?

Can you explain the school's policy as it relates to staff involvement in extra-curricular activities?

What are some of your major challenges relating to the quality leadership heads of department offer in their departments and the wider school community?

Can you comment on the impact of your leadership on the overall performance of the school?

What form of training is available to heads of department and how accessible is this to them?

Appendix F

Academic Middle Leader's Interview Schedule

This interview is part of a study that is gathering information on the roles and functions of the academic middle leader (head of department) in secondary schools.

Data on Heads of Department

Name of head of department

Qualification of head of department

No. of years in the position

No. of teachers supervised

No. of lessons taught

Can you explain how you were selected for the post?

What are your non-teaching responsibilities and have these changed since you were appointed head of department?

How is your department organised to be efficient?

What roles if any do you play in the areas of macro and or micro issues of the school?

How equipped are you to carry out your various responsibilities?

What decisions are left entirely up to you?

What would you say is your greatest strength?

What strategies do you use to monitor your teachers?

How do you handle teachers who are not effective in their delivery of the content?

What strategies do you use to get the required level of support from you department?

How do you ensure that new teachers do not feel withdrawn from the others in the department?

How do you develop and maintain a department spirit?

How do you ensure that teachers and students are supported by the department?

Can you comment on the level of interaction between departments?

How does the principal appeal to your sense of obligation to get the job done?

Can you explain how you manage teachers on the opposite shift?

What strategies are employed by the principal to ensure that teachers are supportive of his/her decisions?

Do you feel empowered to manage certain aspects of the school's programme?

What are the main issues that have or could cause tension between you and the principal?

How prepared were you for the position when you became HoD and what might have enabled you to perform better in the post?

What provisions for training are available to HoDs?

Appendix G

The number of sessions taught and the number of teachers supervised by heads of department

School Type	Subject Department	No. of years in teaching	No. of years in position	No. of sessions taught	No. of teachers supervised
Technical	Home Econ.	25	15	24	9
	Business	8	3	28	12
	Language	12	5		20
	Mathematics	17	10	34	12
	Science	30	10	24	15
Upgraded	Mathematics	24	8	12	10
	Business	17	12	16	9
	Home Econ	7	4	24	8
	Social Studies	18	7	24	6
	History	21	10	22	6
Traditional	Chemistry	31	10	12	4
	Physics	30	20	18	11
	Religious Education	15	14	17	4
	Spanish	16	12	16	4
	Geography	20	9	20	4

Appendix H

Non-teaching activities performed by heads of department

Tasks	School Types			Categories
	Technical	Upgraded	Traditional	
Developing annual budget.	✓	✓	✓	Administrative
Planning curriculum	✓	✓	✓	Administrative
Doing dept's inventory	✓	✓	✓	Administrative
Conducting meetings				Administrative
Catering for school functions	✓	✓		Others
Handling disputes		✓		Administrative
Vetting written communications to office		✓		Administrative
Assisting with timetabling				Administrative
Evaluating teachers	✓	✓	✓	Supervisory
Ensuring laboratory is properly equipped	✓		✓	Supervisory
Supervising across shifts	✓	✓		Supervisory
Marking teachers' weekly plans	✓	✓	✓	Administrative
Ensuring examination papers are prepared	✓	✓	✓	Administrative
Monitoring external examinations		✓		Supervisory
Overseeing tuck-shop/canteen		✓		Others
Coordinating field trips	✓	✓	✓	Supervisory
Making development plans	✓	✓	✓	Supervisory
Preparing requisitions	✓	✓	✓	Supervisory
Monitoring lab technicians	✓		✓	Administrative
Organising religious activities			✓	Others
Maintaining dept's log	✓	✓	✓	Supervisory
Assisting the guidance committee			✓	Others
Coordinating extra curricular activities			✓	Extra-curricular
Assisting with parenting seminar			✓	Others
Counselling students		✓		Supervisory
Ensuring lessons are common across both shifts	✓	✓		Administrative
Monitoring teachers' lessons	✓	✓	✓	Administrative