

**FRAMING CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE LENSES OF  
LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING:  
PERSPECTIVES FROM THREE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The concepts of school leadership and continuing professional development have become the cornerstone of much educational debate and enquiry. This mixed-methods study investigates the perceptions of teachers, head teachers and ministry officials in relation to what they feel are the defining constituents of continuing professional development and school leadership in three Caribbean islands. Drawing on data from questionnaires, interviews and focus-group discussions, the researcher examined participants' views about their existing circumstances as they relate to the main concepts. The findings highlight three key but interesting view-points. First, leadership was characterized by three major constructs which are directly interrelated but more importantly, captures the essence of leadership from the island narratives. Second, respondents' accounts showed that improvement in organizational practices and personal development were considered as the main purpose of CPD in addition to, highlighting some concerns regarding the way in which it is planned and executed. Third, the context in which teachers and school leaders operate seem to play an important part in shaping the way in which they perceive both concepts. These contextual factors appear to guide the manner in which leadership and CPD are practiced across the islands in question. This in turn supports the discourses in the leadership literature that it is not a concept which is easily defined. Added to this, the evidence also suggests that sustained learning particularly as it relates to CPD would require the combined processes of these leadership constructs and a supporting atmosphere of structured dialogues between policy-makers and practitioners.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my career as an educator over the past thirty (30) years as well as the development of education in Montserrat. It is hoped that this research would serve as a catalyst in promoting educational research in my home country and by extension the wider Caribbean region.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ANU</b>	Antigua
<b>AXA</b>	Anguilla
<b>BERA</b>	British Educational Research Association
<b>BSA</b>	British Sociological Association
<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Community
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>CUREE</b>	Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education
<b>DL</b>	Distributed Learning
<b>ESRC</b>	Economic and Social Research Council
<b>ESRI</b>	Economic and Social Research Institute
<b>LfL</b>	Leadership for Learning
<b>MAER</b>	Montserrat Annual Education Report
<b>MERR</b>	Montserrat Education Review Report
<b>MNI</b>	Montserrat
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>NPM</b>	New Public Management
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation of Economic Corporation and Development
<b>OECS</b>	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

<b>OFSTED</b>	Office for Standards in Education
<b>PLC</b>	Professional Learning Communities
<b>SDOS</b>	Staff Development Outcomes Studies
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>TDA</b>	Training and Development Agency
<b>TL</b>	Teacher Leadership
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

This research project originates from a personal and national interest following the Montserrat volcanic eruption which began in 1995. The resultant effects have severely impacted the school systems to the point where it created an education crisis. These changes have had an adverse effect on the teaching and learning provisions as well as the leadership practices within the schools. This problem brought to light a number of serious concerns regarding the leadership capacities and continuing professional development interventions that were required to drive change (Montserrat Education Review Report, 2011). Added to this, there has been a growing interest within the academic field about the various leadership theories and ways they can enhance the role of leaders in leading learning (Day *et al.*, 2000; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005; Spillane and Seashore-Louis, 2002; Stoll and Temperley, 2009; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). To further problematize these issues, it is quite evident from a global perspective that these theoretical debates have resulted in the explosion of new policy reforms such as increased continual professional development initiatives and more accountability on the part of school leaders (Starr, 2014).

MacBeath and Dempster, (2009) argue that leadership has emerged strongly within education as a means of making the necessary transformations which could improve schools. They further reason that there is an increasing focus on improving educational standards within schools where principals are viewed as playing the key role. Similarly, primary schools in Montserrat and in particular, public operated, have been under much pressure about the decline in student

performance (MERR, 2011). Consequently, this has spawned numerous arguments about leadership as the main agent to instigate change (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005).

According to the Montserrat Annual Education Report (2013) there was evidence that the leadership in some of its primary schools is insufficiently grounded in coherent whole-school activities hence, the decline in student learning. School leadership continues therefore, to be a major concern of policy-makers in light of raising standards in both teacher professional development and students' learning (Stoll *et al.*, 2009). One very important question that can be raised here is the extent to which theoretical perspectives on school leadership really matters in the discourse of continuing professional development. However, the problem is that within the context of Montserrat there is no documented research in these areas and as such, no real evidence is available to engage in, or support any profound discussion on the issues at hand.

On a more personal note however, it is critical to summarise the conditions which have created a deep interest in this inquiry. Being a primary Head Teacher in Montserrat over the past twenty-five years I recognised that many teachers (particularly the senior members) were not inspired and they practically stayed very passive in staff development activities especially those organised by the Ministry of Education. Over time, it has in some ways affected their professional growth and by extension their capabilities to improve the learning of students (Stoll *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, I sensed that perchance they have lost touch with the evolving changes in teaching and learning coupled with the emerging trends in school leadership. With this in mind, I was convinced that an investigation of the present situation would in some way flag up critical issues which could give new insights into how continuing professional development for teachers is understood. In addition to this, I wanted to know how school

leadership was perceived as well as the contextual variables that could drive improvement in students' learning.

## **1.2 Significance of the Study**

In the initial design stages, I was quite interested in obtaining a clearer perspective on a number of issues related to CPD that I observed as a school leader. As a practicing school leader, it was significant for me to understand the root causes of the problems observed and how they are manifested in the broader landscape of primary schools. Consequently, I felt the need to examine why there was such an observable reluctance of teachers to participate in continuing professional development activities. Since I was in leadership position I thought it was equally important to examine these issues from the perspective of school leadership practices.

The limited research on leadership for learning and CPD in the three islands created an opportunity to explore these areas. Miller (2016) echoes this view by pointing out that research as it relates to school leadership is still in the developing stages in most of the islands in the Caribbean with the allowance of only a few studies. Most of these enquiries lack the capacity to fully illuminate what leadership really means and as a result there is insufficient literature to help explain the nature of principals' work in such contexts (Miller, 2016). In addition to this, Blasé and Anderson (1995) argue strongly that the type of data gathered from studying leadership in schools should include both the formal and informal aspects of their daily activities. Capturing such perspectives would contribute to producing a wide range of views concerning what the concept means in specific contexts (Miller, 2016). Considering the resources invested in school leadership and the potential impact it has on streamlining

continuing professional development, it is conceivable that practitioners, policy-makers and researchers would have a keen interest in the findings from this study (Earley, 2013).

Another interesting observation from the literature which has significance to this study is the argument advanced by Huber (2011). He contends that while there are many debates about considerations for the usage of mixed-methods design to investigate leadership dimensions, only a small number of studies to date have integrated this process. In addition to this, the heavy focus on empirical studies in the US and other developed countries present only the perspectives from such areas and therefore a shift in enquiry to other places where leadership contexts are different is necessary (Huber, 2010).

### **1.3 Background Information**

The three islands of Montserrat, Anguilla and Antigua share a similar geographical location (see Figure 1) and history since they were colonised by UK. Antigua gained its independence in 1981 while Montserrat and Anguilla still remain British Overseas Territories. The political system of government in the islands originated from a Westminster style of self-governing structure and is grounded within the framework of capitalism (Thomas, 2014). The main contributor to economic activities in the three islands is tourism and their education systems are broadly based on some of the British practices and policies although such influence is more prevalent in Montserrat and Anguilla. The provision of primary education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the human and physical resources are funded centrally by government (Thomas, 2014).

In Anguilla there are six government primary schools which are scattered across the island while in Montserrat the volcanic crisis has reduced the previous total of thirteen to only 2 public primary schools. On the other hand, primary education in Antigua is delivered in 32 government schools. These schools are located in one of four geographical zones. The compulsory school-age for the islands is five to 12 years after which they enter secondary school (OECS Report, 2002). These features highlight the similarities that exist within the research context and as such it narrows the gap between the differences in the characteristics of the sample used in this study. Figure (1) below shows the wider Caribbean region as well as the smaller Leeward Island grouping to which the three islands belong.

**Figure 1: Map showing the location of Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla in relation to the Caribbean region.**



## **1.4 Research Aims and Objectives**

Researchers often pose broad questions in search of their inquiries (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). According to Thomas (2013) the process of framing good research questions require the investigator to contemplate on queries that relate to the things in the present situation as well as what are the issues and how they relate to each other. The purpose of this research was to explore how the concepts of continuous professional development and leadership for learning are perceived in primary schools across three islands namely; Montserrat, Anguilla and Antigua. It draws on participants' circumstances, experiences, points of view as well as insights into their school practices. The study therefore captures the views of head teachers, teachers along with ministry officials with respect to school leadership and CPD activities. Based on the purpose and scope of the research, the followings are the main aims:

1. To investigate perceived meanings and issues associated with school leadership and continuing professional development activities in primary schools in three Caribbean Islands namely; Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla.
2. To study, in particular, the specific practices and views associated with continuing professional development and leadership in such context.
3. To describe the manner in which primary teachers are involved in school leadership activities particularly as they relate to continuing professional development.
4. To analyse how head teachers' and teachers professional roles influence the way in which they conduct and evaluate continuing professional development activities.
5. To draw recommendations from the findings which may offer ways to improve and guide continuing professional development and leadership practices in primary schools.

These main aims are explored through the following broad research questions in the study;

1. How are the concepts of continuing professional development and leadership perceived and practiced in primary schools?
2. What are the common practices and issues associated with continuing professional development and leadership in such contexts?
3. How are teachers involved in school leadership activities particularly as they relate to learning and continuing professional development?
4. In what ways have leadership roles and other contextual factors influenced the approach by which continuing professional development is evaluated?

The first research questions sought to assist with an explanation of how the two concepts are understood and practised in schools within the contexts in question. The second question aimed to provide a contextualised perspective of the current practices and issues of school and CPD. The third question explored the ways in which teachers are engaged in leading and learning in their schools. The last question analysed how CPD is evaluated across the three islands. The degree to which the answers to these questions repeat some of the evolving work of the field they are confirmatory while in cases where they bring about new evidence they are contributory.

## **1.5 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Chronological perspectives on leadership show that it originates from the corporate literature and over time it was transposed into the educational context where it has revolutionized how leadership is conceptualized in education (Townsend and MacBeath, 2011). However, there are some criticisms imposed on this viewpoint partly because of inadequate research on the organizational processes as well as the impact on students' outcomes (Hallinger, 2008). Similarly, Muijs (2011) and Leithwood and Seashore-Louis (2012) assert that much of the research conducted in this area tend to generate their data sources from documented reports and other institutional outcomes rather than from the deep consciousness of teachers and school leaders who are centrally located at the heart of the debate. Therefore, my interest in this debate is principally based on the deeper perceptions of the core issues of leadership and CPD in primary schools. In other words, I am more concerned with the contextual factors under which these two constructs actually operate.

In recent years, there has been rapid advancement in education reform initiatives which have led to an increased devolution of school management with greater independence in school authority (Ball, 2008). These developments have had a significant influence on the role of school leaders, both in terms of how they lead schools and their increased accountability for students' learning outcomes (Hallinger and Heck, 1996a; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). Arguably, schools in the twenty-first century are vital locations for knowledge production (Gunter and Ribbins, 2002) and it is for this reason why for example, that the Ministry of Education in Montserrat advocates for good leadership practices (MAER, 2013). In contrast, writers such as Smylie and Bennett (2005), Yuen and Cheng, (2000) and Barnes *et al* (2010) argue that it is insufficient to simply explain the practices and meanings associated with the manner in which heads execute their leadership practices to sustain learning. Rather it requires

a more thorough understanding of school-based learning that would channel such practices into habits of sustaining student learning (Muijs, 2011). Undoubtedly, these views have caused the role of school leaders to be the major subject of interest within the field of educational research (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003). In contrast, Leithwood *et al* (2004) take a pragmatic view in that they contend that caution must be given to research which examine the role of leadership in the context of evolving school transformation.

Subsequently, I have located my research in the broader field of educational leadership (Gunter, 2012), school leadership (Spillane, 2006; Gronn, 2010), but more specifically in leadership for learning (LfL) (Townsend and MacBeath, 2011). In addition, consideration was given to the inclusion of CPD literature (Day, 1999; Kennedy, 2005) since it is deemed as an important lens through which deeper meanings of leadership and learning can be captured. According to MacBeath and Dempster, “leaders lead and children learn, it’s as simple as that” (2009, p. 1). While this statement may seem an accurate representation of what schools should be, the connections between leadership and learning are becoming increasingly difficult to comprehend. This is mainly because the richness and complexity of learning is synchronised by the multifaceted and often obscure qualities of leadership hence, making it a daunting task to tease out their interrelationships (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). Any attempt to make meaningful connections must start with the premise that context and culture matter as well as that school leadership is fundamentally bound in time and place (Townsend and MacBeath, 2011).

It is against this backdrop that I drew on the core principles of LfL as the conceptual lens through which I investigated aspects of continuing professional development. To adequately understand the relationship between these concepts I looked beyond their surface level characteristics so as to provide new ideas about the context, individuals’ perceptions, current

practices, and experiences from the viewpoints of the participants. In doing this, I have sought to strike a balance between the need to respect the complexity and dynamism of the field while at the same time creating a framework that is useful in uncovering new insights about the concepts being explored (Gunter, 2012).

## **1.6 Overview of the Research Design and Methods**

Schools are complex organisations where leadership practices converge to deal with the core business of learning, on top of, the different interests of policy-makers, teachers, parents and students (Gunter, 2012). The application of CPD as a mechanism to improve teaching and learning, however, should not be an unsystematic process (Guskey, 2002). Expanding our knowledge of how these matters are understood and practiced in specific contexts is very important for creating new perspectives parallel to the discourses within the leadership literature (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003). The inclusion of multiple voices to uncover the working experiences of different stakeholders in school activities is directly in line with an interpretivist position (Bryman, 2006a).

In an effort to support this and to adequately address the research questions, a qualitative dominant mixed methods approach (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011) was used to illuminate the reality as it currently exist in the participating schools of Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla. The broad research questions were broken down into specific research questions. Each question in turn was linked to an appropriate research method (questionnaire, interview, focus group). A purposive sampling technique was used and the triangulation in the design enhanced validity and reliability issues (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). The findings of the quantitative phase of the study are presented in the form of simple descriptive statistics while a thematic analysis is

employed to present the qualitative accounts (Robson, 2011). These research findings were discussed against the backdrop of the literature review to explain how they contributed towards a better understanding of the key concepts that were investigated. In light of these interpretations, a series of concluding statements were drawn in addition to outlining some implications for practice and future research.

## **1.7 Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis is divided into six chapters. For each chapter a number of bullet points have been used to highlight the key questions that are answered as well as addressing other important aspects which are pertinent to each chapter.

### **Chapter One: Introduction;**

- What is the thesis is about?
- The reasons for the research.
- The type of study.
- Where it was done.
- How was it conducted?

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review;**

- What are the key concepts and how they have been debated in the literature?
- How did the theoretical perspectives frame the approaches used in this study?
- What are the knowledge gaps of previous research?
- What difference will doing this research make, and to whom?

### **Chapter Three: Research Design, Methodology and Methods of Collecting Data;**

- What kind of data was collected?
- Philosophical positions and justifications for methodology.
- How the data was collected?
- How the validity and reliability issues were addressed?
- What were the techniques used to analyse the data?

- The knowledge claims that can be made about the data.

#### **Chapter Four: Presentation of the Research Findings;**

- The forms of analysis that were used to present the findings.
- How the data collected from the instruments was utilised to support the findings?
- What were the main findings?

#### **Chapter Five: Discussion and Analysis Synthesises;**

- The propositions that were found or emerged.
- The ways in which the main findings corroborated with the literature review.
- The arguments for explaining and interpreting the major findings.

#### **Chapter Six: Conclusion;**

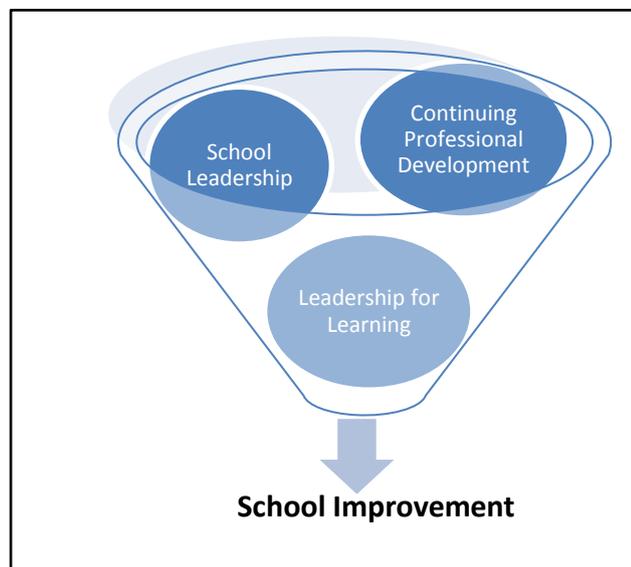
- The research questions and main findings.
- Limitations of the study.
- The contributions to the field of knowledge.
- Reflection of learning experience.
- Recommendations for policy and practice.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

This literature review maps out the theoretical perspectives of current debates on school leadership, discourses on continuing professional development (CPD) and the principles of the leadership for learning (LfL) model. It highlights arguments of agreement and disagreements between major theorists and researchers in relation to the dominant views associated with the key ideas and concepts. Thus, the literature review focuses on the core issues, and problems which are relevant to exploring the subject at hand.

**Figure 2:** Conceptual model of key concepts (*adapted from Townsend and MacBeath, 2011*).



The conceptual model for the literature review is summarized Figure (1). The literature begins first by outlining the diverse ways that authors have written some of the scholarly arguments about school leadership. The key components that are associated with continuing professional development (CPD) are also discussed since it is viewed as one area that is specifically central to the learning of teachers as well as one of the mechanisms that leaders can use to enhance learning (Bissessar, 2013). The theoretical perspectives of leadership for learning (LfL) are then discussed particularly because they converge at the point where ideas about leadership and learning become the significant feature in school operations. Additionally, it serves as a tool to order and structure the literature review in addition to, resisting any notion to simply summarize the sources rather than critically evaluating the evidence presented and the conclusions drawn from the literature. By clearly defining and grouping the main research ideas together, it illuminates the principal theories, core issues and problems that form the conceptual framework for this study.

# SECTION 1

## 2.2 The Nature of School Leadership

The term leadership is one key concept that requires defining because it is critical to understand how it has been conceptualised within the broad-spectrum of the leadership discourses (Leithwood *et al.*, 2008). The concept has many definitions and as such, evokes competing arguments about what are the exemplifying components (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Gronn, 2010; Murphy *et al.*, 2009). While I acknowledge that it is difficult to avoid the existence of these multiple interpretations, the following discussion aims to synthesize some of the descriptions and explanations presented in the leadership literature as well as outlining my understandings of the term in question.

This section therefore examines the various interpretations of leadership particularly because it stands at the forefront of current developments in educational research (Gunter *et al.*, 2013). It starts by looking at some of the early meanings attributed to leadership as well as more current perspectives. It considers differences and similarities between how different researchers convey such connotations. By carefully scrutinizing the key studies and the meanings offered in the leadership literature they have brought to light the significant ideas that are worth noting in order to give a tighter meaning of leadership. In so doing, it shapes a more explicit definition that pinpoints the salient characteristics and themes that are common across the leadership discourse (Leithwood *et al.*, 2008).

Gunter and Ribbins (2003) argue that educational leadership sits at a point where issues such as policy, management and school improvement converge with purposes, theory and research. Realistically, the concept is rooted in the study and practice of headship through research activity that is primarily aimed at describing, understanding and theorising the nature and

meaning of head-teachers' practice (Gunter, 2001). What is significant for me therefore is the combination of these interchanges and how they create and expand the leadership boundaries hence, charting how educational leadership has progressed over the years (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003).

Traditionally, leadership in schools has been associated with the heroic or courageous image of individuals who single-handedly turn around learning institutions from failure to success (Beare *et al.*, 1988). From the early 1980s, the administrative language of leadership was introduced to schools as part of the neoliberal restructurings – leadership defined by policy - and the New Public Management (NPM) movement in many Western and Asian countries (Hood, 1995). Contained in this language, leadership in schools is strongly aligned to change through the use of market-like structures for the delivery of public services (Pollitt, 2001). As a result, the underlying assumption is that leaders should exert a type of force on their colleagues rather than work in collaboration to ensure their institution's success. Over time, this new thinking of leadership and robust 'executive' management has generated controversial debates within the scholarly community (Chandler *et al.*, 2002).

Sergiovanni (2001) and Yukl (2010) argue that within the present-day thinking of leadership, leaders devote a great amount of their energy on finding new ideas and structures, building consensus, and helping their institutions become places of shared duty. It is quite obvious here that such change in practice – leaders demarcated by what they do - will require a different mode of thinking (Sergiovanni, 2005). In essence, leadership activities cannot be separated from its underlying theories nor can it be divorced from its natural attributes of reflecting personal values, beliefs and assumptions (Alvesson and Spicer, 2011a). The fundamental issue therefore is that any view of leadership and the values that drive it should be made known

particularly to teachers and students as well as parents (Simkins, 2005; Storey, 2004). This public disclosure is critical to ensure that the proposed educational leadership practices remain justified and gains the respect and confidence of key stakeholders (Alvesson and Spicer, 2011).

Aside from what has been argued thus far, the power relations among competing views are not always equal or practicable to bring about progress in schools (Alvesson, 2011a). It is for this reason I concur with the view that the debate on leadership is quite extensive and has become a worthy academic exercise (Yukl, 2006). Although leadership continues to be a determining factor in enhancing the teaching and learning processes (Day, 1997; Bennis, 2000; Gurr et al., 2006), there is always the condition that different practices of leadership will equate to diverse levels of success for schools (Lambert, 1998). Moreover, some of the assessment of the leadership literature indicates that it is not an easy task to identify a single view or definition of leadership that consistently stands out and above all other interpretations (Barker, 1997; Sergiovanni, 2001; Alvesson and Spicer, 2012). Other reviews of leadership studies repeatedly reveal the contestation of existing knowledge of leadership, especially on matters that relate to its nature, characterization, and theoretical underpinnings (Northouse, 2004; Alvesson and Spicer, 2011; Bryman and Lilly, 2009; Simkins, 2005; Yukl, 2010). This has led to numerous attempts in charting the field in order to establish categories but more importantly, develop the type of leadership thinking that would find a common ground among scholars (Stogdill, 1974; Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Gunter and Ribbins, 2002).

## 2.3 Defining School Leadership

If we accept that leadership is a meaningful and useful construct in securing sustainable school improvement, the question remains: What does it look like? There are a number of conceptual understandings from the international literature which offer some clarity on what leadership means (Harris *et al.*, 2003). Part of this meaning of leadership however, might be accredited to the ways in which researchers and practitioners make sense of what is understood as leadership through their differing perspectives and interests (Fairhurst, 2007, 2008, 2011; Ford, 2005; Yukl, 2010).

Sergiovanni, (2001) notes, that establishing a clear definition for leadership continues to be a problematic issue in the academic community. It is therefore unsurprising that the literature stockpile as many definitions of leadership as there are the number of people who have fought to illuminate its meaning (Ford, 2010). In the face of the efforts to comprehensively define and, perhaps, recommend a general idea of what leadership is or should be, the number of publications on leadership continues to grow within and outside the scholarly community (Goethals and Sorenson, 2006). These theories, concepts, and models have been presented with the attempt to generalise and legitimise the idea of leadership. Surprisingly, this large amount of work has led to even more confusing and contested knowledge claims between scholars (Goethals and Sorenson, 2006).

Notwithstanding this, one of the early traditional meanings given to leadership comes from Cohen and March (1974) who state that leadership refers to the practice of choosing a suitable tool to attain a goal with an understanding of the complex nature of a school setting. In contrast, Burns (1978) offers another view where leadership means following beneficial aims that cater for the needs of the whole school community which ultimately raise their standards of morality.

On the other hand, Bennis and Nanus (1985) describe leadership as the influential capacity which they use to engage teachers, students and parents to become part of the leadership vision. In his book on moral leadership, Sergiovanni (2002) suggests that leadership is the ability to enhance the meaning and importance of the shared values that parents, students and teachers experience through common thoughts and standards.

Another writer, Heifetz (1994) refers to leadership as prompting members of the school community to recognize, comprehend and take responsibility for addressing the challenges they encounter. Alternatively, Lambert (1995) labels leadership as comprising of a joint process that permits members of a school to create meanings which lead to collective purposes. This construction of meaning is less a role to be expected by some, but more a responsibility to be assumed by all thus, promoting learning and encouraging a collective duty to the school (Lambert, 1998). Bolman and Deal (1997, p. 11) in their attempt to define leadership refers to the notion of theoretical pluralism “against a jangling discord of multiple voices” for a united vision by involving everyone in the school.

In comparison, current perspectives have made an effort to offer several competing definitions that help to elucidate what we mean by leadership. Southworth (2002) for example, associates leadership with the practice of enhancing learning outcomes through the combination of vision and collective decision-making process. Framing a meaning around team work Leithwood and Riehl (2003) assert that leadership means mobilising, motivating and working with others to achieve shared objectives. Likewise, Burton and Brundrett (2005) maintain that the shift from a central position to practices of concerted and extensive exchanges has rewritten the meanings associated with leadership. Yukl (2006) on the other hand, expresses leadership as the capacity to persuade others they can understand their working environment much better when they share

the same vision. On the other hand, Spillane and Seashore Louis (2002) shift the emphasis on leaders becoming the driving force behind learning where they must first acquire certain types of knowledge. However, the knowledge that is referred to is branded in general terms and focuses on interpersonal interactions - such as the importance of knowing how to inspire, support, and motivate staff (Yuen and Cheng, 2000). There is the need therefore, for leaders not only to distinguish between the declarative aspects of any prescribed knowledge but also how to execute them (Bransford *et al.*, 2000; Barnes *et al.*, 2010). Interestingly though, Spillane (2006, p. 16) upholds that the “collaborative, democratic, participative or transformational are different approaches” that school leaders employ within particular circumstances but also taking into account the intended goals.

A careful examination of these definitions of leadership shows that while each one is different in some regard many of the interrelated aspects seem to overlap (Ribbins and Gunter, 2002). The rationales for most of the definitions seem to take into consideration both human and organisational development. As a result, it may be reasonable to suggest that the collective definitions outlined are alluding to the point that leadership is highly transformational and as such, can be reasonably represented by the following definition:

“Leadership involves the identification, acquisition, allocation, co-ordination, and use of the social, material, and cultural resources necessary to establish the conditions for the possibility of teaching and learning. This definition supports a transformational perspective on leadership, defining as the ‘ability to empower others’ with the purpose of bringing about a ‘major change in the form, nature and function of some phenomenon” (Spillane *et al.*, 2001, p. 24)

Contrary to these perspectives, Youngs and King (2002) argue that even though there is a profusion of research on leadership, only a few studies have theorized or empirically examined the connections among school leadership, professional development, and school organizational conditions that may influence instructional quality. This gap in the research field perhaps in some ways justifies consideration for advancing the view that there are grounds for additional research work in the exploration of continuing professional development. Such investigations will be useful in my attempt to search for new insights with respect to the knowledge and processes involved in examining the perspectives about continuing professional development and leadership for learning. While the conceptual and theoretical debates on how leaders influence learning are incomplete, there is still the point to be made of the centrality of young people's learning as distinct from adults' learning (Muijs, 2011).

## **2.4 School Leadership in the Caribbean**

Recent trends in educational research have led to the proliferation of ideas about school leadership. The plethora of thoughts and the disagreements in the debates have also publicized the view that there is no clear-cut meaning of what counts as good or successful leadership (Goleman *et al.*, 2002). This however, may be deemed imprecise since the empirical data collected over the last decades shows that there are certain types of practices required to improve schools but in particular, student achievements (Hallinger and Heck, 2010). Yet, the major discrepancies within the leadership debate originates from the arguments that examine both the type of information that is gathered as well as the sources from which such leadership behaviours have emerged (Kruger and Scheerens, 2012).

One of the most significant reports from researchers in school leadership is the acknowledgement that good leadership principles often equate to substantial effect – although some argue that it is indirect - on student outcomes (Earley *et al.*, 2002). Leithwood *et al.* (1999) recapitulate these consistencies by stating; “to date, we have not found a single documented case of a school improving its student achievement record in the absence of talented leadership” (p. 3). Moreover, the key traits and practices of successful school leaders are generally defined, but a comprehensive definition still eludes most of those who attempt to define it (Kruger and Scheerens, 2012). In contrast, but within the Caribbean context, Miller (2013, p. 195) postulates that “it may not be possible to construct a unitary definition of Caribbean school leadership particularly as school leadership is exercised in multiple ways across territories”. Surely, it might not be taken out of context if at this point I state here that the assessments above may be signifying that there is the need for more research in leadership within the Caribbean so as to further illuminate its constituents, thus giving a clearer picture as to how school leadership in the region is understood.

One of the more problematic or contentious aspects of leadership theories that has been raised by Miller (2013) concerns the notion that the features and approaches identified from Western school leadership research can be easily borrowed and applied to the education system in other parts of the world to include the Caribbean. While this is an interesting but also a controversial comment, it has been challenged by an influential report led by the McKinsey Corporation (Earley *et al.*, 2002). The findings derived from the research conducted for the English National College for School Leadership noted that good leadership practices are consistent in different contexts. Barber *et al.* (2010) found similar qualities and applications in successful schools leaders across South East Asia and Africa. This therefore suggests that leadership issues should be vigorously pursued beyond the routine work that leaders do and focus instead on what they

do with and for others thus, positioning themselves to be able to reflect critically on challenges within a given context (Miller, 2013).

## **2.5 Contextualizing Leadership Development in the Caribbean**

Undeniably, school leadership has become an extensive field with a growing collection of theories, theorists, and espoused solutions to the problems in educational institutions (Miller, 2016). Under the direction of Education Ministries both secondary and primary schools across the Caribbean allocate funds – although some claim that it is inadequate – for CPD (Miller, 2013).

In the early eighties an education report revealed that most of the training programmes for school leaders in the Caribbean remain too narrow in scope and sequence (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1982). This discovery was further substantiated by Stanley-Marcano (1984) who claims that such competencies required improvement particularly because the leadership preparation opportunities were not only limited, but also inadequate with respect to catering for the training needs of school leaders. This had led to the formation of the Nationwide College for Educational Leadership by the Jamaican government in 2010. Although some may argue that such an initiative was modelled from the British, Finnish and Australian education systems, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) policy on education still remains closely aligned to sustaining and promoting school leadership development throughout nation states (Miller, 2013). However, according to UNESCO (2006), enhancing the leadership capabilities of school leaders arises from the decline in educational outcomes in addition to, the emerging trends in research and coupled by the task to cope with the demands and competition caused by the global developments in education.

In the context of the Caribbean, it is definitely promising to see such a push at the political level to advance capacity building for leadership in schools. However, Miller (2013) warns that there are still some tendencies for current approaches to school leadership development to reinforce theoretical tolerance which focus chiefly on the procedures management. Notwithstanding this, Hirsh and Carter (2002) establish three salient tensions facing school leaders and their development. First, they argue that parallel with the prescribed programmes, there is an increasing need for holistic activities to be undertaken by leaders at all levels of the school. Second, personalised learning approaches, such as mentoring and individualised plans pose serious challenges as they relate to time and resources required to design and support such interventions. Third, the education landscape is constantly shifting due to the employment competition in other sectors hence, long-term career planning is necessary to retain leaders.

On the other hand, Miller (2013) notes that a number of issues influence the present school leadership provisions across the Caribbean. He opines that these may come about due to the practical concerns stemming from the historical perspectives and actual practice of school leadership in different Caribbean countries. According to him, this in turn raises some important questions such as; “what does school leadership mean to the Caribbean principal or teacher? How is leadership carried out in the context of school? How are individuals training needs addressed (p. 18)?” Certainly, these questions have some significance and relevance to my research since it is the sort of questions that I intend to investigate.

## **2.6 Leadership Approaches in the Caribbean**

Over the last two decades, a considerable number of researches from the Western Hemisphere have given rise to several approaches geared towards improving school leadership (Earley *et al.*, 2002). Techniques such as in-service skills programmes, seminars and conferences, mentoring and coaching, formal qualifications, attachment assignments and to a lesser extent, e-learning all forms part of the leadership framework designed to improve schooling (Storey, 2004). Across the Caribbean region, there exist noticeable inconsistencies in the direction of utilising the approaches mentioned above in schools (Miller, 2013). Miller further asserts that on one hand, there is a decisive interest in the use of qualification-based development within the typical school and on the other, there is an existence of more formal leadership development activities. He concludes that even though changes have been made to include new provisions, the over-reliance on traditional modes often proves inflexible and expensive. As a result, Miller (2013) argues that if schools in the Caribbean intend to promote a philosophy of mutual leadership, then the prospective gains would be severely reduced if only a selected few - namely the principal and or senior leaders – have the chance to engage in leadership activities. Giving preferences to only those who are directly involved in leadership could result in unintentional outcomes which include demotivation, disaffection and reluctance from other teachers (Hargreaves, 2001).

One intriguing approach to leadership is the study examined by Shotte (2013) where she advocated that a precise form of school leadership was required in the context of Montserrat. The volcanic eruption which started in 1995 has caused total disruption to the social, political and economic facets of the island which ultimately eroded the stability of the society. In the context of Montserrat the notion of social transformation (McCarthy, 2000; Alvord *et al.*, 2004) must not be conceptualised simply in terms of the mass migration or the prolonged period of

the volcanic eruption. Rather the concept needs to be looked at with specific reference to how the government enact its education policies to bring about a sense of normalcy (Meade, 2012).

It is against this background that Shotte (2013) declares that the changes to Montserrat as a consequence of the volcanic crisis warrant a ‘transformational leadership in schools’ (p. 29).

Drawn from the numerous perspectives that researchers offer about leadership, she proposes the ideas from Binnie *et al* (2005) which she claims are closely linked to transformational leadership and quite suitable for the Montserrat context. Transformational leadership heightens the level of cognizance of workers so that they take ownership of the organisational goals and strategies to optimize the achievement of its aims (Alger, 2008). Likewise, Cherry (2010) makes the association between transformational leadership and positive changes because such leaders are often energetic, enthusiastic and passionate about assisting every member of the group to succeed beyond their personal motives or pursuits.

The foregoing conceptual views suggest that deliberate actions of school leaders are necessary to provide children with the skills and values needed for them to become productive citizens to their society. This can be achieved through the practice of ‘critical pedagogy’ (Shotte, 2013, p. 33) – which looks at how education can be executed in ways that promotes democratic values (justice and freedom) through a process of progressive social change (Kellner, 2000). In addition to this, Guzman and Johannessen (2010) argues that critical pedagogy is a decisive tool for teaching and learning but it would not have far reaching impact unless it is supported by joint strategic arrangements which leaders put in place.

Another approach which has been gaining prominence in the Caribbean over the last decade is the view of teachers being considered as teacher leaders (McCallum, 2013). More attention is now given to the practice where experienced, but in particular, expert teachers are given the

responsibility to support and mentor (Harrison and Killion, 2007) novice or beginning teachers as they make the transition from preparation to practice. At the very least, the writers above are making the claim that mentors perform a vital role in CPD. With reference to the Caribbean but in particular Jamaica, McCallum (2013) points out that the idea of 'teacher leadership' may have some resemblance to the position of a Master Teacher. She explains that the rationale for establishing such a system was strategic since the Master Teacher Programme also enables excellent teachers to advance professionally within the teaching system without the need to abandon the classroom or assuming administrative positions. In light of this, it seems clear that there was a calculated effort to evaluate and identify those proficient teachers who are anticipated to be a source of "additional educational leadership in Jamaican schools" (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 2).

Fundamentally, successful leadership is created by a process of leadership development which is dependent on all aspects of human conditions and serves as a multiplicity of purposes beyond merely developing talent (Tomlinson and Allan, 2002). In this regard, there must be a concerted effort in the Caribbean to place more emphasis on both the leader and leadership development, while at the same time grounded in theory and understood in the contexts (experience and skills of leaders, vision of schools and supporting mechanisms) in which people are located (Miller, 2013).

## **SECTION 2**

### **2.7 Continuing Professional Development**

It is necessary to highlight the relevance and interrelationships between leadership, learning and CPD particularly because this research investigates aspects of teachers' professional learning. This section aims to thoroughly explore and interrogate the relevant theories and key issues with respect to continuing professional development and its place in leadership for learning. To achieve this, a variety of sources were examined, critically reviewed and evaluated to establish and identify potential gaps in the literature. As a result, the concepts and topics that are appraised in this review are outlined under a number of subheadings which centrally give structure and order to the way in which the arguments are presented.

#### **2.7.1 Meanings and Purpose of CPD**

Before an attempt can be made to discuss or present any discourse on continuing professional development (CPD) and its related issues it is essential first to recognize that over the years several terms have been associated with the CPD literature (Patton and Parker, 2015). The more popular terminologies include teacher growth, on-the-job education and training, ongoing education and lifetime learning (Bolam and McMahon, 2004). However, what is often vague and sometimes misleading is that these expressions regrettably have overlapping connotations and are defined in different ways by a number of writers (Carlyon, 2015). Yet, one thing that is perhaps more certain and agreed on by most CPD researchers is that irrespective of how schools are organized the rekindling of staff members' professional development is crucial to school improvement (Guskey and Huberman, 1995).

The task therefore of formulating a precise definition for continuing professional development is no doubt a formidable undertaking. Previous writings on CPD typify it as professional learning not as quick-fix activity but as a long-standing enterprise which spreads from initial teacher certification through to their lifetime in workplace (Putnam and Borko, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Similarly, Pedder *et al* (2010) argue that CPD refines the prior pedagogical knowledge by ensuring that new trends in teaching are accessible to teachers. In the same way, OECD (2009) defines professional development as on-going undertakings that develop the pedagogical skills and attitudes.

A more recent viewpoint on the subject describes CPD as an enhancement programme which is specifically designed to improve the skill set and outlooks of teachers (Mitchell, 2013). The concealed part of this definition is that while it concurs with the knowledge and skills aspects of earlier contributions on CPD it also takes into account the right reasons behind teaching. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin's (2011) description of professional development denotes the multiplicity of learning experiences that is geared towards pedagogical advancement outcomes. However, one of the limitations with this explanation is that it does not state clearly whether or not the range of educational experiences that is alluded to take into account the attitudes or values that teachers possess. An assessment of these broad and diverse perspectives suggests that the inquiries into the specialised work combined with the contextual backgrounds give prominence to the history, culture and politics of CPD (Banks and Smyth, 2011).

Taking into consideration the significance of each standpoint above as well as the dilemmas implicit in them, it is perhaps necessary at this point to adopt an operational meaning offered by Day (1997, p. 4):

“Professional development consists of all natural experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute, through these, to the quality of the education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills, and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives”.

The unvoiced problem here in my opinion is that these definitions are far from being straightforward partly because some of the key matters involved are compounded by the nature of how teachers learn and the precise ways in which CPD activities are highly influenced by regulations, standards and teaching norms (Bolam and McMahon, 2004). It is these variables that combine in subtle ways to create the dynamism which often exists in CPD programmes across different contexts (Patton and Parker, 2015). The dominant idea that seems to emerge from the above definitions is that they present conclusions which strongly suggest that CPD proves to be a central and supportive feature of pedagogy (Timperley 2005; Robinson *et al.*, 2009).

Moreover, other researchers have argued that CPD centrally places teachers in a position to address the challenges and opportunities for enhanced instructive understanding and success aimed at higher student performance in schools (Hoyle and John 1995). The key point that must not be overlooked here is that the nature of CPD inevitably accentuates the importance of teachers to be viewed as continuous learners who must constantly make adjustments in diverse and evolving situations (Newell *et al.*, 2009). Consequently, one of the main issues regarding the purpose of CPD is that teachers require it throughout their professional lives so as to sustain

the specialized growth that is required to bring about improvement in student learning (Carlyon, 2015).

### **2.7.2 Characteristic Features and Models of CPD**

Traditionally, CPD was confined to the deficit intervention which utilized a one size fits all tactic to enhance the capacities of teachers (Richardson and Placier, 2001). This was quite similar to the ‘workshop’ method which involved the participation of large numbers of teachers in one setting (Murchan *et al.*, 2009). More recently, new methods to CPD have developed which view teacher learning as “interactive and social, based in discourse and community practice” (Desimone, 2011, p. 68). These current restatements of CPD consider the importance of all aspects of teachers and learning and are deemed as essential mediums through which teachers professional competencies can be developed. Support for this view, comes from Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) who identify three guiding principles of professional learning. First they emphasize the significance of a dynamic and collaborative learning environment; second, incorporating shared concerns and third, constructing CPD into an on-going process. Mayer et al. (2005) further point out the need to add inquiry and research as critical components of organisational practices and improvement.

Extending the discussion further Villegas-Reimers (2003) offers a comprehensive description of the components which encapsulate CPD. According to the writer CPD constitutes several critical elements which are drawn from both the internal and external environments of the school. Villegas-Reimers (2003) also argues that within the school, CPD must take into consideration; 1) the knowledge and experiences of the school; 2) collaborative activities aimed at improving learning and 3) allocating sufficient time for CPD to be entrenched in teachers’ work. Regarding the external factors, the writer emphasizes the importance of the involvement

of experts who can provide support through mentoring and coaching. However, more contemporary frameworks of professional development have acknowledged the personalised characteristics of teachers' proficiencies and the need for them to become skilful in fine-tuning their practice (Kitchen 2009). Within the CPD literature it is well documented that when teachers engage in professional development which is self-directed it results in teacher empowerment; hence leading into strategies which are beneficial to them (Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002). This interpretation confirms Ferrier-Kerr *et al.*'s (2008) analysis where they propose that teachers' aptitude to be insightful is a key ingredient for the success of CPD.

Despite the disagreements about where the emphasis lie regarding the features of CPD, the evidence advocates for teachers to work collaboratively as well as sharing a common vision (Harris *et al.*, 2003, Storey 2004; Fennell 2005; Timperley 2005, Timperley *et al.*, 2007, Kennedy 2011). Conversely, while Kennedy (2011) agrees that a concerted style to CPD is necessary, the argument is also made for some de-emphasis on the collaborative approach particularly because the learning prospects for teachers do not always come from the prearranged activities but they could also arise from their social interactions. In presenting a new framework which outlines the purpose for CPD, Kennedy (2014) asserts that the rationale for classifying the previous models is underpinned by three broad categories namely; "transmissive, transitional or transformative" (p. 349). These classifications are positioned in way to represent the nine different models – "training; award-bearing; deficit; cascade; standards based; coaching and mentoring; community of practice; action research; and transformative" - which have been proposed (Kennedy, 2014, p. 337-338). What Kennedy is proposing here is that these models should not stand alone but rather they should pronounce the dominant characteristics of particular approaches to CPD which in turn enable a framework for analysis. Comparing Kennedy's work with much of the discussion surrounding

collaboration and shared vision to support CPD, it is noticeable that the inclusion of two of the models - “coaching/mentoring and the community of practice” (p. 338) - reinforce the importance for the professional development of teachers to have at its core a process of sharing through dialogue which in itself promotes the capacity for establishing a learning environment (Kennedy 2005).

### **2.7.3 Discourse versus Reality**

To inject a different perspective as well as to further clarify what is meant by CPD Guskey (2000) points out that we first need to take into account three important characteristics. These include a deliberate action, continuing learning atmosphere and a methodical approach to all activities. On the other hand, Sparks (2002) labels the features of good professional development as: dedicated to the strengthening of teachers’ knowledge base and instructional abilities; providing situations for practice, encouraging exploration and critical thinking; rooted in teachers’ effort and occurring within regular school hours; continuous and initiated by a spirit of group effort among and between staff members and principals.

Several academics have argued that CPD is a powerful mechanism which school leaders could utilize to improve the quality of instruction and by extension an improvement in students’ learning (Gemedá *et al.*, 2014). Though this evidence pervades much of the literature, some researchers have pointed out that CPD initiatives have unsuccessfully produced the desired impact worldwide. An international survey confirms that most of the professional training conducted across the globe does not adequately cater for the needs of teachers (OECD 2009). A closer examination into this report reveals that the main contributor to such failure is the common workshop approach used by many countries Adsit (2004).

According to Cole (2004) the inefficiencies in CPD is primarily caused by an overemphasis on the things that should be altered instead of focusing on the strategies that teachers require to effect change. He further extends this argument by stating that most professional development activities are performance oriented where the intent is on the acquisition of information and not necessarily on techniques to support changes in practice. The conclusion that could be drawn from Cole's account is that gaining new knowledge and innovations from CPD is insufficient on its own without a translation into classroom practices. If the primary objective for CPD is to advance student learning, then arguably, it could only be grasped after the learning experiences are transformed into practice (Adsit, 2004).

#### **2.7.4 Motivation and Commitment**

Motivation is considered as an essential factor in determining the level of success in training programmes for teachers (Kelania and Bowes, 2012). This implies that the reluctance of teachers to participate in such programmes might be the result of different types of motivational forces. Research has shown that teachers often demonstrate an unwillingness to be involved in CPD because of personal and contextual reasons (Thoen, 2012). Added to this, they are antagonized by a number of curriculum and school-based issues. In order to address these challenges school leaders must first develop an awareness about what motivates teachers before engaging them in professional activities (Kelania and Bowes, 2012). CPD must therefore be driven by the notion of how adults learn and the nature of their practice (Thoen, 2012).

While the literature is suggesting that it is important for teachers to take some ownership of their professional development, there is also the requirement for school leaders to provide a

stimulus for the learning among staff members. White (2013) specifies that leaders need to communicate the expectations that they hold with respect to the benefits of participating in CPD. Even though there is not an explicit account of how such a task should be done it by no means reduce the relevance of stimulating teachers to participate in CPD. Heystek (2011) makes the argument that professional growth is challenging since the situation necessitates physical, sensitive and intellectual adjustment on the part of the persons involved. Separately from determination and participation, time and resources are frequently required, and it makes teachers unenthusiastic to take part. Furthermore, the proposed training usually takes place over holidays or following the official release of classes thus, making it problematic for them to be present in a meaningful way (Harland and Kinder, 1997).

A different cause for teachers' reluctance towards transformation, but more specifically engaging thoroughly in CPD, is the insecurity it conveys (Stensaker and Meyer, 2012). With particular reference to the UK context, reports have shown that from since as far back as 1988 the main strategic aim of consecutive administrations has been to impose a nationwide restructuring programme on teachers' professional development (Bubb and Earley, 2007). In addition to this, Pedder *et al.* (2010), note that such rigid education policies immediately raise two relevant queries which have implications for CPD. First, they argue that it may be to some degree responsible for teachers being less inspired in pedagogical advancement since such a centralised approach could give the impression of, as well as casting suspicion about the capabilities of the teaching community to address issues regarding CPD. Second, the extent to which the role of pre-setting the framework for pedagogical experiences and mandating conformity serves as the most appropriate method to improve teacher quality and student learning.

My view in relation to this debate is that prescribe or otherwise, the fundamental principles suggest that suitably planned CPD is usually explicit about the context, benefits, views, needs and concerns of the teachers (Pedder and Macbeath, 2008). Having said this, however, there is still the need for a balance between the relative power of the policy-makers and the pedagogic renewal and innovation to teachers in the classroom (Stensaker and Meyer, 2012). The fundamental idea in this argument therefore, is that while policy is important to guide the broad aims of education it remains problematic if teachers' learning is confined to performance-oriented programmes (Day et al. 2007). Moreover, CPD literature highlights that it weakens the specialized autonomy and confidence that teachers need largely because the core elements of CPD are grounded in bold, investigational and collective learning practices and standards (Pedder *et al.*, 2007; Weindling, 2006).

### **2.7.5 Role of Leadership in CPD**

It has been argued that the main aspect of the leaders' responsibility is directly related to the provisioning of educational leadership which is demarked by leading and shaping a culture of professional learning (Day, 2001). In contrast, Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990, p. 20) concisely write, "an effective school leader is someone who has a significant impact – for better or worse – on student opportunities to learn in the classroom". Cardno (2005) strongly argue that manner in which school leaders could inspire teachers and provide operational guidance on developmental interventions is highly dependent on sound planning and monitoring of CPD.

The main argument here is that school leaders could considerably impact the proficiencies of teachers and as a result, raise the standards in schools (Timperley *et al.*, 2007; Cardno, 2005). However, the critical aspect of this assessment of the principal's role in CPD is not just the obvious notions of influence and provision, but also a greater need for school leaders to align

their current thinking with what constitutes continuing professional development (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). Despite the difficulties in making absolute claims about the required links between school leadership and CPD, there are studies which suggest that there is an increasing awareness of school leaders understanding the responsibility they have in nurturing teachers to recognise the importance of professional growth as well as creating the kind of climate to foster such developments (Fullan and Hargreaves 2002, Harris 2007, Branson 2010, LeFevre 2010). In addition, Timperley *et al.*, (2007) recognise that leaders possess the power to create the type of environment which could enhance CPD. Similarly, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012, p. 56) postulate that there comes a time when teachers “have to be steered into new practices”. Consequently, this signifies that leadership practices must provide the impetus for teachers that would encourage them to engage in collaborative activities. This view is also reinforced in Larrivee’s work, who advocates that “the more teachers explore, the more they discover. The more they question, the more they access new realms of possibility” (2000, p. 306).

The extremely challenging responsibilities of principal-ship in schools today prohibit little space for traditional methods of leadership practices (Cardno and Collett, 2004). Leaders of primary schools need to take heed of more current trends of dispersed leadership that depend on intermediate groups to bolster the leadership capacities (Childs-Bowen *et al.*, 2000). This suggests that substantive school leaders should devote resources to develop the capabilities of the school community to have an impact on the critical and central issues of teacher quality and pupil learning. Day (1999) recaps that the leader’s aptitude to generate a learning culture for both teachers and students is an essential factor in verifying the extent to which teachers perceive CPD as another policy initiative or whether they view it as a fundamental approach to longstanding school advancement.

Instead of letting their leadership roles to be marginalised through an overabundance of formal duties leaders in school must reshape and redesign the practices in a way that would make teacher professional development their priority (Cardno, 2005). In order for this to happen, Cardno (2005) argues that it entails a vivid conception of the things staff members rate in leadership practices as well as a better assessment of the school's requirements. For example, one study which examines the viewpoints of teachers in relation to leadership practices shows that teachers place a higher value on leaders who encourage and support professional development by providing the time for structured conversations about CPD (Blase and Blase, 2000). More precisely, the findings from the above study also reveal that these leaders specifically plan CPD in such a way where they integrate theories of adult learning to propel school-based inquiry which could enlighten the decisions make about teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009). The resulting outcomes from such leadership practices create and sustain a certain type of school ethos where sharing of teaching practices and constructive feedback become the customary standard (Blase and Blase, 2000).

### **2.7.6 Evaluating the Impact of CPD**

It has been argued that appraising the effect of CPD is fundamentally challenging especially for schools (Rhodes *et al.*, 2004; CUREE 2008). This is reflected in the UK Inspection Agency, Ofsted's (2006) report, which found that the evaluation of CPD was the area which needed most attention. This is partially due to the fact that the methods used are ill-defined, indirect and often too simplistic (Earley and Porritt, 2014). The Ofsted (2010) findings point out that there is a heavy reliance on circumstantial substantiations and personal recounts to make a valued judgement about the effectiveness of CPD. The common practices that were in place focus on the completion of assessment forms which are usually given at the end of the training (Guskey, 2000). Added to this, and amongst the barriers to progress, Earley (2010) claims that the real struggle for schools is partly due to the unavailability of suitable experts and insufficient resources to conduct any meaningful evaluation.

The debates over the extent to which CPD contributes to student learning continue to be contentious because the evidence to support the argument is often blurred (Rhodes *et al.*, 2004; CUREE, 2008). However, there are some cause and effect inquiries conducted in the US which confirms that there are some linkages between CPD and student learning (Porritt, 2009a). The use of random and controlled samples and quasi-experiments in the design of these studies raises the issue of the extent to which the findings can be generalised across different contexts (Wayne *et al.* 2008). Notwithstanding this, it is worthwhile to comprehend the complex relationships between what teachers learn from CPD and how they use such knowledge to improve learning in the classroom (Opfer and Pedder 2011; Wayne *et al.*, 2008). Although there are several different types of approaches to evaluate CPD, it remains unclear as to which specific model is utilized in schools (Pedder *et al.*, 2010).

### **2.7.7 Communities of Practice and Professional Learning Communities**

Lave and Wenger (1991) developed the concept of ‘communities of practice’ but subsequently it has been further advanced to include some additional terminologies. There are several conceptions which have been offered to explain the communal learning and professional development that take place in school (Younger and George, 2012). Many of these new terms are coined by various writers: ‘teachers’ learning communities’ (McLaughlin and Talbert, 2006), ‘networked communities’ (Hattie and Timperley, 2007) and ‘teacher professional learning communities’ (Levine, 2011). Despite these grades of constructs, there seems to be no generally acknowledged definitions with respect to the collective learning processes that are developed in schools (Levine, 2011).

The concept however, has three distinct but interrelated characteristics – namely- 1) the desire to reciprocate group experiences and sharing of practices, 2) agreed consultation on innovativeness and 3) building a collection of accessible skills over an extended period (Wenger, 2000). These elements when combined represent how teachers generally share their learning in schools. Many researchers however, argue that teachers’ collaboration about their own as well as student learning is perhaps the most profound strategy for professional development and improving schools (Meirink *et al.*, 2007; Levine and Marcus, 2010). According to McLaughlin and Talbert (2006) the formal and informal discussions among staff members provide an excellent opportunity for the exchange of ideas and experiences that they encounter in their daily practice. While this is a meaningful way to promote PLC’s, the differences in the core views and assumptions that teachers hold could also stifle the development of such programmes (Stoll *et al.*, 2006). It is for this precise reason why Horn and Little (2010) strongly advocate for further inquiry into an understanding of the dynamic processes that are involved in PLC’s.

Nevertheless, Bottery (2004) argues that the success of professional learning communities is determined not only by the structured interchanges but equally important the high levels of trust which must permeate the group. In contrast, Hargreaves (2007) comments on both the attractiveness of PLC within schools as well as the contributing factors that enables them to flourish. At the very least, he suggests that PLC is exemplified in the philosophy of a school and manifests itself as a specific way of thinking about teaching and learning. On the other hand, Stoll *et al.* (2006) stress that PLC's play a major part in stimulating capacity-building for maintainable school enhancement. For that reason, PLCs are most successful when they: "are connected to other schools around them, in networked learning communities that spread across a system" (Hargreaves, 2007, p. 192).

### **2.7.8 Empirical Findings on CPD: The England Context**

The Staff Development Outcomes Study (SDOS) was commissioned to investigate the relationship between staff development and the learning outcomes for both pupils and teachers (Bubb and Earley, 2010). The initial findings of the research indicated that there was a positive relationship between school results and professional development activities partly because of the methods and tools that the researchers utilized to produce several pieces of empirical data which help to validate this relationship. First, in the high performing case-study schools staff development had specified objectives and was conducted by knowledgeable senior staff. Second, these schools had an ethos that was fundamentally embedded in staff development and leaders promoted such spirit so as to encourage teachers taking charge of ownership of how they grow professionally. Third, the attrition frequency was very small and the confidence of members was very high. In light of these conclusions, the report also outlined that there were

some notable obstacles to staff development which were linked to issues of time, finance and support, including the poor usage of days reserved for training (Bubb *et al.*, 2009).

A primary concern of professional development is the narrow view that has been attributed to it where it is seen as a single off-shot event or a set of activities (Guskey, 2002). While it involves a series of actions, it is more importantly to note that it is the teachers' daily reflections about their practice that will influence the improvement and quality of the instructional process (Pedder *et al.*, 2010). Even though there is substantial literature about the theories that illuminate the constituents of good CPD practices, the State of the Nation findings show that there was a disconnection between the real activities teachers participate in and those associated with positive impacts. For instance, (Opfer and Pedder, 2010a) argue that the common methods of CPD have tendencies of weak collaborations and lack the scope for the utilization of research data. They further point out that there is a propensity for teachers to partake in inactive types of learning where most of the CPD time is spent in workshops and meetings.

To shed more light on the findings, one of the questions that teachers were asked in the SDOS research was to identify the effect of their professional experiences on students' learning. Majority of the participants stated that "better learning and greater motivation and greater confidence" (Bubb *et al.*, 2009, p. 46). Surprisingly, only as little as 15% of the respondents mentioned that their CPD training had brought about improve test scores. While anecdotal assertions and intentions are useful they fall short of giving any clear cut evidence about professional development and its positive indicators in school improvement. As Guskey says:

"Good evaluation does not need to be complex; what is necessary is good planning and paying attention to evaluation at the outset of the professional development programme, not at the end" (Guskey 2002, x).

The evidence from much of the research in UK suggests that the planning of CPD has to take into consideration the entire needs of the school as well as the concerns of the key stakeholders in external environment (TDA, 2007b). However, it would be naive to think that these entities interact without tensions in conjunction with how decisions related to CPD are made and carried out (Opfer *et al.*, 2008). School leaders must make certain that all training and development cater for the needs of both teachers and organisational priorities particularly because resources are limited hence, the reason why they should be strategic (Cardno, 2005). Operating strategically here carries a kind of thinking that would encourage the habit of being proactive so as to anticipate the challenges ahead and put plan in place to alleviate potential problems (Cardno, 2005).

### **2.7.9 Teacher Professional Development in the Caribbean**

Sustained, but more importantly, productive teacher professional development does not only yield successful students and teachers, but by extension, expedite individual and collective contributions towards the insightful and valuable characteristics associated with the process of teaching and learning (Kaplan and Norton, 1996). Sherman *et al* (2003) point out that empirical evidence in education which defines what is applicable or not is both a necessary and vital feature of CPD in the Caribbean. Accordingly, they reiterate that that “relatively little systematic research has been conducted on the type of professional development necessary to improve instructional practices or learner outcomes” (2003, p. 2). With these ideas in mind, teacher professional development therefore is one of the pillars for educational institutions and in accordance with Bissessar (2013) who stated that it;

‘is needed for educators to not only to keep abreast of the current trends in curriculum and technological advances, but also to maintain an institutional, societal, and national culture of protracted growth and development in methodology, collective practice and individual efficacy, and development of professional communities of learners and teachers’ (p. 126).

In addition to this, Singh (2007) concludes from her research that when teachers engage in ‘authentic classroom research’ – become producers of knowledge by enquiring into their own practice through research to find ways of improving and developing their practice – they are more committed to their own professional practice and as such, modify their instruction to suit the requirements of the learners. In another study conducted by Joseph (2007), he signposts the importance of ensuring that continuing professional development is made available to address the needs, prior knowledge and experiences of teachers. Here quality for Jones refers to the type of CPD that encourages teachers to be reflective and self-sufficient critical thinkers who constantly examine their moral and ethical values as they relate to pedagogy. Support for this view, comes from Bissessar (2013) who carried out a survey mainly among primary school teachers to capture their views on CPD. The emerging themes from the data collected from the two demographic (urban and rural) areas in Trinidad generally identify issues that were related to the purpose or relevance, structure, follow-up activities, motivation and socialisation. While there were common trends across both zones, there were still substantial differences between the ways teachers from the two areas think about matters related to CPD (Bissessar, 2013). The generalizability of the data therefore has implications for administrators and it is for this reason why De Lisle *et al* (2007) stated;

“Even within Trinidad and Tobago, it is unlikely that strategies that work for a high achieving urban school would translate successfully to a small rural school. Based on

the resource-dependency perspective, schools face different and unique environmental conditions and these will influence their success. Critical aspects of the environment include human and physical resources and the parent-student-community interface” (p. 549)

This underscores the importance of educational administrators in engendering a culture of CPD and finding innovative methods of not only fostering principal and teacher commitments, but also monitor and evaluate all the stages and processes involved in CPD (Pedder *et al.*, 2010). Making CPD meaningful and enticing is often the greatest challenge for school leaders particularly when it comes to the matter of implementing any CPD programme (Kennedy, 2011). Such suggestions perhaps call for teachers to have more autonomy over what is presented and that learning and training be underpinned by aims which are philosophical in nature (Opfer and Pedder 2010a).

## SECTION 3

### 2.8 Leadership for Learning

School leadership and student outcomes are extensively recognized and debated as two of the fundamental concepts at the core of education partly because they are deemed as crucial factors for success and improvement in schools (Day and *et. al.*, 2007). Furthermore, it is quite evident from the available scholarly discussions that both ideas are multidimensional, and open to extensively opposing interpretations among academics, policy-makers and practitioners (Leithwood *et al.*, 2004; Gronn, 2010; Townsend and MacBeath, 2011; Timperley, 2011).

Notwithstanding these debates, some research findings concur that the leadership process in schools is in disequilibrium especially when the comparison is made between low and high performing schools (Murphy *et al.*, 2009). This type of analysis and evaluation calls for highly contextualized and flexible approaches to leadership as well as recognizing the importance of individual beliefs and knowledge about learning (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009a). With specific reference to the theoretical framework of Leadership for Learning (LfL) both concepts are considered at this juncture as actions that connect the relevance of human intervention against the backdrop of ethical determination (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009a). Frost (2006) refers to the notion of human agency “as the capacity to make a difference through self-conscious strategic actions, and moral purpose to the underpinning values of learning process and leadership activity” (p. 20). Accordingly, these two constructs set the foundation for the leadership and learning practices in schools (Dempster, 2009).

The Leadership for Learning Carpe Vitam Project commenced in 2002 and culminated in 2006. Broadly speaking, this project was primarily concerned with both concepts and for the most

part, with their connection in relation to understanding and promoting leadership in education that supports learning (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). The scheme involved the participation of a number of countries, higher education institutions and schools. The primary goal was to discover the links between leadership and learning by collecting data from symposiums, workshops, school visits and inter-country exchanges. MacBeath *et al.*, (2005) observe that the Carpe Vitam project was a critical learning expedition for several reasons. First, they point out that it was more than just a physical voyage which involved criss-crossing from one place to another across different countries. Second, it was an intellectual exercise where there was a continuous need to reflect on passive ideas and traditional ways of thinking. Third, it was a sensitive as well as a purposeful excursion mainly due to the fact that the researchers had to move from a position of familiar contexts in order to establish new social bonds and relationships through national boundaries. This shift in my view brings to the fore the varied meanings across cultural context with respect to how both leadership and learning are played out in actual practice (House and Aditya, 1997).

Having said this, it is important to point out very early that the question of how the competencies of leaders in different contexts impact student learning cannot be overlooked. Classical situational theorists such as Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) conclude that there are reliable assertions to advocate that leaders in one circumstance might not automatically be effective in other situations. By the same token, contingency theorists Bossert *et al.* (1982) reason that not one solitary style of leadership is routinely suitable in all contexts. The essential point here is that leaders must initiate the style and arrangements most appropriate to their localized positions. In my mind therefore, I am of the view that some aspects of these early theoretical perspectives in some ways support the Carpe Vitam project since it was aimed at exploring the interrelationships of leadership and learning in various contexts.

According to MacBeath *et al* (2009) the original stance which they took at the start was demarcated by a set of autonomous beliefs about leadership and learning. In the same way, Woods (2004) argues that the purpose of democratic leadership is to establish and sustain a learning environment that enables everyone to meaningful participation and have admiration for and expectations toward everyone as moral beings. However, it is appropriate to note that dealing with the notion of democratic leadership raises an array of philosophical, political and sociological questions. This demonstrates that it is a much more complicated and challenging concept since education is fundamentally a moral activity (Fullan, 2003). In relation to the Carpe Vitam project these values were deciphered into concrete plans at school and classroom levels (MacBeath and Townsend, 2011). The greatest noteworthy result of the project was a number of principles that make the connections between leadership and learning. Leadership for Learning practice involves five core principles: 1) focus on learning, 2) conditions for learning, 3) dialogue, 4) shared leadership and 5) accountability (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009).

### **2.8.1 Principle One: A Focus on Learning**

In the history of education, schools have always been considered as the key factor in the provisioning of learning experiences for children (Fullan, 2003). Despite this view, there are contentions in the literature with respect to the processes and approaches that are used to promote learning. For example, Rhodes and Brundrett (2010) claim that some of the concepts which are linked to learning have been confined within the literature to a number of theories around teacher-centred (top-down strategy) approaches. Other researchers (Taylor, 2000; O'Sullivan, 2003) suggest that there has been a gradual shift from teaching to a greater emphasis on learning supported by student-led classroom practices.

Research has shown that the schools which are capable of raising the achievement of students generally have principals who consistently formulate, implement and sustain the shared vision of school (Murphy *et al.*, 2009). However, it may serve useful to ask the question what do we mean by having a focus on learning? Does learning at school need to be purely tied to student or should the learning of teachers be an integral part of the process? According to MacBeath *et al* (2009) the role of teachers should involve more than just the delivery of the content materials. As an alternative, they argue that if they are to be truly perceived as experts in their practice then they should concentrate their efforts on learning by expanding their practice through reflection, investigation, dialogue with co-workers, and staying abreast with new developments in the field.

In order however, for teachers to focus their attention on how well students are progressing, it is logical as well for them to understand the process of acquiring the necessary pedagogical skills (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). Several studies conclude that the quality of teachers is a major contributing factor for variations in pupils' learning outcomes (Kelehear, 2008). The assertion drawn from these perspectives is that it is necessary for teachers to understand how they learn, the nature of the subject they teach, and the needs and abilities of the students (Muijs, 2011). This implies that the concentration of learning in all schools should include the on-going professionalization of teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2009). Further confirmation from the literature indicates that when the opportunities are provided for teachers to participate in CPD it gradually empowers them to lead in other areas (Elmore, 2002; Hollingworth, 2012). The continuation of upgrading teachers' instructional skills is necessary because of the vital link between student learning and professional learning (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). This notion of focusing on the learning of teachers and students is an important component in accomplishing the broader aspects of whole school learning. Any attempt therefore, to drive school

improvement must take into account the multidimensional link between teaching, student learning and the organizational learning needs (Collinson and Cook, 2007).

An extension of a focus on learning beyond pupils and teachers leads to the more complex process of the organisation managing and modelling learning. The ways in which a school for example learns is arguably something difficult to conceptualise since it has been argued that it is people who learn and not physical entities such as schools (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). They further point out that it is people who create structures and pass on ideas which eventually become rooted in the culture of the school. In support of this view Tiler and Gibbons (1991) state that;

“Clearly organisational learning can take place only through the actions and experiences of individuals. But what defines the organisation as unique is the way in which it is able to marshal the learning experiences of individuals, to draw effectively upon this collective body of knowledge and experience” (p. 33).

With reference to the statement above it can be implied that focusing on organisational learning means developing an insightful capacity to react readily to the changing conditions at school in intelligent ways. This however, assumes that there is the existence of knowledge and interventions on hand to address the emerging challenges (Collinson and Cook, 2007). Organisational learning inherently “addresses questions of values and purpose because it is primarily concerned with the nature of evidence, truth and validity, subjectivity and objectivity, summative and formative assessment” (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009, p. 79). Another larger and broader concept of organisational learning which stretches further than the school itself is system learning (MacBeath and Cheng, 2008). The distinctive feature of this idea is that it frames the interest of schools regarding

matters of inter-school networks as well as linkages with social agencies, community and family support (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). To substantiate this view, Muijs (2010) makes the claim that collaboration and networking are now becoming popular strategic tools to drive school improvement. In sum, I am of the opinion that without having an understanding of the dynamic process in which everyone in the school community learns much of the current leadership practices would continue to overlook the crucial aspects of learning.

### **2.8.2 Principle Two: An Environment for Learning**

One of the misleading conceptualization of an environment for learning is to narrow it down to the material spaces, equipment or resources utilized at the school (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). These two writers further reiterate that while an environment for learning essentially includes these physical features it is absolutely vital that it takes into consideration cognitive aspects and moral responsibilities as well as placing a high value on learning. Moreover, it must take into account the active partnerships of the entire school community particularly the ways in which knowledge is acquired and shared (Townsend and MacBeath, 2011). Therefore, a conducive learning atmosphere should entail a dynamic relationship between these elements which result in the establishment a school culture that place emphasis on pedagogical knowledge and learning. For example, with reference to a practical example drawn from the Vitam Project, Dempster and Bagakis (2009) explains that one of the principals described the use of a ‘backward mapping’ technique to ensure there was a link between what she did as the leader and what happened for the students in the classroom. According to them, the principal stated that it is important first to highlight the needs of the students and then you tailor your leadership practices and pedagogy in ways to support the aims.

Research findings from Collinson and Cook (2007) reveal that there is an urgent need for schools to make learning for all its members a priority hence, promoting inquiry and facilitating the fundamental preconditions necessary for learning. In some cases they found that schools were implementing unplanned and fragmented versions of these conditions - such as professional learning communities and teamwork practices – without linking them directly to organisational learning. The recommendations from these conclusions state clearly that any attempt to promote a learning environment must be harmonized with the organizational learning. As a result, leaders should create the space and time for reflection on teaching and learning. MacBeath *et al* (2009, p. 76) argue that: “...mutual observation of classroom life and shared discussions of pupils’ work is an important part of refining professional practice for teachers”.

Cementing this view, Davies *et al* (2005) emphasize the significance of devoting a period for thinking about all the factors which could influence or shape the learning environment. Equally important is the responsibility to support innovative thinking, behaviours that promote learning and respectful human relationships among all members (Goleman, 2002). It is these features that school leaders must monitor and pursue vigorously in order to establish and sustain an environment that is conducive to organisational learning.

### **2.8.3 Principle Three: A Dialogue for Learning**

Research has shown that language is a fundamental feature in human agency chiefly because it provides the connection between people thus, enabling them to harness the shared meanings which are absolutely critical in making decisions for the benefit of all concerned (Swaffield and Dempster, 2009). Within the context of the LfL model it is crucial to underscore the

significance of dialogue in building the social cohesion within the school that would allow everyone to engage with others beyond their immediate group, and that leaders with positional power and authority involve those without it (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). The question then, is what do we really mean by ‘a learning dialogue’? Drawing from Chris Watkins work, he frames dialogue within the theoretical perspectives of constructivism and social approaches where he makes reference to the concept as a type of conversation that is underpinned by deep learning while at the same time designed to establish an understanding and building community knowledge (Watkins, 2005).

On the other hand, in his comprehensive analysis of dialogic teaching Alexander (2004) concluded that there are five categories (collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful) under which the concept can be represented. These adjectives when combined promote a particular kind of thinking and discussion that is not demeaning, censoring or destructive (Swaffield and Dempster, 2009). Rather, they are completely dedicated to the aims of the schools and are stimulated by useful qualitative and quantitative data consequently, turning them into constructive conversations within a discipline context (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). One technique that is useful in facilitating this kind of professional conversation is ‘scaffolding’ (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). According to these researchers, this process is the means by which specific types of conversations are initiated, supported and sustained so that all aspects of leadership and learning become the focal point of engrossed discussions. However, they also forewarns that regardless of having a scaffolding to support a learning dialogue it is also necessary that the foundations of the platform must rest squarely on three principles namely; understanding, trust and purpose. These concepts are closely related because they all require elements of ‘good will’ and time for them to be developed alongside all operational events in the school (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009) .

Several reasons have been advanced to justify the use of a dialogic style of learning than the monologue approach that is still prevailing in some schools presently (Boyd and Markarian, 2011). Carnell and Lodge (2002b) maintain that old-fashioned ways of teaching stifle the dynamic forces and unrestrained relationships within the teaching space while open channels of communication accelerate the learning so that the maximum levels could be achieved. One implied assumption here is that a learning dialogue should transcend itself outside the walls of the classroom conversations and it is for this reason why Alexander advocates that:

“... if it [the dialogic principle] is valid for children’s learning, it is no less valid for the learning of adults, including teachers themselves” (Alexander, 2004: p. 39).

Arguably, the concept of dialogue as presented in the LfL model is closely related to the ideas in the aforementioned literature. MacBeath *et al* (2009) strongly argue that it would be damaging to restrict a dialogue for learning solely between students and teachers primarily because the idea is framed in such a way to mesh with leadership practices as well as stakeholders external to the immediate school environment. Therefore I argue here that continuing professional development requires a dialogic position which informs the decisions about how it is planned and executed (Alexander, 2004). That is to say, leaders embracing a dialogic approach and inspire teachers to express themselves in ways that would have an impact on learning (Boyd and Markarian, 2011).

#### **2.8.4 Principle Four: Shared Leadership**

Shared leadership is a concept which is well informed by theories of organisational learning in addition to, the importance of social interfaces within organisations (Waterhouse and Møller, 2009). At the core of this idea lies what Gronn (2002) refers to as the concentrated and

pluralistic nature of leadership with a strong emphasis on influence rather than on authority. Conceptualising shared leadership in this way clearly demonstrates that there has been a significant shift in the literature consequently, making the predominance of individualistic or heroic forms of leadership less attractive and valued in our educational institutions (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009).

While the concept of leadership is commonly associated with terms such as status, power and authority, the notion of shared leadership takes into account a designed interchange between knowledge and action that influence them sequentially to become change agents (Foster, 1986). This bears resemblance to the way in which Segiovanni (2001) proposes the process of leadership compactness. He suggests this to mean where many people's efforts are combined into a central activity, have open access to new ideas, make joint decisions and participate extensively in the production and transfer of knowledge. As a result of this, more persons have an input in the outcomes of the organisation.

The interesting but critical thing to note here however, is that shared leadership within the context of schools presupposes that there are certain factors that can either promote or prohibit the human capacity to act in ways that can shape a culture of learning (Waterhouse and Møller, 2009). What follows from this is a conceptualisation of shared leadership that is based on a process instead of an authoritative position and therefore the unit analysis is best framed around collaboration, teamwork and dialogue (Gronn, 2002). Moreover, Waterhouse and Møller (2009) stress that the discourse supporting leadership for learning is premised on the belief that the most useful way to seek an examination of leadership is through a distributed perspective. This however, may prove difficult without acknowledging that teacher interactions and the ways in which leaders espouse their actions within the organisation context are considered as

the essential forces that blend in dynamic ways to drive learning in schools (Gronn, 2003b). It is these two ideas I wish to elaborate on in the following sections.

### **2.8.5 Distributed Leadership**

Inescapably, issues of power, authority and inequality run parallel with the concept of DL (Harris, 2013). The purpose of those writing about DL is certainly not to discredit or tarnish these significant influences or aspects. Remarkably, despite several decades of leadership research Lumby and Morrison (2010) and Coleman (2012) posit that issues of race, ethnicity and gender are not adequately addressed within the DL discourse. Therefore, while it is acknowledged that we need more empirical studies that inform such issues, the expectation is that as the DL research base matures, it will produce more concrete evidence that will clarify as well as capture the actual practices of DL that drive positive changes in school (Harris, 2013).

It is quite evident that in several countries DL is at present included in policy agendas (Harris, 2011b). Sharratt and Fullan (2009), note that distributed leadership is progressively becoming a tactical device for establishing the aptitude for transformation in schools. The connection between DL and enhanced performances in schools has steered several nations to promote this model, even though in different ways. For example, in England, DL supports the innovative types of education, and specifically groups of academies (Chapman *et al.*, 2010). Within the Scandinavian context, DL is deeply connected with the principles and practice of democratic education (Moller *et al.*, 2005). In the Netherlands a leadership proficiency structure has been developed which reflects the principles of DL, and in Norway successful headship is associated with DL practice (Moller *et al.*, 2005). Finally, in Wales, DL is a key part of system wide reform and manifests itself most clearly through a national infrastructure of PLC's (Harris, 2011b).

Taking into consideration the extensive interest in DL, the question that still remains is what does this imply for formal leaders in schools? The concept DL means different things and the various interpretations has caused researchers to “talk past each other” (Mayrowetz, 2008, p. 425). One general misapplication I observed in the literature is the expedient use of descriptors such as dispersed, democratic, or delegated to represent versions of DL. Bennett *et al* (2003) suggest that these labels distort the precise meaning even further. In the same vein, Mayrowetz (2008) argues that while different conceptualisations and explanations of DL co-exist, persist and prevail it is important to account for the numerous elaborations of DL for two main reasons. Firstly, the disparity in meanings results in a misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the concept and secondly, more precision is needed to unpack the related indicators between distributed leadership and school improvement (Mayrowetz, 2008).

Seeking clarity of definition is not aided by substituting DL for the inverse of ordered leadership or redefining it as coated forms of leadership concealed under some other theme (Gronn, 2009). While DL is perhaps another approach to unravel leadership practices, it is not merely the opposing view of formal leadership (Harris, 2013). Writers such as Spillane (2006, p. 58) states, “it is primarily concerned with the co-performance of leadership and the reciprocal interdependencies that shape that leadership practice”. Appraising this statement further it is perhaps suggesting that joint leadership should consist of both substantive and unofficial leaders rather than looking at it as typically one or the other.

One challenge and concern of DL has to do with the distributive power and control of formal leadership. Harris (2013) points out that there are cases in which DL appears to undercut and compete with the influential guidance of the head. But what if the leadership approach needs to be disrupted? Who says that formal leaders are absolutely right in carrying out their duties

or they are able to confidently judge what is good for teachers and children? However, there is an existing belief of the ‘dark side’ – the manipulation of teachers - of distributed leadership that is being debated where it is argued that if authority and power are used arbitrarily it could create problems for leaders (Lumby, 2013; Leithwood *et al.*, 2009a). This view therefore signals the need to maintain a balance of control as well as avoiding the practice of just enacting policy hence, no single person or team could weaken, unsettle or overturn the collective actions of DL (Murphy and Seashore-Louis, 2009; Lumby, 2013).

### **2.8.6 Teacher Leadership**

Teacher leadership has come to be an increasingly entrenched concept in the school improvement literature (York-Barr and Duke, 2004). York-Barr and Duke, 2004 propose that the key precept of teacher leadership parallels with the idea of the empowerment of the teacher. The mainstream literature indicates that it is still unclear about a unified definition of teacher leadership. However, York-Barr and Duke (2004, p. 287-288) define the concept as;

“the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other of the school community to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement”

Notwithstanding this description, it is imperative to present a more complete theoretical picture which synchronizes the key aspects that lie within the account offered in the definition above. One of the distinguishing features that can be distilled from this explanation is that teacher leadership can be categorized as an individual or collective process (Danielson, 2007).

The general assertions of several authors’ viewpoints is that formal teacher leadership is

envisaged as an allocated role while the informal aspect of teacher leadership is associated with extended work that teachers engage in within the wider school community (Murphy, 2005). In other words, formal teacher leadership is legitimized through the prescribed functions or duties assigned (eg. deputy, subject-head, coordinator), whereas informal teacher leadership gain its prominence from earning the respect of colleagues, students and or other stakeholders through their expert knowledge and creative ways of modeling benchmark practices (Muijs and Harris, 2007). Murphy (2005) also supports this view by outlining that formal teacher leadership is considered an intentional, competitive and personal activity directed at predominantly administrative matters while informal teacher leadership is a more emergent and collective enterprise with its primary aim as addressing issues deeply embedded in teaching and learning.

A second theoretical standpoint that underpins teacher leadership is that it is transformational by nature. An analysis of early writers such as Burns (1978) still serves useful in that distinction was made between the differences of transactional and transformational approached to leading schools. Building on his work, Day *et al* (2000) apply this theoretical framework to schools and point out that transactional leadership emphasizes the maintenance of prearranged procedures geared at achieving efficiency, while transformational leadership has to do more with modifying the climate and culture of the school by enriching its capabilities to change so as to and raise the standards of performance.

According to York-Barr and Duke (2004) an understanding of the principal actions that would promote teacher leadership as well as teachers' perception of their involvement requires further investigation. Research findings show that leaders do allow teachers to conduct specific roles but the contradiction is that too often they are not involved with the planning of

the activities (York-Barr and Duke, 2004). Taken together, the above reviews of the teacher leadership literature show that most of the inquiries have mainly focused on the specific actions they engaged in and the appropriateness of the existing environment to nurture the work they do in schools (Muijs and Harris, 2007). Critically, the unresolved but significant issue that still remains is the need for ongoing research which is necessary to shed new light into how teachers exercise their leadership capacities to effect change both inside and outside of the classroom (York-Barr and Duke, 2004).

### **2.8.7 Principle Five: Shared Accountability**

The thrust of the fifth principle connecting leadership and learning is founded on a collective spirit of answerability (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). Within the normal policy context accountability is often viewed as a singular activity where the burden rests squarely at the office of the leaders (Elmore, 2005). Shouldering such individual responsibility is argued as one of the obvious explanations for principals retiring early as well as reluctance among teachers to assume leadership roles (OECD, 2001; Gronn, 2008). Apart from this however, accountability must be first, conceptualised as a process and second, understood alongside the various overtones which convey different meanings particularly for those whom it impact most (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). In other words, encouraging children to develop an awareness and appreciation of their school environment and promoting learning at all levels are necessary precursors to raising and sustaining achievements (MacBeath *et al.*, 2007).

Accountability therefore, is underpinned by two mutually underlining ideas – answerability for actions and enforcement of procedures (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). In contrast, Rhodes and Brundrett (2010) refer to accountability as a mandatory affiliation between the person who performs action and the one who evaluates the enactment. Parallel to this is the perspective of ‘practical relevance’ where it is argued that heads and teachers can reflect on the existing practices so as to formulate and implement strategies required to raise the standards in performance (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). These writers further argue that this real-life accomplishment is achieved once they draw conclusions about performances with respect to school practices and learning outcomes. This interpretation shadows Diosdado’s (2008) work where he concludes that there is strong advocacy worldwide for school leaders to conceptualise, formulate plans and initiate site-based changes that are relevant to their particular contexts.

An additional important aspect regarding the literature is that the interest in accountability by policy-makers propagated in proportion to empirical data on school effectiveness (Nichols and Berliner, 2007; Reeves, 2009). This in turn provided the analytical devices for making comparisons among schools and setting the expected performance targets which have created additional pressures on schools (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). Consequently, school leadership is now perceived to be leaning towards and juggling with the nexus of accountability and improvement as stated by the following scholars:

“... we found school leaders to be more concerned with accounting than learning, with control than teaching, with compliance than with risk taking and with public relations than with student experiences ...” (Sackney and Mitchell, 2008: p. 112)

On the other hand, the exponents of the LfL model claim that schools which are more comfortable with the confidence bestowed on them are more willing to freely provide quality explanations of what is deemed worthwhile for all stakeholders (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). The important argument here is to recognise that schools are operating in an era of intense antagonism, and as such, there is an urgent need to establish a multi-level approach to accountability that meets the expectations of parents, learners, community groups and authorities (Muijs *et al.*, 2004).

## **2.9 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has reviewed the literature in relation to education leadership theories, the Leadership for Learning (LfL) framework and the critical issues associated with continuing professional development (CPD). The conceptual framework of the review offers an explicit structure for this study. It has drawn attention to some of the key concepts which merited research particularly because no work in the literature explains how these main concepts are understood or perceived in the three islands under investigation. As a result, this study might contribute to the existing knowledge in the field by exploring how leadership and CPD are conceptualized in Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla.

The first section of the literature highlights the nature of educational leadership and the strengths and weaknesses of various definitions used to describe the meaning of the concept. It also examines the leadership perspectives in the developed world, most notably the UK as well as in the Caribbean. The second section provides an introduction to the purpose of CPD where in-depth analyses were made with respect to some of the challenging factors, existing models and the evaluation mechanisms. The final section explains how the LfL theory offers a different perspective of leadership and learning where it highlights both the human and context variables are taken into account as central features. This theoretical perspective points out that leadership and learning are linked but, yet, remain interdependent characteristics of school where they are also bounded by a sense human capacity to act in ways to bring about change. In sum, the literature review in this chapter has contributed substantially to the theoretical framework of the key concepts as well as the research decisions and approach taken in this study. These methodological issues are discussed in more details in the proceeding next chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides details of the research design and methods used in this study. It gives an overview of the research design elements, the philosophical and theoretical considerations in addition to all the other key research decisions and conventions that were taken throughout the project. With specific reference to the sequence of the research design Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) proposed that:

*“... ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions; these in turn give rise to methodological considerations; and these in turn give rise to instrumentation and data collection” (p. 21).*

With this view in mind, the research design of this study is informed by my ontological assumptions, philosophical stance, the research methodology, methods (data collection and analysis), validity and ethical issues (Bechhofer and Paterson, 2000; Gorard, 2013).

### **3.2 Theoretical Foundations**

The decisions and choices that researchers make normally occur against a background of two schools of thought (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). These two ways of thinking are commonly known as positivism and interpretivism (Denscombe, 2014). Typically, the positivist applies a natural science methodology to investigate the social world (Johnson and Christensen, 2004). The essence of social reality is treated in a similar way to physical reality as something that exists independently with properties that can only be discovered using a controlled method (Robson, 2011; Bryman, 2006b). The researcher in this particular situation embraces an objective

approach to the study of the phenomena (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). The focus is generally on facts and figures and the method tends to be associated with the use of quantitative data and presented using statistical analysis (Thomas, 2013). In contrast, the interpretivist paradigm holds the view that the world can be understood from a subjective position (Burr, 2003). It sees social reality as something that is personally constructed by people's thoughts and actions (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Hood, 2006). As a consequence, the role of the researcher is to interpret a social phenomenon while at the same time recognizing that the researchers' own experiences and identities help to shape the interpretations of the occurrence (Schwandt, 2007).

Central to the understanding and generation of knowledge in the field of education, Morrison (2007) strongly argues that researchers constantly operate within a domain that is perforated with different beliefs, perceptions and actions. Researchers such as Pring (2000) and Blaxter, *et al.* (2010) agree that there are two questions which are of great importance for any researcher. These include what is reality (ontology) and what is our theory of knowledge (epistemology). Research therefore is ultimately concerned with the quest of understanding the world in which we live (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007). Such an understanding is reflected by our worldviews or beliefs as well as the interpretations and preferences we apply to them (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2007).

With respect to the first question, there are two main ontological assumptions which take into account the essence of reality. In one case, there is the assumption that reality is external to the thoughts of an individual thus, creating an objective view (Mack, 2010). In the other instance, reality is constructed by the personal analyses of meaning and symbols therefore making it a subjective process (Bryman, 2008). It is these constructs that give rise to an expansion in the discovery of knowledge which in principle is the primary component for the exploration of truth (Scott and Usher, 1999). These theoretical perspectives are critical to my own objective,

and or subjective beliefs specifically in relation to the research position that would guide this research. It is this type of reflection that has helped to position my philosophical stance with respect to the different paradigms of inquiry (Oakley, 2000).

### **3.3 Philosophical Position**

According to Grix, (2004) research is best done by:

‘setting out clearly the relationship between what the researcher thinks can be researched (an ontological position) linking it to what we can know about it (epistemological position) and how to go about acquiring it (methodological approach), you can begin to comprehend the impact your ontological position can have on what and how you decide to study’ (p. 68).

Having worked all my life in education would no doubt affect the ways in which I assumed how people come to know something. The different philosophical views in educational research has broadened my views about the nature of existence as well as what is considered to be knowledge (Thomas, 2013). Even though I appreciate the positivist position (see section 3.2), I feel that the act of knowing should not be fixed since in my opinion it is the participants (teachers, leaders and stakeholders) who have the innate ability to think rationally as well as forming interpretations of the world in which they live (Tang, 2011). Naturally, schools are places where leaders, teachers and students co-construct meanings from the learning environment (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). Although these types of meaning are considered subjective by nature they still form part of the knowledge production which is derived from their social contexts (Gunter and Ribbins, 2002).

Even though it is consistent for positivists to establish causative links under specified experimental conditions, I find it rather counterproductive to fully apply such a method in my study due to the complex operations under which schools function (Robson, 2011). Considering the purpose of my research questions it is justified to adopt a more dominant interpretivist position where access to knowledge should be explored from the context in which people operate (Morgan, 2007; Denscombe, 2008). My role as the researcher in this circumstance is “to understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants” (Cohen *et al.*, 2007, p. 19). In my view therefore, it is paramount to understand how collective attributes such leadership practices and CPD change and shape social ideas as well as individual thought (Townsend and MacBeath, 2011). Applying this to my research it is therefore crucial to note that the intent of exploring the participants’ perspectives combined with their contextual realities forms the basis for the ontological and epistemological positions espoused previously (Grix, 2004). It is these philosophical viewpoints that offer a defence of the choice for the methodology employed in this study.

### **3.4 The Broader Framework and Research Questions**

The conceptual framework outlined in the literature review informs the research methodology, guides the research tools as well as selecting appropriate data collection and analytical techniques. The theoretical structure of the study is connected to the perspectives about school leadership, CPD and LfL. The study explored how these concepts are perceived and practiced in primary schools in three islands (Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla). This research design therefore, is important because it communicates information about the distinct features of the study, which can differ for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Creswell, 2014).

Nevertheless, one common characteristic that spans all research design is that data is collected even though in different ways and for specific purposes (Bryman, 2008; Vogt, 2007).

Research questions are the driving force behind the choice of a research approach. Denscombe (2012b) validates this view by suggesting that well-formulated research questions pin down exactly what needs to be explored. Instead of thinking about fitting different methods to my proposed content topics, I thought about aligning methods to the nature of the research problems (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011). For example, I recognised that a survey best fits a quantitative approach because of my desire to understand a sample of views and attitudes of participants in the entire population under investigation (Greene, 2008). Likewise, a case study best suits a qualitative approach since my intention was to explore an issue so as to convey multiple and in depth perspectives from the participants (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003; Johnson *et al.*, 2007).

When researchers study a few individuals using a qualitative method the ability to generalize the results is reduced while on the other hand, the understanding of each person is lost in the quantitative approach (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006). In such situations it seems rational to employ a mixed-method inquiry since that one data source appears inadequate to address subtlety in the research problems (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011). These reasons enabled me to first, identify the nature of the problem, second, frame the research questions and then map them onto the appropriate paradigm (Neuman, 2014; Johnson and Christensen, 2008). Accordingly, I had to make certain that there were clear connections and alignment with my research questions and the methodology selected. This, configuration is what Creswell (2005) refers to as the notion 'connectivity' which must be part of the design considerations. For clarity

of purpose and simplicity of presentation, I set out the research questions in Table (1) and indicate the methods which address these.

**Table 1: Research questions and data collection methods**

<b>Broad Research Questions</b>	<b>Specific Research Questions</b>	<b>Research Methods</b>
<b>How are the concepts of continuing professional development and leadership perceived and practised in primary schools?</b>	1. How is leadership that focuses on teaching and learning perceived?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Focus Group</li> </ul>
	2. What do you think should be the purpose of CPD?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Focus Group</li> </ul>
<b>What are the common practices and issues associated with continuing professional development and leadership in such contexts?</b>	3. What do you view as the common practices or features of CPD based on your experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>
	4. What do school leaders and teachers regard as the challenging and enabling factors of CPD?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>
	5. How do teachers perceive the role of leadership and the way in which it is practiced?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> </ul>
<b>How are teachers involved in school leadership activities particularly as they relate to learning and continuing professional development?</b>	6. To what extent do teachers feel that they are engaged in leading and learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> </ul>
	7. How do you feel about the current arrangements in the planning of CPD?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> </ul>
	8. Who do you think should lead CPD and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>
<b>How have school leadership roles and other contextual factors influenced the approach by which continuing professional development is evaluated?</b>	9. What mechanisms or systems do schools use to evaluate CPD?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>
	10. How do you feel about linking CPD to teacher accreditation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>

## **3.5 Research Methodology**

### **3.5.1 The Purpose of Mixing Methods**

This research adopts a qualitative approach with a mixed-method design. The rationale for using a mixed-method approach stems from two important considerations. First, the ontological and epistemological positions of the researcher with respect to the underpinning theoretical and conceptual framework previously outlined. Second, to achieve the objectives of the study, in addition to, satisfactorily answer the research questions (Morrison, 2007). However, research critiques have often argued that qualitative and quantitative approaches are associated with two distinct paradigms and are therefore branded incompatible (Robson, 2011). In providing a counterargument to some of the criticisms, Huberman and Miles (2002) challenge the execution of data collection and analysis in quantitative studies by stating that judgements are often made about what counts as valid measures of the variables of interest and what statistical tests are appropriate. They further reason that these are only credible as their contextual assumptions and point of views which in their estimation are subjective elements characteristic of qualitative methodology. Furthermore, Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) in their useful examination support the blending of qualitative and quantitative research methods by suggesting that the combination is based on what questions can be best answered by which method or a mixture of methods. Hence, this approach seeks “to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic” (Morse, 1991, p. 122).

Other advocates of mixed methods research contend that a rationale exists for mixing methods because one data source may be insufficient to provide a detailed understanding of the nature of the research problem (Ivankova *et al.*, 2006). Put another way, mixed methods research allows for the “opportunity to compensate for inherent method weaknesses, capitalize on inherent method strengths, and offset inevitable method biases” (Greene, 2007, p. xiii). Furthermore,

mixed methods can analyse data with better precision particularly between different levels within the data (Morrison, 2007). In addition, Bryman (2006b) offers a detailed list of reasons for legitimising the use of a mixed methods research. With reference to his work, the following components (triangulation, process, contextual and completeness) were utilized in my study as steps to provide ways in which there were high levels of thoroughness.

These conceptualizations demonstrate that mixed methods research may be adopted for one or more of the aforementioned purposes, when a single method in isolation is unable to explore adequately a single phenomenon (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011). Therefore, this study looks for purpose and meanings that inform thoughts and actions of those involved in the process of leading and learning in schools with a focus on LfL and CPD. The data was collected through multiple sources such as questionnaires, interviews and focus groups discussions. As a result, my study is primarily a qualitative research with some usage of quantitative methods to ascertain the extent to which the participants view some statements about leadership and CPD in relation to their context. Mayall (2000) concludes that there is some congruence among researchers that enquiry in schools is fundamentally for and with those who play an active role in learning rather than something imposed on them.

For the above reasons, the research questions were developed with a focus on the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study with a strong consideration of the principles of LfL which include context - in which schools work in Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla; moral purpose - how leadership, learning and CPD are perceived in schools for the islands above and agency - what actually happens in these schools regarding leadership and learning and the types of engagement in the process (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). Notably, I did not balance or equate qualitative and quantitative approaches so that each had the same notional value, for these reasons: firstly, the sort of investigation and analysis I embarked upon is unique to the

three islands, as no similar or detailed study has been undertaken thus far, and as Marshall and Rossman (2011) and Creswell (2005) note, a qualitative approach can be very useful in new areas of research. Secondly, this research started without a set of rigid initial assumptions, not intending to test a particular pre-existing hypothesis, but to rely on what can be inferred from information gathered from the questionnaires. Thirdly, most of the data was obtained via fieldwork with teachers, Head Teachers and Ministry Officials as the actual circumstances of work or life are considered as ideal for gathering qualitative data. Since approximately two thirds of the data collection tools are qualitative in nature, it makes the analysis of the data to have a qualitative significance thus, labelling the study as a 'qualitative dominant mixed methods' (Johnson *et al.*, 2007).

Thus, my decision was influenced by the development of research methodology and the perceived legitimacy of both quantitative and qualitative research. This is in line with the new trend in social sciences where researchers have increasingly adapted mixed method approaches that employ strategies to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data as a means of seeking convergence and or divergence across both methods (Creswell, 2005). Mixed methods research has become more widely accepted and associated academic investigations have advanced from providing simple justifications to more elaborate philosophical reasoning of the addition of defined qualitative and quantitative methods within the framework (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011; Johnson *et al.*, 2007; Greene, 2008; Onwuegbuzie *et al.*, 2009).

### **3.5.2 Triangulation**

Triangulation is a useful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. In particular, it refers to the application and combination of several research methods in the investigation of leadership and continuing professional development. These blends included dual methodological approaches (quantitative and qualitative) as well as multiple data sources such as questionnaires, interviews and focus groups (Denzin, 1970). The rationale here is that triangulation was utilised as a dialectical process where it sought a more in-depth nuanced understanding of the research findings. This in turn, clarified incongruent results by placing them in dialogue with each other (Bogdan and Bilken, 2006). Furthermore, triangulation in this mixed methods study involved the integration the two research paradigms, not merely to look at agreement or disagreement between data sets, but to place the data in a more comprehensive explanatory framework (Thurmond, 2001).

Using this twofold approach did not result in a single, clear-cut, consistent picture, but rather it presented the task to improve comprehension of the various reasons for the existence of inconsistencies between the two sets of data (Patton, 1990). The qualitative input (verbal responses) has helped to explain the way how LfL and CPD are perceived and practiced where the quantitative measures (descriptive representations) failed to give a thorough analysis of the reason behind the participants' narratives. In other words, this methodological triangulation created the potential of exposing unique differences or meaningful information that would have remained undiscovered with only one approach or data collection technique in this study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Similarly, the quantitative data enhanced an understanding of the three contexts by revealing outliers or unique individual cases (Yin, 2009). In thinking about how my different methods and data sets complemented each other, I avoided a naïve convergence model of triangulation. That is to say, I did not hold any expectations that the data

developed from the one-to-one interviews, focus groups and survey responses would necessarily provide any straightforward mutual support or convergence on a common set of easy to interpret understandings.

Another important purpose of combining different methods as part of my case study strategy was to elucidate different dimensions and levels of the informants' perspectives and practices, however inconsistent the data might appear on the first inspection. Arguably, it would be surprising if the diverse kinds of data developed displayed total consistency given the complexity of the work of leaders and teachers, the differences in the island contexts, and the dilemmas and contradictions they face in their day to day practice, including their own learning development. By combining different methods within the same overall design opened the possibilities for theoretical development by engaging constructively with divergences and apparent inconsistencies in the three data sets. With specific reference to the above discussions, the triangulation employed in this study offered the prospect of greater confidence in accepting or refuting possible explanations from the data that I collected. Web (*et al.*, 1996) validates this view by emphasizing;

“Once a proposition has been confirmed by two or more independent measurement processes, the uncertainty of its interpretation is greatly reduced hence, the most persuasive evidence comes through a triangulation of measurement processes” (p. 3).

### **3.5.3 Knowledge Creation**

This research aims to create a holistic picture of the prevailing conditions in the contexts of Montserrat, Anguilla and Antigua with respect to LfL and CPD. It is located in the conceptual and humanistic knowledge domains, where the focus is to investigate what practitioners know and should know (Gunter and Ribbins, 2002). Gunter and Ribbins (2003) opine that it is significant to understand what knowledge is valued (conceptual domain), how to know and execute that knowing and who does the knowing (humanistic domain). According to Gunter (2005) this approach to the pursuit of knowledge is a multi-layered process. This conceptual framework was embedded in my research in the following ways. First, the applied aspects were associated with the actual perceptions explored; second, enlightening since it involved interpreting the meanings of practices with respect to how and why they took place; third, critical as it questioned issues about power relations inside and outside of the actions; fourth, practical in the sense that the results might have implications for enhancements in activity and actions; fifth, positional where I brought into line my philosophical standpoint with certain knowledge claims about the actions (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003).

### **3.5.4 Defining Case Studies**

Research that studies the attitudes, values and feelings generally tap into the perceptions of people (Seidman, 2006). Yin (1984, p. 23) defines the case study research method as;

“an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.”

In accordance with the definition above, case studies refer to a method that focuses on one or a few occurrences of a particular situation with a view to providing an in-depth account of for example; organization (schools), relationships (interaction between school community) and processes (leadership and continuing professional development issues and practices) (Gerring, 2006; Robson, 2011). In this study, the rationale for concentrating on a few cases rather than many is that the research is intended to illuminate the general idea about particular circumstances by exploring specific instances (Miles and Huberman, 1984; Denscombe, 2014). As a result, this approach has been extensively used in small-scale research and it has become more affiliated with qualitative dominant research (Yin, 2009).

### **3.5.5 Relevance of the Islands as Case Studies**

The justification for identifying the islands as cases is underpinned by the size and uniqueness of the education systems that have evolved in each of the three islands. Each of the islands has varying grades and number of educational institutions in each sector as well as the actual size of the organisations. Antigua with its 32 government primary schools by far has the highest numbers along with larger school populations and by extension teachers and school leaders. On top of this, it has almost the same number of private schools as public which makes it a very distinctive characteristic for the three English speaking islands. In the cases of Anguilla and Montserrat, the education systems are much smaller where there are only six and two public primary schools respectively. Another significant difference in the education systems is the existence of a State College in Antigua where one of its departments is directly responsible for the teacher training programme. In Montserrat such provisions are addressed by in-service programmes and or overseas training at a training college in one of the larger islands. On the other hand, teacher training in Anguilla is done under a quasi – training centre. With respect to

tertiary education, Antigua has the largest number of tertiary institutions that provide opportunities for higher education and adult learning.

Based on the above descriptions, it is quite clear that the magnitude and comprehensiveness of each levels of learning vary particular in Antigua. It is also noteworthy that each island has different methods by which teachers are trained which ultimately speaks to issues concerning the training and development of teachers. Such contextual factors in many ways might influence or shape their personal views about CPD since their experiences are different. Moreover, these individual differences might have implications for how leaders lead in their schools as well as the conceptualisation of leadership within localised backgrounds. It is these distinctive features of the education systems that make the three islands interesting case studies in which to investigate and illuminate perspectives of leadership and CPD.

Furthermore, the use of a case study in this study is considered a useful research strategy since it is characterized by in-depth inquiry, emphasis on context, and concerns about an individual, group or organization perspectives which is validated by multiple sources of data collection some of which might be quantifiable (Pring, 2000; Yin, 2004). Another important reason for the acknowledgement of case study as a research method is mainly due to the limitations of quantitative methods in providing complete and detailed descriptions of the social matter in question (Hamal *et al.*, 1993). Essentially, the case study method enabled the researcher to move further than the quantitative numerical outcomes to comprehending the meanings of the situation from the participants' perspective (Stake, 1995).

Similarly, Robson (2002) opines that in a case study the combined emphasis is on both the actual case(s) and the contextual details. Yin (2004) argues strongly that the in-depth qualitative accounts regularly created in case studies do not simply recount the data in the actual setting,

but more precisely describe the complexities of such circumstances which are unlikely to be captured in quantitative research. In actuality, the case study of school leadership and CPD practices used in the individual islands, for instance, gave access to not only the statistical figures regarding the proportion of the participants who agreed or disagreed with the items, but also the explanations for how and why things are done across the cases (Yin, 2009). This emphasis given to the context in this case study approach is directly aligned with the aims and objectives of my research study. In light of the views discussed above, this study utilized a mixed-method with a convergent parallel design which involved collecting and analyzing two independent strands of quantitative and qualitative data in a single phase (Creswell and Plano-Clarke, 211).

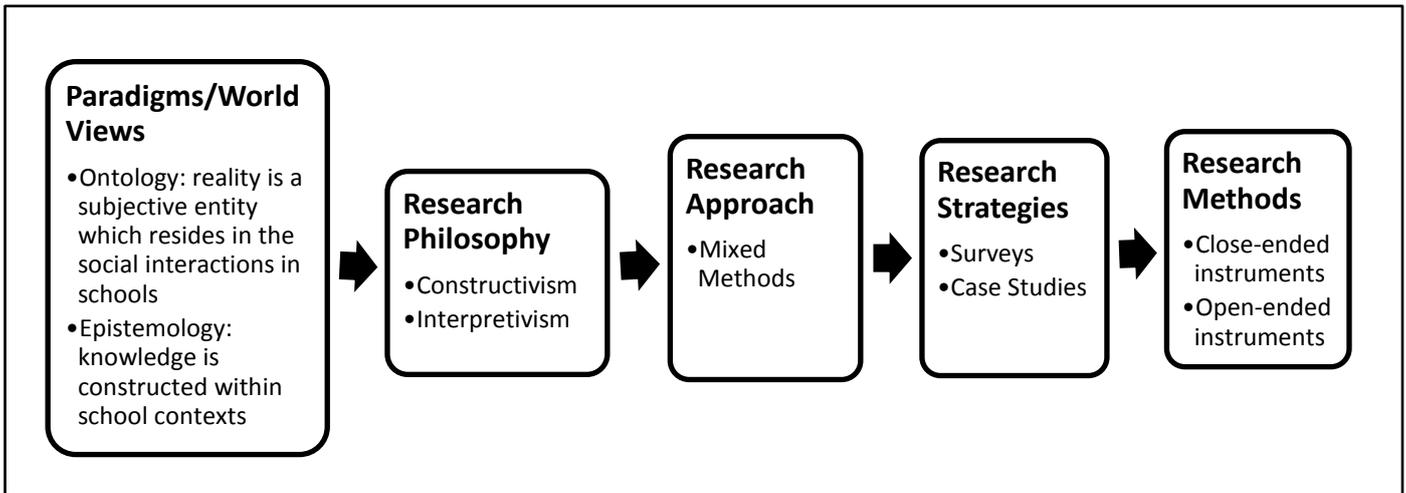
### **3.5.6 Investigative Generalisations**

Choosing this case study approach poses some uncertainty about how far to realistically generalize from the findings of the small number of cases (Denscombe, 2010). Notwithstanding this tension, it is a good insightful practice to expect these criticisms. However, what is most important is for the researcher to provide some explanation about how such issues are dealt with in the study. I addressed this matter by emphasizing the point that the cases should not be considered as the integral feature of the sample (Swanborn, 2010). Rather, the rationale for the use of the case study is to analyse the situation and to reach certain conceptualisations or claims that might help explain particular events in the context under investigation (Yin, 2014). Viewed in this way, each case is comparable to an individual experiment and, as Yin (2009, p. 15) argues:

*“Case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to postulations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a ‘sample’ and in doing a case study, your goal will be to expand and generalize theories (analytical generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)”.*

From these viewpoints, the results from this study should not be regarded as final or outright source of truth (Thomas, 2011). Instead, the findings should be viewed as part of a continuing process in which the results are not only tested for exactness, but are used to improve and build on the theoretical perspectives previously developed (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). It is against this analytic framework that the findings from this study could gain widespread acceptance (Denscombe, 2014). In summary, this study used a mixed methods approach to collect and analyse data. It drew its information from participants’ responses to questionnaire items, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Having selected this combination, it was absolutely necessary to provide a detailed framework of how the investigation was conducted. Using ideas from Creswell (2003), Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011), Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), Bryman (2006a) and Morse and Niehaus (2009) my research methods included: selection of sample techniques, compiling the instruments, conducting the pilot study, collecting data and presenting and analysing the data. In the following sections, I provide more procedural and substantive fine points of the methods used.

**Figure 3:** Stages in the research process (adapted from Creswell and Plano-Clarke, 2011).



### 3.6 Sampling Procedures and Characteristics of Sample

Sampling is defined as the process of selecting “a portion, piece, or segment that is representative of a whole” (The American Heritage College Dictionary, 1993, p. 1206). According to Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) in both quantitative and qualitative studies, researchers must choose the number of participants to select (i.e., sample size) and how to handpick these sample members (i.e., sampling scheme). For the purposes of this study, I distinguish between sampling schemes and sampling designs. I describe sampling schemes as specific techniques used to select units (e.g., people, groups, events, settings) (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). On the other hand, the sampling designs represented the process through which the sampling took place, in addition to, the number and types of sampling schemes as well as the sample size (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005b). However, sampling decisions characteristically are more intricate in mixed methods research because selection arrangements are required for both the qualitative and quantitative parts of the study (Creswell *et al.*, 2003).

### **3.6.1 Target Population**

The volcanic crisis which took place in Montserrat caused the education sector to be reduced to two (2) public primary schools. I have worked in the system over the past twenty-five years but more specifically I worked at as the Head teacher in one of the schools for the past 10 years. This meant that I had both professional and institutional knowledge regarding issues of leadership as well as the type of climate in which schools operate in Montserrat. The status of affairs regarding the small school population in Montserrat combined with my research interests and aims caused me to recognize the serious challenge that I would face in terms of first, having a wide enough population to generate meaningful data and second, the ‘insider-outsider’ dilemma. I therefore made an early decision to broaden the population scope and extended it to two of the nearby islands (Antigua and Anguilla). This in many ways helped to minimize bias; hence I did not include the teachers with whom I had directly worked in the sample (Thomas, 2013). The target population in this study involved the key players in the education process. The units or groups included teachers, Head teachers and Officials from the Ministry of Education who possess common characteristics as they relate to key issues in the research questions. As a result, it provided reasonable support to satisfactorily address the issue of homogeneity within the population (Green, 2008).

### **3.6.2 Sample Design: Schemes and Size**

Mixed methods researchers (Patton, 2002; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003b; Collins *et al.*, 2006; Kemper *et al.*, 2003; Creswell *et al.*, 2003; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004) postulate that the sampling strategies involve the selection of units using both purposive sampling techniques so as to increase transferability. Due to the purpose of the research, the logistical challenges presented in the fieldwork and my professional connection with the population especially in

Montserrat, I felt it was justifiable to use a convenience sample in my home country, a purposive sample in Antigua and a stratified purposive sampling scheme in Anguilla in order to administer the quantitative phase of the research (Teddlie and Yu, 2007). In addition, the launching (also referred to as timing) of the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study happened parallel to each other but remained separate events (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011). This concurrent mixed methods sampling design allowed me to triangulate the results from the combined approach, thereby permitting them to “confirm, cross-validate, and corroborate findings within a single study” (Creswell *et al.*, 2003, p. 229).

### **3.7 Access to Participants**

Once I had obtained ethical approval from the University of Birmingham, formal research authorization was sought and granted by the Ministry of Education in each of the islands. After I received permission from the education authorities, I made initial contacts with the participating schools where I briefed the Heads on matters of the nature and reason for the study, the rationale for selecting the participants and context, and the potential value of the findings. This was followed by additional telephone calls to discuss issues such as researcher-participant expectations, research protocols and establishing an agreement of the timing of the fieldwork events.

While being a professional colleague of the target population for over twenty-five years (which seemingly made it appear easier to negotiate with the gatekeepers) it was naïve to assume that the participants, especially those in my home country, would automatically feel comfortable with the project (Bryman, 2006a). Previously, I may have been viewed as an insider but playing the role now as an outsider (and not to mention being a male in a context dominated by females)

would add certain types of subjectivity in the relationships (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). To address this issue, I used the Education Officers (who were responsible for the participating schools) as the mediators or secondary gatekeepers. This was done to establish direct links with the school Heads as well as fostering positive relationships with the teachers so that their concerns were taken on board throughout the process. I kept this practice constant in the three islands and overtime it highlighted the significance of the impact of power relations in fieldwork and the ways in which it can assist the researcher to cope with unforeseen circumstances (Robson, 2011).

## **3.8 Quantitative Phase**

### **3.8.1 Sampling Procedures**

Originally, the intention was to seek consent from the teachers in my home country (Montserrat) to participate in this study. However, I realised that the number of teachers were not enough to collect even the smallest sample size for the quantitative component. In addition, I had to consider the sample size particularly in relation to a teacher's time, access to teachers, teaching schedules, and the feasibility of conducting research within a real setting of the school. Once the decision was made to include units of sample from Antigua and Anguilla I decided that for the quantitative phase of the study it was necessary to look at the number of primary schools in each island. An online search backed by confirmation from the respective Ministries revealed that there were 32 public primary schools in Antigua and 6 in Anguilla in addition to the one available in Montserrat.

Bearing in mind that there was less emphasis on the quantitative strand of my research and taking into consideration the possible cost of travelling, I decided that I would use a small sample size of 100 participants. Since it was obvious that the largest numbers of the teachers

were in Antigua, I ensured that more schools were selected from this grouping in order to account for representativeness of the whole population (Robson, 2011). I first used the four (4) geographical regions or zones in which the public primary schools in Antigua were categorised as the large grouping. Using this as a starting point, I recognised that there were one school in each zone that had a total of 15 teachers on staff. By means of a purposive sample, I selected these 4 schools which produced the 60 teachers that I required.

With respect to Anguilla, I used the six public primary schools as the sample frame. As a point of reference, I decided to divide the teachers into 3 groups (grades K-2, grades 3-4, and grades 5-6) and use it as my sub-strata. I then independently selected 1 teacher from each grade in every school but I also ensured that each grade was represented at least 3 times in the sample so as to avoid over selection in circumstances where a school may have more than one grade levels. In addition, the strategy minimised bias. This stratified purposive approach (Gay and Airasian, 2003) yielded a total of 30 teachers. In the case of Montserrat, there was only one school to consider so I conveniently treated the 10 teachers from the staff as a single case. Overall, the sampling techniques gave rise to the 100 teachers that I originally had in mind to form the sample size for the quantitative phase of my study. Moreover, it allowed me to discover and illustrate the characteristics that are similar or different across the subgroups (Patton (2002). Since I was not necessarily interested in making any specific generalisations from the survey but merely using it as a triangulation tool, I opted to use a small sample size.

Debates of sample size tend to be dichotomized, with small samples being associated with qualitative research and large samples linked to quantitative studies (Creswell *et al.*, 2003). Onwuegbuzie, (2003) stresses that even though this represents one of the common ways of connecting sample size to research paradigm, it still remains too basic and thereby a misleading

claim. Certainly, there are times when it is appropriate to use small samples in quantitative research, while there are occasions when it is warranted to use large samples in qualitative research (Gay and Airasian, 2003). Support for such a small sample comes from Goodson and Sikes (2001) who assert that any apprehension for different sample size is unnecessary since that quantity does not determine appropriateness of the findings but rather on the richness of the data collected and the nature of the phenomenon researched.

### **3.8.2 Designing of Questionnaires**

In order to obtain the teachers' broader views on their perceptions about school leadership and CPD, a questionnaire was chosen because it is the traditional supplementary tool used in mixed methods since it gives easy access to a wider population (Bryman, 2008; Cohen *et al.*, 2007). The actual items were formulated from ideas and concepts in the literature review which represented the broad views of theories related to LfL and CPD. To ensure that the questionnaire had validity it was critical to look at what I envisaged it would measure. In essence, it was useful to think about the relevance of the items, wording issues, which response format is best and the physical layout of the questionnaire (Robson, 2011). I decided to use close-ended questions but in the form of a 7 point Likert scale (see Appendix G section2, p. 338-340) since research has shown that a 7 point scale appears sensitive enough to record a more accurate evaluation of an interface while remaining relatively compressed (Finstad, 2010). However, one of the most controversial discussion points was about whether or not I should include the neutral point (Robson 2011). Research has shown that the exclusion of the middle option is often done so as to prevent some respondents from over choosing it (Thomas, 2013). On the other side of the debate, Finstad (2010) and Burns and Gove (1997) strongly argue that

if the neutral point is omitted, it forces the respondent to choose a response, which might lead to some level of uneasiness as well as increasing non-response bias. Following this line of argument, I included the middle option in my scale because I was desirous of giving teachers the chance to express themselves freely and avoid restraining them to either positive or negative rating (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005).

### **3.8.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of Using a Questionnaire**

The advantages associated with a questionnaire include being cost-effective, not too time-consuming, ideal to conceal anonymity, potential for high return rate and able to be administered by a single researcher (Lewis *et al.*, 2006; Punch, 2005). Conversely, Denscombe (2003) confirms that questionnaires have certain limitations. One recognizable shortcoming for questionnaires is that they provide little or no opportunities for a researcher to validate the respondents' answers, in addition to, generating any explanation for their responses (Oppenheim, 1992; Cohen *et al.*, 2000).

To minimise these disadvantages, I drew on the guidance and direction proposed by researchers such as Churchill and Iacobucci (2002), and Bryman, (2008) all of whom make similar points about the drawbacks that can emerge from using questionnaires. For example, a questionnaire should be clear about what is intended, instructions for respondents should be unambiguous, and it should specify where answers are to be ticked, circled, or written out (Bryman, 2008). In the design of my questionnaire, the purpose of the investigation was highlighted in an accompanying cover letter (see Appendix F) which explicitly stated the nature of the study. Further, I provided precise guidelines for respondents at the top of each section. To ensure that pages did not appear congested, I used different fonts and other techniques to distinguish questions from instructions. Clearly, questionnaires can inflict a structure on answers and shape

the nature of responses in ways that reflect the researcher's rather than a respondent's thinking, but by piloting and revising the questionnaire I sought to eliminate this as far as possible (Churchill and Iacobucci 2002).

#### **3.8.4 Piloting the Questionnaires**

Bryman (2001), Cohen *et al.* (2001), and Blaxter *et al.* (2010), suggest that it is critical to pilot the tools for obtaining data before undertaking 'actual' research so that the researcher could check the relevance, utility and application of each instrument. This pilot study sought to eliminate ambiguities in wording, identify redundant questions and misunderstood items, and gain feedback about the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Given that I intended to first, survey a representative sample of the target population, I needed an instrument that would be accurate as well as easy to administer bearing in mind the challenges posed by the islands being separated by the sea. Both Gorard (2004) and Robson (2002) recommend the need for a two stage pre-testing process. I therefore piloted the questionnaire sheet as well as the interview schedule.

#### **3.8.5 Initial Pre-test**

A PhD colleague and 3 teachers from a primary school in UK provided some early feedback. They were asked to comment on whether they felt that the items were clear and whether adequately capture teachers' perceptions of LfL as well as CPD. In a comprehensive article Hertzog (2008) proposes several different recommendations in relation to the fit between the sample size and the purpose of the pilot study. She recommends "samples as small as 10-15 per group sometimes being sufficient" (p. 190). Because I wanted both accurate estimates of the responses from pilot studies, I needed samples that were both representative of the

population and sufficiently small, respectively. The implication was that I needed to conduct the pilot studies with an adequate number of participants who serve as an accurate representation of my population of interest. Although the focus of more recent literature on pilot studies has been on the appropriate sample size required for precision, the nature of the sample, rather than its size, has the greatest impact on the accuracy of the items (Hertzog, 2008).

This was fully supported by the first wave of piloting done where they served as a very powerful lens to highlight awareness that certain terminologies (see item 3 on Appendix G) conveyed different meanings in the UK context as compared with the context of the Caribbean. Moreover, it emphasized the significance of piloting the instrument in the context from which the sample would be taken. As a result of feedback from the initial pilot, components of the instruments, especially on the questionnaire, were adjusted. For example, in section 1, the word '*gender*' was changed to '*sex*' and the category of *less than one year of teaching experience* was added to capture any teacher who falls within that grouping. In section 2, the word slight was changed to somewhat and the neutral rating was included to make it a 7 point scale. The word '*uncap*' in item C3 was changed to '*break open*' as one teacher said it was unclear about its precise meaning.

### **3.8.6 Piloting Stage**

The piloting of the questionnaire was conducted in January of 2015 Montserrat with 10 teachers who appeared to have similar backgrounds (in training, qualifications, and other factors). These teachers were asked to complete questionnaires and a space was provided on the instrument for them to write comments. However, one main issue with the piloting was that I did not include any of the teachers from the other two islands in the pilot due to travelling cost and time constraint factors.

To sum up, piloting the questionnaire and the interview questions gave me the opportunity to re-shape, rectify and remove possible ambiguities in the questions before starting the research (Robson, 2011). Further, it enabled me to re-adjust plans and ensure that selected questions yielded appropriate data compatible with the research questions. Because time permitted, I was fortunate in that I piloted each instrument and made the necessary adjustments to each instrument. Having discussed the initial research design and how the piloting phase helped me to modify the research instruments, I now turn to discussing how the research instruments were used in this study.

### **3.8.7 Administering of the Questionnaires**

After gaining access to the schools and establishing the school Heads as my gate keepers I visited the lone participating school in Montserrat and gave the Head Teacher 10 questionnaires to distribute to the teachers. The Head was instructed to first distribute the questions and then ask the teachers to place the completed instruments in the envelope provided and return them to the school office. Eight (8) out of the 10 surveys were returned as two teachers left the service during the process.

Since Antigua was the largest case under investigation and its close proximity to Montserrat (10 minutes flight or 45 minutes by ferry) I felt it was absolutely necessary to travel to the island to work out the details of accessing the schools. I journeyed to the island towards the end of February in 2015 and delivered the 60 questionnaires (15 each to the Head Teachers of the 4 participating schools). After spending two weeks on the island and receiving valuable support from the Ministry and Head Teachers, I was able to collect 45 of the 60 questionnaires that were distributed at the beginning. Using follow-up emails and telephone calls to contact the schools, a remaining 5 was collected by my gatekeeper after my departure to my home country. This groundwork also paved the way for me to set up the logistics for the follow up interviews, building relationships with schools and addressing some of the concerns raised by the participants.

The long distance and high cost of travel to Anguilla presented a serious challenge for me. I decided therefore that it was best to make a single trip to Anguilla to conduct the interviews since it would require me to enter the field physically for total immersion. Consequently, I had to rely on my gatekeeper to administer the 30 questionnaires. Rather than dealing with some of the potential fallouts associated with posting materials, we agreed that we would take advantage of information technology. I emailed a copy of the questionnaire to my gatekeeper after which the required numbers were printed and delivered to the 6 participating schools. This process resulted in 100% response rate of the questionnaires.

### 3.9 Demographic Descriptions of Participants

**Table 2: Teachers' demographic profile**

	Gender		Teaching Experience					Country		
Sample Size								MNI	ANU	AXA
								<b>10</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>30</b>
								<b>100</b>		
Grade Level	M	F	> 1 yr.	1-5 yrs.	6-10 yrs.	11-19 yrs.	< 20 yrs.			
K-2	1	35	2	8	13	8	5	5	15	16
3-4	1	22	1	3	8	6	5	1	16	6
5-6	5	24	1	3	10	4	11	2	19	8
Sub-total	<b>7</b> 8.0%	<b>81</b> 92.0%	<b>4</b> 4.5%	<b>14</b> 15.9%	<b>31</b> 35.2%	<b>18</b> 20.5%	<b>21</b> 23.9%	<b>8</b> 80%	<b>50</b> 83.3%	<b>30</b> 100%
Total Returns	<b>88</b>		<b>88</b>					<b>88</b>		
Response Rate	<b>88%</b>									

Table (2) showed that a total of 88 completed questionnaires were received from the target sample of 100 teachers from across three islands. Montserrat involved 10 participants and had an 80% response rate while total participants and return rates for Antigua and Anguilla were 83.3% and 100%) respectively. The table confirmed that majority of the respondents were female (92%) while the minority (8%) were males. Although it might not be conclusive, it perhaps raises the question as to the likelihood of this trend being representative of the entire teaching workforce in the three islands. Another striking observation regarding the number of male participants in the sample is that of the 7 male respondents 5 (71%) of them are positioned at the top grade levels (5-6). This gave some insight into the manner in which male teachers are deployed across the primary sector but more specifically, it possibly speaks to the division of teaching roles. In contrast, there was a more even distribution of female teachers that are

placed across the middle and top grade levels (25% and 27%) while there was a higher proportion at the lower grade levels (40%).

The table also revealed that only (4.5%) of the respondents had less than one year of teaching experience, 15.9% had 1-5 years of experience, 32.5% had 6-10 years of experience, 20.5% had between 11 and 9 years of experience and 23.9% had 20 or more years of teaching experience. Amongst the more experienced teachers it was quite noticeable that a higher proportion of them (52.4%) taught at the grade 5-6 levels. One plausible explanation for this is that it appears that the more experienced teachers are placed at the higher grades. The overriding importance of the demographic profile is that it strengthens the validity of the sample with respect to their characteristics and suitability thus, increasing the potential for producing fairly accurate measures about their feelings regarding the items on the questionnaire (Oppenheim, 1992).

### **3.10 Qualitative Phase**

#### **3.10.1 Sampling Procedures for the Interviews**

Qualitative studies normally do not make generalizations because its goal usually is not to make inferences about the underlying population, but rather to gain insights into particular social processes and practices that exist within a specific context (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005a). In relation to the qualitative phase of my research, I explored the issues associated with the key concepts in the natural setting in order to make sense of the meanings given by the participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). This meant that a choice of sampling scheme was an essential step in the qualitative process.

I decided to use a combination of purposeful sampling schemes to select the interviewees from schools across the three islands. In the case of Montserrat 3 teachers participated in the interviews. On the other hand, in Anguilla 6 teachers across 3 schools expressed their desire to be involved in the interviews. In relation to Antigua, I collaborated with the Education Officers and Heads in order to canvass the support of the 16 teachers (at least 2 from each of the 4 zones) who participated in the interview process. Yin (2004), notes that selecting multiple cases represents a repetition of the likely results. The decision to extend the sample boundaries beyond Montserrat and include teachers from Antigua and Anguilla was based on my belief that an investigation of each case would lead to a deeper understanding of the perspectives of the target population (Stake, 2000).

By considering the use of multiple cases, it meant also that it presented an opportunity to compare and contrast the results (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2004a). At the analytical phase, the selected cases are treated as a whole so that the total responses are compared with all other cases one at a time. Subsequently, this provided a better understanding of the phenomenon which has been investigated. However, in order to ensure that the collective voices led to data saturation I decided that I would conduct as many interviews as time permitted but I made sure that most of them were conducted in Antigua which had the largest number of teachers. In addition, I took full advantage of the range of perspectives on the issues across the target population by including one Head Teacher and one Ministry Official from each island. Table (3) below summarises the components of the interviews and the related sample.

**Table 3: Disaggregation of the interview sample**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Cases</b>
<b>Interviews</b>	Teacher	Montserrat	3	25
		Antigua	16	
		Anguilla	6	
	Head Teacher	Montserrat	1	3
		Antigua	1	
		Anguilla	1	
	Education Official	Montserrat	1	3
		Antigua	1	
		Anguilla	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>

### 3.10.2 Designing of Semi-Structured Interviews

The interview schedule (see Appendix H) was designed to provide some order to the interview process in addition to outlining key topics that the interviewer intended to cover (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Notably, the research questions linked to this phase of the study influenced the themes and questions that were included on the interview schedule. In developing the interview schedule there were some key issues that I had to consider (Becker *et al.*, 2007). First, I drafted some guidelines that allowed the questions to flow smoothly, although I was mindful that the order of the questions could be altered to permit the interjection of follow-up questions and probes (Oppenheim, 1992). The interview schedule was categorised into four sections, (see Appendix G). Section A inquired about general demographic information, section B was aimed at retrieving their ideas and opinions in relation to school leadership and CPD, section C was intended to find out the leadership context for planning and implementation of CPD, and section D focused on the evaluation and benefits of CPD. However, in sections C and D some of the questions differed slightly in order to elicit group specific data.

Another important matter that I took into consideration was the type of language used to construct the questions. Even though I was dealing with teachers and school administrators, it was still necessary to ensure that the questions were specific, not too long, free of jargon and comprehensible in nature thus, avoid misleading the participants (Seale, 2004). One other contemplation I took on board was the significance of recording the interview. Qualitative researchers most times tape-record their interviews because the element of detailed analysis is required to make certain that responses are captured in their own terms (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). In addition, it makes provision for the interviewer to be responsive to the interviewee's answers (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

### **3.10.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviews**

The use of interviews in this research reinforces my epistemological stance that the subjective nature of the process does not result into quantifiable outcomes. Instead, it provides an opportunity to interact with human subjects as they generate data and knowledge through conversations (Kvale, 1996). Interviews therefore, are considered as a means of direct transfer of knowledge from specific contexts (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). Notwithstanding this, there are however, certain drawbacks that are associated with interviews which Rubin and Rubin (2005) highlight as important considerations especially for inexperienced researchers. Table (4) presents a summary of some of the advantages and disadvantages of interviews.

**Table 4: Advantages and disadvantages of interviews (adapted from Denscombe, 2003)**

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Flexibility allowing for adjustments to further develop and control direction of the discussion in terms of research questions	Interviewer effect, if not balanced may contaminate data with personal bias
Direct transfer of pure information and knowledge	Danger of interpreting the unsaid
Valuable depth of information and experience	Invasion of privacy
Can be a rewarding experience for the informant especially reflecting time about their or organizational practices	Time consuming, taking an appointment, travelling, transcribing and coding
A lot of data coming from one source	Data analysis of open-ended questions is difficult

#### **3.10.4 Piloting of the Interviews**

Regarding the interview schedule, I originally used a family member who is a primary teacher to test the instrument. I then followed up with further testing using 2 teachers in Montserrat particularly because it was too costly both in terms of travelling or telephoning to reach teachers on the other two islands. After conducting the pilot I discovered that I had to make several changes to the existing questions. These modifications are listed below and they showed how I benefited from carrying out the exercise. The pilot was useful as it;

1. Helped to sequence the order in which the questions should be asked in the interview as well as which questions may require the use of probes.
2. Highlighted where certain questions were not clear and needed to be rephrased or written in more specific terms.
3. Provided a measure of the average time the interview will take.
4. Provided guidance on how to effectively utilize techniques such as pacing, probing and controlling emotions.

5. Informed me about how and when I should adjust my tone of voice, posture and personal behaviour. I was very conscious that I needed to detach my academic appearance so as to appear more relaxed during the interview process. Furthermore, I mostly wanted to avoid the ‘transference’ process; that is to say, I did not want to transfer perceived anxiety or aspects of my professional background and knowledge to the interviewee during the interview session.
6. Familiarised myself with operating the audio devices so as to obtain the technical knowledge to address any glitches during the interview recordings.

### **3.10.5 Administering the Interviews**

For the purposes of this part of the study, in-depth semi-structured interviews were the most appropriate choice as it was important to go beyond the relatively simplistic, quantifiable responses permitted in the tightly structured questionnaire (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The aim was to complement these findings with more insightful, detailed data based on the experiences of those involved. The flexibility of this method also meant that issues that were important to the participant, but which had perhaps not been fully considered by the researcher, could be explored and elaborated on in more depth (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

In conducting the face-to-face interviews, I had to plan my fieldwork around the operations of the schools especially matters related to access and the availability of the teachers. After consulting with the teachers in Anguilla and Montserrat, it was agreed that the best time to conduct the interviews was after school. However, the participating schools in Antigua were more flexible and I used the free times that were available when the teachers relinquished their classes for their students to engage in non-academic subjects such as sports and music. For the Head Teachers and Ministry Officials, they opted to use early morning and mid-afternoon

periods respectively as these times were more convenient for them. The interviews, (approximately lasted 35 - 45 minutes) were conducted in the classrooms of the teachers and the offices of the Heads and Officials which provided suitable settings which were relatively quiet and relaxing.

Given the importance of what the participants involved in this study had to say about issues on school leadership practices and CPD, I observed that almost all of the interviewees were overwhelmingly passionate in expressing their views on their perceptions of leadership and the purpose of CPD. As a result, I was very careful to note all crucial statements relating to these areas as well as their anecdotal comments. When and where it seemed appropriate, I followed up on certain key comments related to concerns about school leadership and CPD. Because of this attention to detail, I was able to cross-check my notes with the tape-recorded transcripts to more accurately identify the key elements that were specifically related to the research questions.

### **3.11 Focus Group**

#### **3.11.1 Nature and Purpose**

The use of focus groups as a data collection method has been highly debated in methodological literature (Liamputtong, 2011). According to Krueger (2000) there is limited evidence in several published works to show how and for what purposes focus groups are used in the research process. As a result of this observation, I felt it was necessary to clearly outline the unique value that the focus group discussions provided for my research.

Broadly speaking, focus groups are connected to qualitative method and are referred to as combined conversations, which take place between a group of individuals to discuss a specific

set of topics (Krueger, 2000; Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2013). For example, in this study the participants discussed explicitly a number of LfL and CPD issues by reflecting on their common perspectives and or experiences. However, the focus groups conducted in this research were conducted mainly for two purposes. First, it generated data that uncovered individual opinions regarding the key issues in the research questions. Second, the collected data was used as part of the triangulation strategy (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005), that is, the findings from each focus group helped to corroborate or substantiate evidence collected in the questionnaires and interviews (Liamputtong 2011). In addition, these focused conversations assisted in revealing group consensus thus, strengthening the potential for rich data to emerge from the array of conversations (Morgan, 2007).

Therefore, I did not utilize the focus group simply as an instrument for obtaining accounts of individuals. Rather, it was used as “a means to set up a negotiation of meanings through intra- and inter-personal debates” (Cook and Crang 1995, p. 56). This method guided the process through a spirit of openness which was intended to attain multiple perspectives from the participants (Natasia and Rakow, 2010). According to Ivanoff and Hultberg (2006), focus group research is grounded within the interpretive theory where the researcher functions through a belief in the variety of ways in which people demonstrate different means of knowing and understanding. In this study, the focus groups conducted placed control of the communication exchanges into the hands of the group members instead of the researcher (Cyr, 2015).

### 3.11.2 Sample Size and Schemes

Sandelowski (2001) points out that a common mistaken belief regarding sampling in qualitative research (focus groups) is that numbers are insignificant in guaranteeing the appropriateness of the sampling approach. Procedurally, focus group interviews consist of a group of 6–10 participants who have comparable contextual characteristics or related experiences (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007). However, the size of the sample should not be too insignificant so as to prevent the process from reaching its saturation point (Krueger, 2000). Data saturation in this particular study referred to the point at which I was unable to gather fresh data or when it was no longer possible to find additional coding (Guest *et al.*, 2006). Considering the challenges to convene teachers in a central location I decided to select one group which comprised of 6 participants from a school in each island (Lasch *et al.*, 2010). This made the group sizeable enough for creating some diversity in relation to how they exchanged their point of views (Onwuegbuzie *et al.*, 2009).

A stratified purposive sample was considered as the best way to ensure that the conversations from the discussions represented the collective voices of the teachers on staff. Using the names of the teachers from the staff, I divided the teachers into three groups where the first group was made up of teachers who taught at the lower levels (grades K-2), the second group with grades 3-4 teachers (middle levels) and the third group with grades 5-6 teachers (upper levels). From these three (3) subgroups, six (6) teachers were chosen from each subcategory giving a total of eighteen (18) participants in three (3) focus groups. For this reason, the stratified technique was aimed at making each group as similar as possible while the randomised feature of the selection process was intended to reduce bias with respect to avoiding too many teachers chosen from one level of the school (Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2007).

### **3.11.3 Execution of the Focus Group Discussions**

A successful focus group discussion relies heavily on “the development of a permissive, non-threatening environment within the group” where the participants can feel at ease to talk about their feelings short of fearing that any judgement would be cast on what they disclosed (Hennink 2007, p. 6). The focus groups exercise was carried out during the period of April and June in 2015. I capitalized on my time in Anguilla and conducted the focus group after I had collected the data for the questionnaires and interviews. The discussion took place after school in the IT lab which offered much privacy for the teachers since it was perhaps one of the most secured rooms in the school. In Montserrat, the focus group was conducted after school in one of the classrooms which was located on the far end of the school compound. This provided an environment that was away from any potential distractions caused from persons who had after-school business around the central areas of the school. In contrast, the focus group session in Antigua was conducted during school time in the staff room of a large primary school which had more than one level of each grade. This allowed at least one teacher from each level to participate in the discussion since that their classes would have been covered by other teachers. The Head Teacher also notified other members of staff about the event and as a result, it minimised disruptions.

The pre-session activities addressed matters that pertained to the aims of the exercise and the ground rules which guided the process. All of the participants approved the use of the audio tape recorder and they agreed that I should take notes and stand as the moderator since they felt it was the researcher’s responsibility. In order to stimulate the participants, I used an ice breaker to elicit participants’ background information which included how and why they became teachers. After the introductory stage, the discussions transitioned into the main part of the

discussion where the key questions were debated in a cross-talk. Each of the focus group discussions were very lively and took on average 1¼ hours to complete.

Researchers on focus groups admit that the dynamic forces within a group unavoidably influence the response given by each participant (Farnworth and Boon, 2010). Others have contended that based on the characteristics of the group there is the inclination to “exaggerate, minimise, or uphold experiences” (Hollander, 2004, p. 626). Accordingly, the final outcome or consensus that emerged on a given question might not accurately reflect the opinion of each participant because the individual views are a product of the environment as a whole (Cyr, 2015). This situation implied that I had to consider the impact of the opinions that were expressed (Paluck and Green, 2009). To address and reduce this effect, I first took note of both the dominant and passive speakers in each focus group. Once this was done, I directly engaged each participant (particularly the passive ones) in the conversations by encouraging and allowing them to express their views on the questions asked during the discussions. I also specifically asked each participant to make a summary statement about the key questions posed so as to capture any additional details that they had to share. This also served as a way of double-checking their initial responses with their summary statements thus, validating the extent to which they were consistent with their spoken words.

Although the focus groups were quite useful for identifying similarities and differences among the participants, I had to constantly think about the part of the discussion that represented the main analysis of the whole group (Stewart *et al.*, 2009). For example, I contemplated on questions such as, was there agreement on the subject discussed? Did the participants and or groups understand the questions in different or similar ways? However, the main goal of the focus groups in this study was to assess the degree to which there was consensus between and across the focus groups.

### **3.12. Ethical Considerations**

This scholastic enquiry required much acquaintance with the standard rules that governed my behaviour as a researcher (BERA, 2011). The responsibilities that I upheld warranted ethical considerations that cut across the whole research process (Cohen, 2000). According to Robson (2011), it is essential to carry out research projects in an ethical and responsible manner. For the purpose of this study, ethics meant conforming to the prescribed rules of conduct as they relate to the specified conventional principles or standards (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2001; Pring, 2000). Creswell (2005) opines that ethical guidelines in research are needed to guard against any possible errors, including the less obvious, yet harmful effects of research. This guidance mandated careful considerations regarding the question of whether or not this research might harm the participants involved in this study. There were several reasons why it was important to adhere to ethical norms in research. First and foremost, standards promote the aims of research in relation to the pursuit of knowledge and the avoidance of serious errors (Barnett and Johnson, 2008). Second, research involves an enormous amount of collaboration and coordination among many different people who must promote the ethical values that are essential to building trust, accountability and mutual respect (Punch, 2005).

The fact that I investigated aspects of my workplace meant that it raised a range of ethical issues around privacy, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, honesty and the dissemination of the findings (Boynton, 2005; Blaxter *et al.*, 2010). After receiving ethical approval from the University of Birmingham, I wrote a letter to the respective Ministries of Education in the Caribbean outlining the purpose of the research as well as seeking support and permission as a matter of protocol (ESRC, 2012). It was also obligatory to develop a participant information sheet (see Appendix B) which explained the nature of their involvement, time and scale of events, and the manner in which they would benefit from their participation (BERA, 2011). In

the same way, I attained informed consent (see Appendix C) from all the participants through a letter covering specific details about the research especially on the issue of withdrawal and by what mode and intervals the results would be communicated (Denscombe, 2014).

While the nature of the research did not anticipate any inherent or highly sensitive issues, I was mindful of the importance of gaining the trust of the participants through continuous dialogue by reaffirming the purpose of the research and making the necessary adjustments as the processes evolved (Denscombe, 2014). It was for this reason why I conducted meetings and made telephone calls to all the research stakeholders before I started. In this study, I sought permission from relevant authorities (i.e. MoE), principals and teachers. I arranged to visit or contact every school at least once before starting my project in order to introduce myself, to gain consent and to establish working relationships (Denscombe, 2014). This laid the foundations to discuss matters related to professional integrity as well as most of the previously mentioned ethical principles (BSA, 2017). It was during this phase also that the written consent forms explaining the nature of the research and their involvement were given to all selected participants. Although some participants insisted that they were committed to taking part in the research without signing the form, I still reinforced the importance of them completing the form as evidence of my research obligations.

The processes of data collection necessitated continuous reflective actions and self-awareness so that I maintained an unbiased stance in addition to making the results trustworthy (Watt, 2007). While epistemological reflectivity was vital in the stages of formulating the research questions and selecting an approach, personal reflection on the other hand, was even more crucial in determining my values and beliefs how they positioned me to constantly address the challenges in the field (Watt, 2007). It is for this reason why Creswell (2011) suggests that the position of the researcher in relation to the participants has implications for bias. I was therefore

cognisant of the anticipated impacts that my personal identities such as authority (being a principal) and institutional knowledge (working in the service over 25 years) could have on the data collection process (Denscombe, 2003).

Participants were informed that they reserved the right to withdraw from the research particularly if any of the agreed procedures was breached by the researcher (Morrison, 2007). Therefore, the anonymity and privacy of the participants in the research were respected by concealing and storing personal identities and, or any sensitive issues in a special place (personal cabinet in my home) where I was the only person who had access (BSA, 2017). In addition, appropriate measures for preserving anonymity included the removal of identifiers or the use of fictitious names to break the link between the data and the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

Creswell (2005) advises that it is important to respect the site where the research takes place. This respect was shown by gaining approved permission before I entered a site and viewing myself as a guest at the research venues. Equally important, much attention was devoted to the access stage so as to build participants' confidence in appreciating the need for the research along with avoiding the use of too many technical terms which could be very intimidating and counterproductive (Denscombe, 2014). Moreover, prospective participants have a predisposition to think of themselves as subjects or items to be researched where the researcher's primary goal is to extract information for their own benefits (Morrison, 2007). As a result, it was important therefore to take extreme caution at the beginning to demystify such myths and assist them throughout the research process (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

### **3.13. Validity and Reliability Issues**

Denscombe (2014) describes validity as the accuracy of the data as well as its appropriateness in relation to the broad research questions. On the other hand, reliability refers to whether a research instrument is dependable across a number of applications (Thomas, 2013). Quantitative researchers in particular, have widely accepted that the crucial check of validity of any research findings is that an independent researcher should be able to reproduce the process (Gorard, 2014b). In contrast, this approach is often challenging when a qualitative design is used, partly because the matching conditions are difficult to be reconstructed (Denscombe, 2014).

Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) suggest that in the context of mixed methods research the terminologies could be labelled as a form of ‘legitimation’. Furthermore, by using the word in this manner it is consistent with what Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003) mention as “using a bilingual nomenclature” (p. 12), as well as being in line with Kuhn’s (1996) claim that using a common language could preclude the “breakdown in communication” (p. 200–201) that make provisions for both ideas to be evaluated as a general approach. Along these lines, Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) outline nine typologies of legitimation for mixed research. However, in relation to my research purpose and design, I have utilized four of these to provide details of how validity and reliability issues were addressed in the study.

### **3.13.1 Researcher and Participant Legitimation**

As illustrated by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006), inside–outside legitimation signifies the degree to which the researcher satisfactorily and correctly integrates both the participants’ and researcher’s views in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon. Balancing these two standpoints needs to be synchronised so that the value of the conclusions made from the (quantitative and quantitative components) blend together in a logical way (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003a). The qualitative phase of this research explored the understanding of particular people (teachers and school administrators) and cultures (leadership and professional development practices) in particular times and places (Caribbean). In contrast, quantitative phase applied objective principles to measure the attitudes of the participants in relation to LfL and CPD. Within this mixed-methods research, the balance between the philosophical perspectives was dependent largely on the emphasis that I placed on qualitative and quantitative approaches (Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005b). For example, this study was a qualitative dominant mixed-method where I mainly took a qualitative, constructivist stance with respect to the research process, while, at the same time, acknowledging the addition of quantitative data and approaches to be beneficial (Johnson et al. 2007). In this mixed-methods research the insiders’ subjective views are given precedence over the outsider’s or objective views Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006).

### **3.13.2 Mixing Paradigms**

Another type of justification that was useful in providing an account of validity and reliability issues is paradigmatic mixing (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011). This form of research legitimation refers to the extent to which the researcher's epistemological, ontological, and methodological beliefs are fused together to ensure that the research questions are adequately addressed (Johnson *et al.*, 2007). This was done by stating clearly my philosophical position (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3) as well as my ontological and epistemological positions. Legitimation was also taken into consideration at the research formulation stage, that is, during the identification of research objectives and questions, the rationale of the study and justification for mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches (Collins *et al.*, 2006). It is these types of justifications that form part of the process to validate the vigorousness of this study.

### **3.13.4 Maximizing the Strengths of the Instruments**

This form of mixed-methods validation looks at how the weaknesses of one approach (i.e. qualitative or quantitative) are supported by the strong point of the other (Morgan, 2007). For instance, in this study quantitative techniques were used to obtain empirical data (e.g. Likert scale ratings being utilized to measure teachers' attitudes about statements on LfL and CPD), whereas qualitative methods were utilised to obtain an in depth analysis of the same concepts (e.g. words being utilized to understand the participants' experience and perceptions about LfL and CPD). By doing this, it created the opening for the qualitative and quantitative results to converge in an efficient way so as to produce trustworthy findings (Johnson and Christensen 2008). In other words, the qualitative approach compensated for the weaknesses of the quantitative method (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004).

### **3.13.5 Sequencing Phases**

This legitimation refers to the extent to which I minimized the problem of the outcomes being affected by reversing the sequence of the quantitative and qualitative phases (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006). In this study, it involved thinking about the potential impact that the ordering of the phases might have on the overall findings (Sandelowski *et al.*, 2006). For example, the interviews that were conducted after the administration of the closed-ended questionnaires yielded responses which were free from any prior knowledge (Onwuegbuzie *et al.*, 2009). On the contrary, if the interviews were conducted before the survey instrument had been administered, the potential exist that some of the cues or ideas on the questionnaire could have shaped or influenced the interview responses (Sandelowski, 2001). In such a case, the order of the quantitative and qualitative phases was critical since that the quality of the results would be directly dependent on this order (Creswell, 2011). I minimized this legitimation threat by utilizing a concurrent research design, in which data collected in the quantitative phase were kept separate from and did not inform the data collected in the qualitative phase (Creswell, 2011).

### **3.13.6 Addressing Critical Issues in Mixed Methods**

Concepts such as reliability and validity are critical for quantitative research but are often viewed as challenging concepts to justify in qualitative designs (Onwuegbuzie, 2003). However, it is quite misleading to conclude that both reliability and validity cannot be established in qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). It is for these reasons that Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose a renaming of the terms. The work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) was embedded into this study in the following ways to enhance the thoroughness and

quality assurance of the research procedures. Table (5) shows how specific strategies were used to address both validity and reliability issues.

**Table 5: Strategies to verify authenticity (*adapted from Lincoln and Guba, 1985*)**

<b>Procedures that augmented validity and reliability</b>	<b>Strategies embedded in the research design</b>
<b>Credibility (Validity)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting with participants to confirm and clarify views expressed (member-checking).</li> <li>• Using field notes and summary statements to crosscheck data for consistency.</li> <li>• Compare the responses from the pilot study with actual data collected to verify the reliability of the instrument/responses.</li> <li>• Extensive field work supported by empirical evidence which led to <i>grounded data</i>.</li> <li>• Use triangulation to bolster confidence about the data.</li> </ul>
<b>Dependability (Reliability)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit details of methodology.</li> <li>• Kept an audit trail to;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Record changes, challenges and decisions made from conception through to findings and conclusions.</li> <li>➤ Compile a research journal.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Transferability (Generalizability)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing specific and relevant information about the target population, sample size and schemes to enable others to make an inference of its applicability.</li> </ul>
<b>Confirmability (Objectivity)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outlining researcher’s self: identity, personal values and beliefs</li> <li>• Generating a reflective account concerning the impact of researcher’s self on the study.</li> <li>• Conducting the project with an open mind so as to;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Avoid overlooking inconsistency in the data</li> <li>➤ Embrace competing views or theories</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### **3.14. Analytical Techniques**

#### **3.14.1 Data Analysis**

Bassey (1999) describes data analysis as;

*“an intellectual struggle with an enormous amount of raw data in order to produce a meaningful and trustworthy conclusion which is supported by a concise account of how it was reached” (p. 84).*

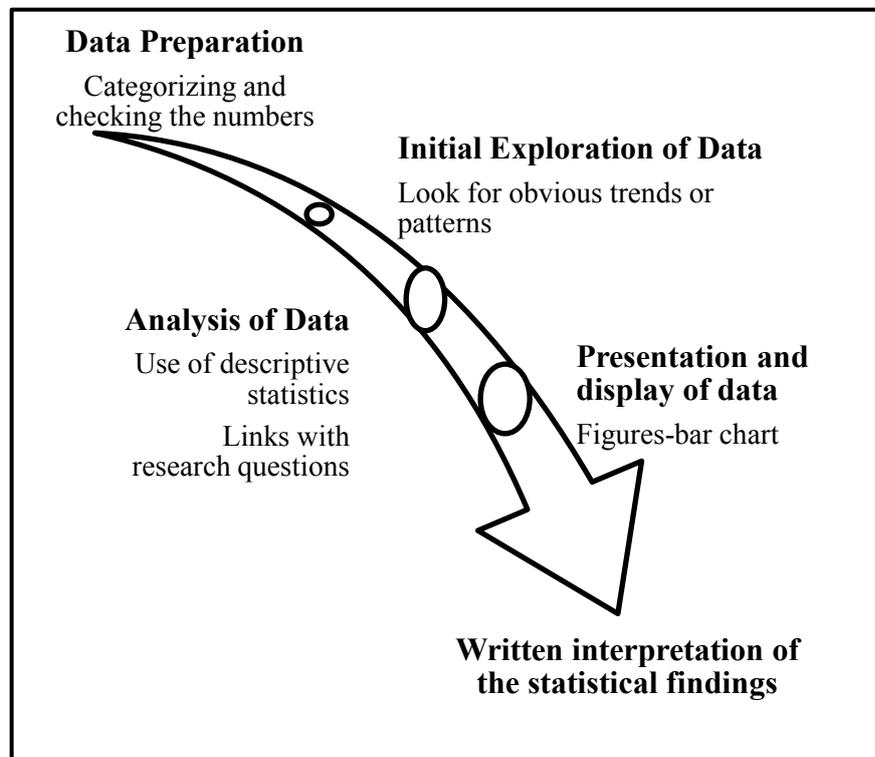
The above quote seems to suggest that the purpose of analysing something is to gain a better understanding of it and by extension deducing what it means (Denscombe, 2014). Taken literally therefore, the analysis with respect to this study is concerned with arranging the chunks of data collected into smaller fragments and interpreting the whole in terms of the related parts (Robson, 2011). In this section, I now present a thorough account of the approaches I adopted in analysing the data.

#### **3.14.2 Questionnaire Data**

Having only a small amount of quantitative data I decided that it was appropriate to carry out the analysis using relatively simple descriptive statistics which were directly linked to the research questions and instrument (Denscombe, 2014). Although it was possible to compute the analysis by hand, I avoided this drudgery and the potential for error in such calculations, by directly entering the questionnaire data into SPSS software (Pallant, 2013). This helped to prepare the data with respect to categorizing and coding the responses. The questionnaire was based on counts (1 to 7) of items assigned to specific categories (completely disagree, mostly disagree, somewhat disagree, neutral, somewhat agree, mostly agree, completely agree) where they stood in an ordered relationship.

Walker (2010) asserts that bar charts are an effective way of presenting frequencies or amounts especially in small-scale research because they are visually striking and easy to read. Since that I only wanted to show the proportion of teachers from each island in relation to their ratings for each statement I felt that it was worthwhile to collapse the scale into two main categories. The scales CD, MD and SD were combined to represent the proportion who disagreed while SA, MA and CA were pooled together to show the proportion who agreed. This also reduced high levels of repetition or overcrowding of the charts but at the same time creating a general picture of how the responses were interpreted (Walker, 2010). In relation to the neutral responses only the scores that were above 15% were deemed significant to present and comment on in the findings.

**Figure 4: Stages of the quantitative analysis (adapted from Robson, 2011)**



### **3.14.3 Interview and Focus Group Data**

In this part of the study, the emphasis was very much on collecting, analysing and interpreting the qualitative data. Spoken words are the most common type of qualitative data and are characteristic of people and the context in which they live (Robson, 2011). Large amounts of qualitative data were generated from the methodological triangulation used in the study. Since this forms a substantial aspect of the research, it was therefore critical to provide a detailed description of the principles used to analyse the data. A number of computer software packages (CAQDAS, NVivo) have been developed specifically to help with the analysis of qualitative data (Denscombe, 2014). However, I decided to conduct my analysis manually due to the fact that first, I felt that my competencies in using the software were limited and second, computers cannot fully substitute for my analytical and interpretive competencies (Robson, 2011).

### **3.14.4 Data Acquaintance**

This requires both physical and mental capacities in order to make sense of the large volumes of data that was collected (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). The interviews were transcribed in full (i.e. word for word) because the in-depth transcriptions were required to conduct an effective analysis (Gibbs, 2007). Although this was a very laborious activity (taking an average of 4-6 hours per interview), it also served as a meaningful way of early engagement with the data (Robson, 2011). Since that I had to travel between islands it meant that I was able to collect several bouts of data along the way. This gave me an advantage whereby I was able to commence reading some of the texts as well as formulating initial thoughts about the bits of texts that were related as the collection process unfolded. In this respect, being systematic helped me focus on not only the striking aspects of the texts but also to discern the less emphasised accounts that appeared different but interesting (Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

### **3.14.5 Generating Preliminary Codes**

Having a thorough understanding about some of the ideas that appeared interesting in the data, I was able to move forward with the process of generating preliminary codes. Earlier research work refers to codes as “the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding a phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63). Using different coloured highlighters I searched for sentences across the scripts that contained common ideas about the research questions. Numerous segments were produced but in order to further reduce the data I encircled groups of words and phrases that were closely related. By systematically working through the entire data in this manner, I was able to condense the data into a manageable form as well as paying attention to the bits of data that were interesting and formed the basis for theme building (Gibbs, 2007). Notwithstanding the large amount of data collected, it was absolutely critical to include rather than exclude as many perspectives from the participants.

The coding process depended on the degree to which I felt that the developing themes are drawn from the data itself or they bore a resemblance to key ideas from the literature review (Robson, 2011). Gibbs (2007) claims that the kinds of things that researchers tease out from the transcripts are sometimes swayed by the research questions. For example, I utilized ideas that were related to particular behaviours, events, practices, relationships and context as a guideline to give a clear sense of the precise ideas that were emerging from the whole data (Gibbs, 2007). This continuous and contrasting examination was more than just attempting to code everything but rather, searching for significant extracts that appeared as something relevant and of great interest (Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

### **3.14.6 Identifying Themes**

This part of the analysis became the central part of the process which relied on the fairly long list of different codes. The task here now was to sort the different codes into potential themes and aligned them with the suitable data excerpts within the identified themes (Ryan and Bernard, 2000). To capture the full nuances in the responses and avoid losing the sense of the extremities obtained from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups, I employed the categorical framework proposed Lincoln and Guba (1985). According to these researchers, a major theme occurs when a large proportion of the respondents state similar ideas related to a theme; minor theme ensues when approximately half of the interviewers espouse a similar idea; and an individual theme arises where a few or one person advocates a specific or different idea. This aided with the construction of matrices (see Table 6) to visualize the relationships between codes, possible theme and different levels of themes. Some initial codes ended up as themes in their own right or formed a main overarching theme while others were combined into a sub-theme.

Yet, there were other themes that did not seem to belong anywhere. However, I incorporated a few of them into other themes as the analysis unfolded (Robson, 2011). Following this, I then checked to see if the themes sufficiently capture the extracts in the data. At the end of this phase I had a clearer understanding about the different themes, how they are strung together and the overall story emerging from the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). However, what was important was to use the rich descriptions from the transcripts to carve out the type of thematic analysis that was necessary to make certain knowledge claims in relation to the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In this way, the themes that were identified, coded, and analysed represented an accurate reflection of the content of the entire data set. As a result, it served as useful method

particularly because I was investigating an under-researched area where the views of participants on the key topics are not known (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

**Table 6: Matrix for creating themes**

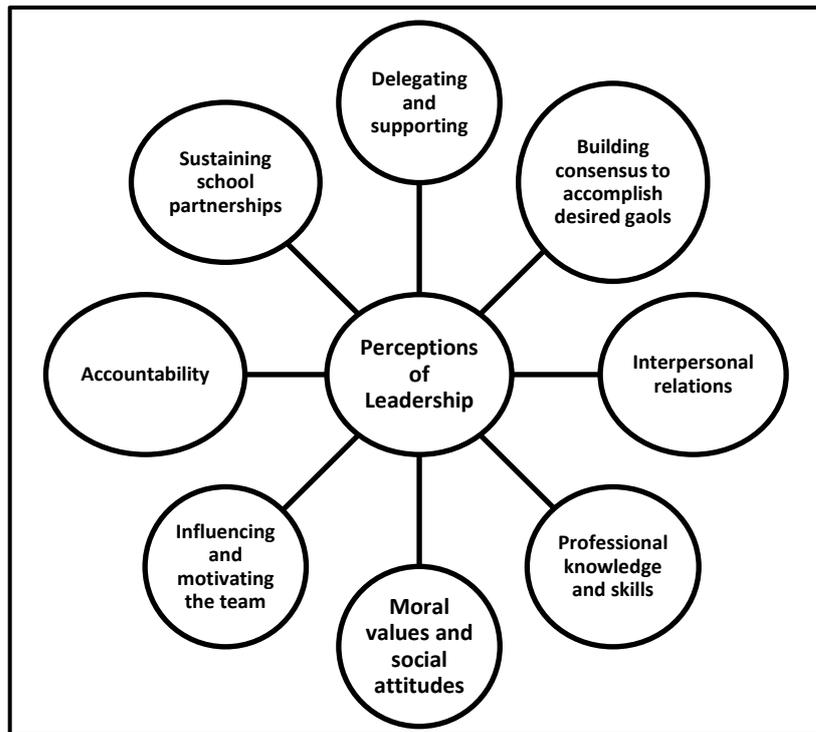
Research Questions						
Countries	Coding Key	Participants			Thematic Categories	
		Teacher	Heads	Official	Predominant Themes	Overarching Theme
		Key Units of Analysis				
<b>Montserrat</b>	Major					
	Minor					
	Individual					
<b>Antigua</b>	Major					
	Minor					
	Individual					
<b>Anguilla</b>	Major					
	Minor					
	Individual					

### 3.14.7 Comparative Thematic Networks

At this stage of the analysis the emphasis was on piecing together the themes into a coherent part. Here the themes were rearranged in a way that combined related themes. Themes that seemed dissimilar were split into more groupings to represent predominant or sub-themes. The process of constant comparison allowed the data to be “segregated, grouped, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation” (Saldana, 2008, p. 12). To further organise the themes, I applied ideas from Attride-Stirling (2001) work where she recommends using a web to create a thematic network. From a practical stance, the important feature is to produce a manageable number of themes that would not complicate the process but at the same

time satisfactorily representing the fullness of the data. Figure (5) below illustrates how this idea was applied.

**Figure 5: Thematic mapping of findings on leadership.**



### **3.14.8 Thematic Merging**

Qualitative researchers have argued that thematic networks are simply methodical tools and cannot be considered as the deeper aspects of the analysis (Robson, 2011). With this view in mind, the next task was to search within and across themes for overarching themes from the coded data. It was important therefore to provide a succinct, non-repetitive and interesting account of the narratives from the overall analysis of the data which ultimately created the participants' story (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This was done by choosing vivid themes as well as excerpts from the actual transcripts which supported the core ideas. However, to make the

analytic narratives convincing I had to make certain that they were written in such a way that their meanings are fully understood (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

### **3.15 Summary of Chapter**

This chapter outlines the methodological underpinnings of my research design and justifies why specific research methods were chosen for this study. The design, development, and use of the various research instruments utilized were informed by theoretical perspectives and supported with relevant research literature. The main aim of this chapter was to explain how evidence was gathered systematically to address the key research questions which focused on how teachers, Head teachers and Ministry Officials in Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla perceived issues around LfL and CPD. The research objectives were best achieved through the adoption of a constructivist/interpretivist research philosophy which was embedded within a mixed methods design.

In particular, this chapter has addressed the sampling techniques, access issues, legitimation matters concerning the validity and reliability, details of the data collection and analytical processes. It has also discussed some of the ethical requirements, limitations of the study and the strategies used to overcome the issues around researcher bias and the challenges presented in the fieldwork exercise. After considering and detailing these critical aspects of the research design process, the next chapter presents the findings based on the data collected in the field.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction to the Findings**

This chapter presents the findings related to the perceptions and views of LfL and CPD from teachers, Head Teachers and Ministry Officials. In general, it seeks to present the findings generated from the fieldwork. The presentation is structured around the research questions followed by the data which was collected. For this reason, my primary goal is to present the findings in a methodical and consistent way for the intended audience. In fact, Flick (2002) states that it is the early considerations given to the research audience demands that the research process is precise and coherent. However, this does not suggest that such an audience is limited entirely to the research community but also includes policy-makers and practitioners. It is here that the work of Gunter and Ribbins (2002) prove useful where their proposed knowledge domains emphasize the importance of extending such a communication beyond the academic field.

The data was collected from thirteen primary schools and three Education Departments across three islands, that is, Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla. Including the Education Officers and Head Teachers in the sample captured the voices from what I considered to be the macro and meso levels particularly because these two groups are closely aligned with the formulation and implementation of educational policies. It also draws on data from the teacher questionnaires, interviews with teachers, Head Teachers and Ministry Officials as well as focus group discussions with teachers. The quantitative data is presented first followed by the qualitative narratives in order to provide a more complete picture of the participants' perspectives and to allow for convergence and or divergence of the findings.

In general, it reports the findings from 88 teacher questionnaire responses (see Table 2 in Chapter 3) and 31 in-depth, semi-structured interviews (see Appendix E) and one focus group discussion from each island. The first section presents the key findings from the questionnaires which gives a broad representation of how the teachers perceive aspects of LfL as well as their views about CPD. Section two primarily aims to provide a nuanced picture from the participants by setting out the thematic narratives derived from the interviews. Finally, the third section provides a collective perspective that reflects the main ideas which were common within the focus groups discussions. Throughout the chapter summary tables were used to highlight the overarching themes as well as the similarities or difference between the responses from the three sets of data.

## **4.2 Presentation of the Findings**

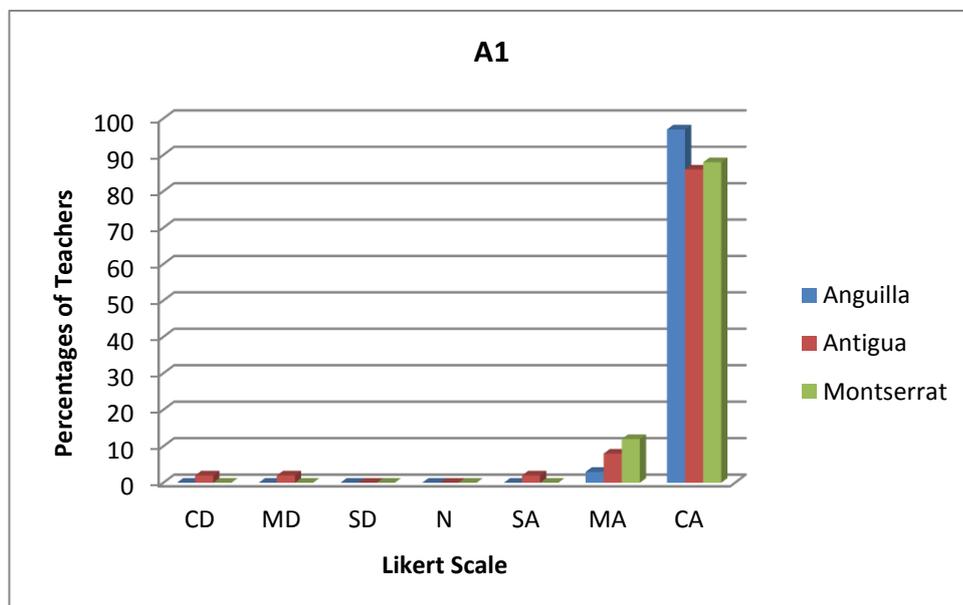
This section presents the findings of the teachers' responses for each category on the questionnaires from each of the three islands. The bar graphs were designed to represent the rating scales shown on the questionnaire. In order to create a more complete picture for each statement, the percentages for each category per island were shown on the bar graphs. This I felt was necessary to capture the full nuances in the responses thus, avoiding losing a sense of the extremities. However, in order to reduce high levels of repetition but at the same time creating a general sense of the responses I collapsed the scales to produce two broad areas in descriptive part of the findings. It is perhaps useful to restate that 1 = completely disagree (CD), 2 = mostly disagree (MD), 3 = somewhat disagree (SD), 4 = neutral (N), 5 = somewhat agree (SA), 6 = mostly agree (MA), 7 = completely agree (CA). To achieve the two general descriptions, I combined CD, MD and SD to represent the percentage disagreement while SA, MA and CA were pooled together to show the proportion of agreement in the responses across

the islands. In relation to the neutral responses only the scores that were above 15% were deemed significant to comment on in the findings. Presenting the data in this way illustrated a more comprehensive and comparable picture of how the participants rated their responses.

### 4.3 Findings from Questionnaires

#### 4.3.1 Category A: How leadership that focuses on teaching and student learning is understood in my school?

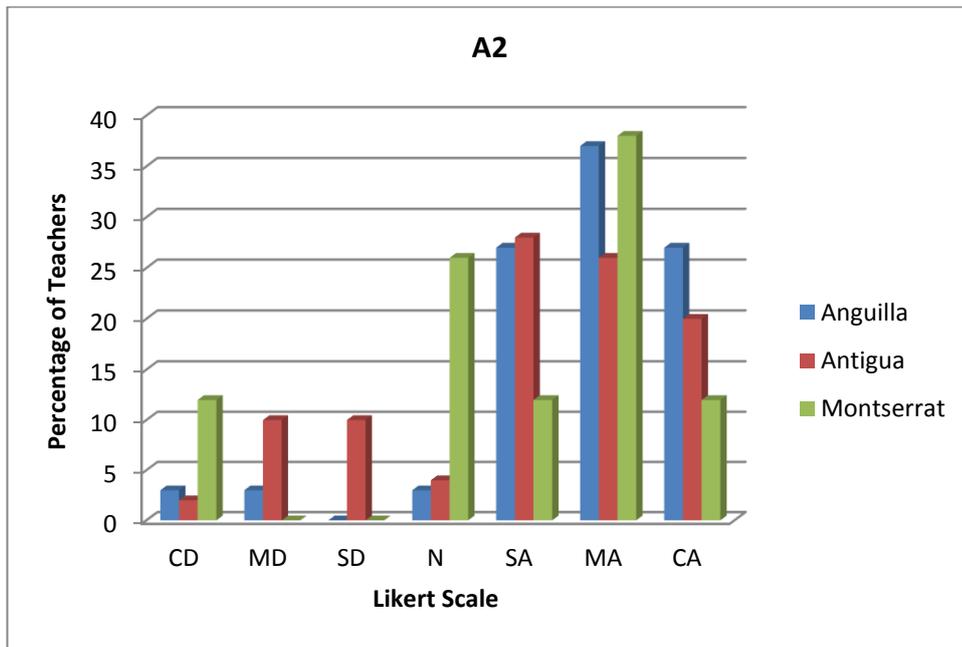
Figure 6: I feel that everyone (students, teachers and head teacher) is a learner.



The graph shows that collectively the participants in the three islands (100% - Anguilla, 96% - Antigua and 100% - Montserrat) agreed to the statement concerning who they consider to be a learner. The unquestionable point here is that the findings strongly suggest that the vast majority of the teachers from the three islands had a 'pluralistic' view of the learner. This implies that they do not confine learning to just students but rather see themselves and the rest of the school community as learners. As a result, both learning and the learner are viewed as

an integral part of schooling. Consequently, this might have implications for the learning environment under which they work.

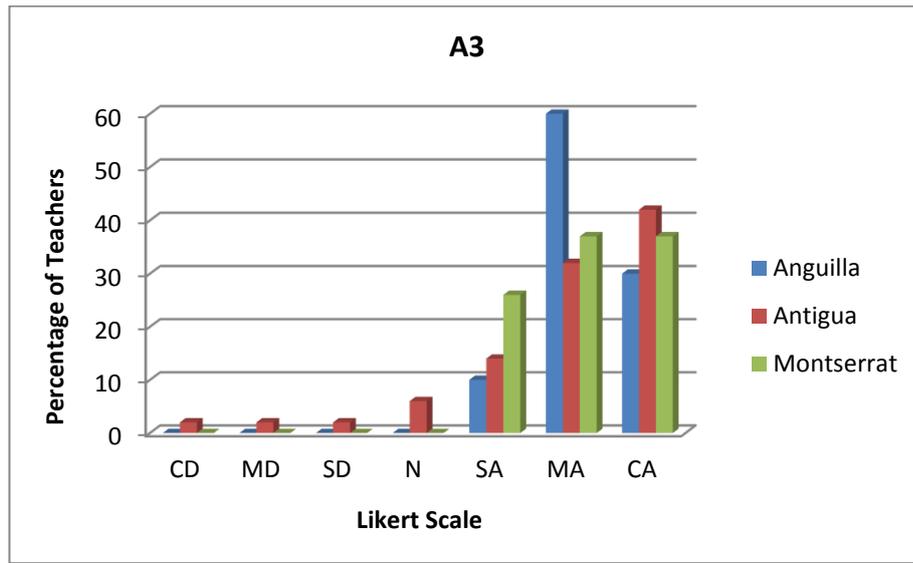
**Figure 7: My school climate encourages a culture which nurtures the learning of all members of the school community.**



The combined percentages of SA, MA and CA show that 91% of the teachers in Anguilla were in agreement that their schools support a culture of learning for all its members while Antigua and Montserrat gave a weaker agreement of 74% and 62% respectively. This suggests that schools in Anguilla are more consistent in promoting and supporting a culture of learning in comparison to Antigua and Montserrat. One piece of evidence that perhaps offers a partial explanation for this discrepancy comes from the demographic data. It showed that 20 out of the 30 (67%) participants in the sample had between 1-10 years of teaching experience which might suggest that the teaching staff in Anguilla comprise of relatively new or junior teachers. In the

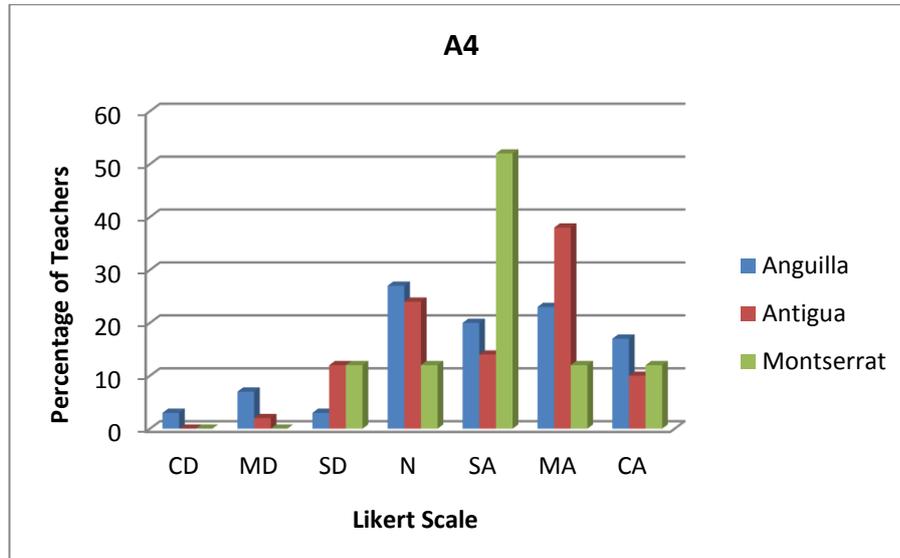
case of Antigua 22% of the teachers disagreed and in Montserrat 26% of them offered a neutral response.

**Figure 8: The level of student learning is enhanced by the teaching experiences created in the classroom.**



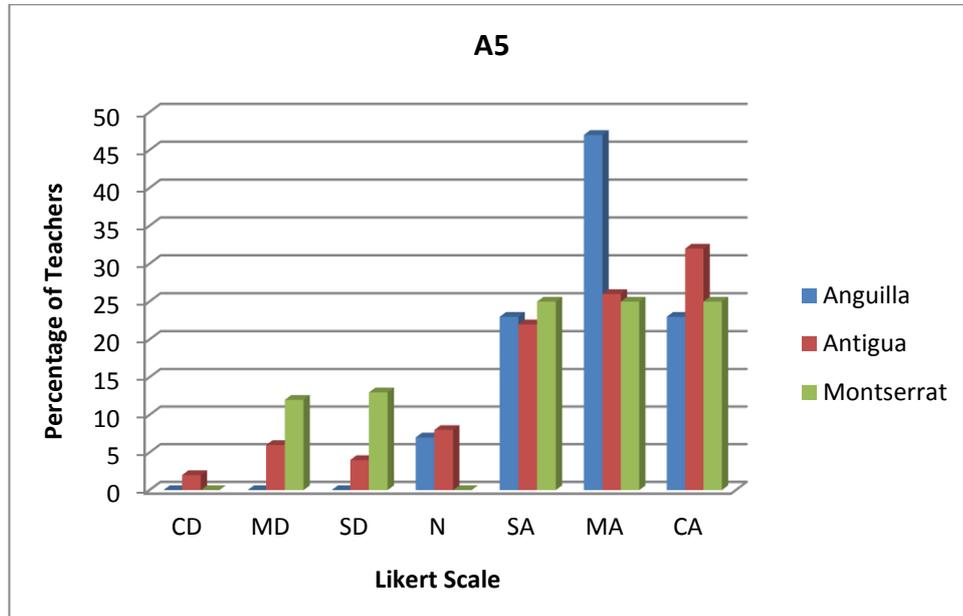
In response to the statement about enhancement of learning by teaching experiences, 100% of the teachers in Anguilla and Montserrat were in agreement. 88% of the teachers in Antigua were also in agreement although it was slightly lower than the remarkable responses from Anguilla and Montserrat. This indicates that a large proportion of the teachers firmly believe that there is a close relationship between learning and teaching. It is conclusive from their response that learning is more likely to be enriched by the types of teaching experiences fashioned in the classroom.

**Figure 9: There is room for allowing everyone to take risks, cope with failure or respond positively to challenges.**



In relation to statement A4 there was a fairly consistent pattern between the totals of the agreed responses given by the Anguillan and Antiguan teachers which were 60% and 62% correspondingly. On the other hand, there was a moderately higher agreement of 76% for the teachers in Montserrat. This suggests that overall there is some scope for schools in the three islands to take risk, cope with failure and respond to challenges. Alternatively, there was perhaps one inconsistency regarding the responses from the Anguillan teachers. With specific reference to statement A2, 91% of the teachers agreed that their schools encourage a culture which nurtures the learning of all its members. Based on this, one may have anticipated that schools in Anguilla would have also included risk-taking and responding to challenges as part of their learning culture which in turn would have caused the teachers to respond with a higher score. The fact that this was not the case in Anguilla might suggest that their notion of risk taking might not be associated with learning.

**Figure 10: When my head engages in continuous dialogue about high expectations from students it will promote learning.**

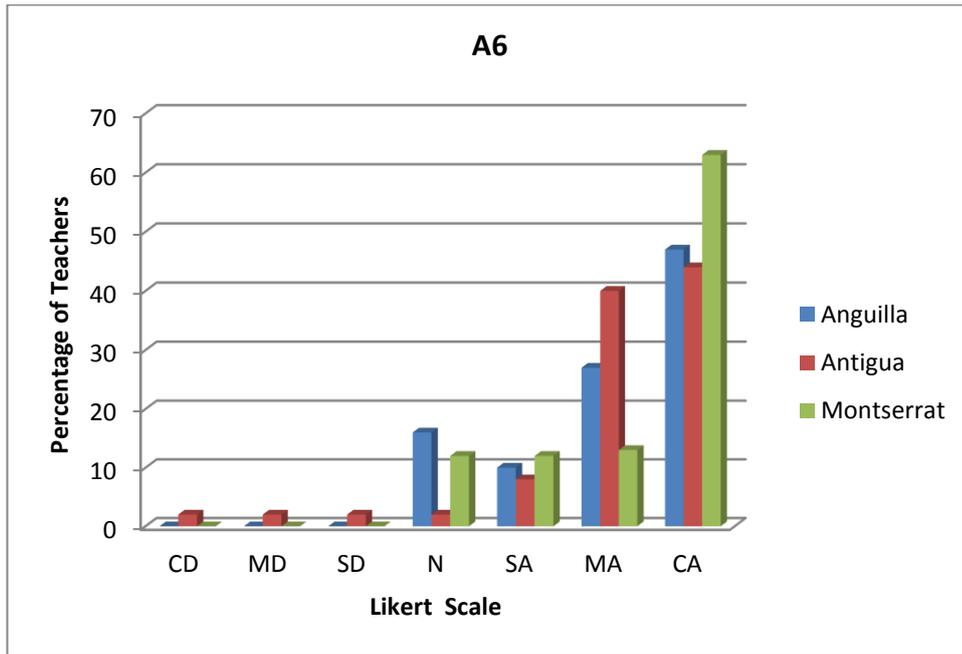


Collectively there was more support for the agreed responses although there were differences in the actual levels of ratings among the islands. For example, overall 93% of the teachers from Anguilla, 83% from Antigua and 75% from Montserrat agreed. It appeared that a large number of the teachers felt that continuous dialogue about high student expectations from the Head would promote learning. By contrast, 25% of the teachers in Montserrat indicated that they disagreed in relation to this statement.

The reason as to why the teachers in Anguilla had the highest proportion might best be explained in terms of making the connections between their responses in A2. The data revealed that 91% of them indicated that that their schools encourage a nurturing climate for all of its learners. This might then support the reason for 93% of them also stating that when their Heads engage in continuous dialogue about high students' expectations it will promote learning. It may very well be that the nurturing culture which was referred to in A2 was mirrored as a

climate of continuous dialogue thus, explaining why the two ratings were consistently high in the Anguillan context.

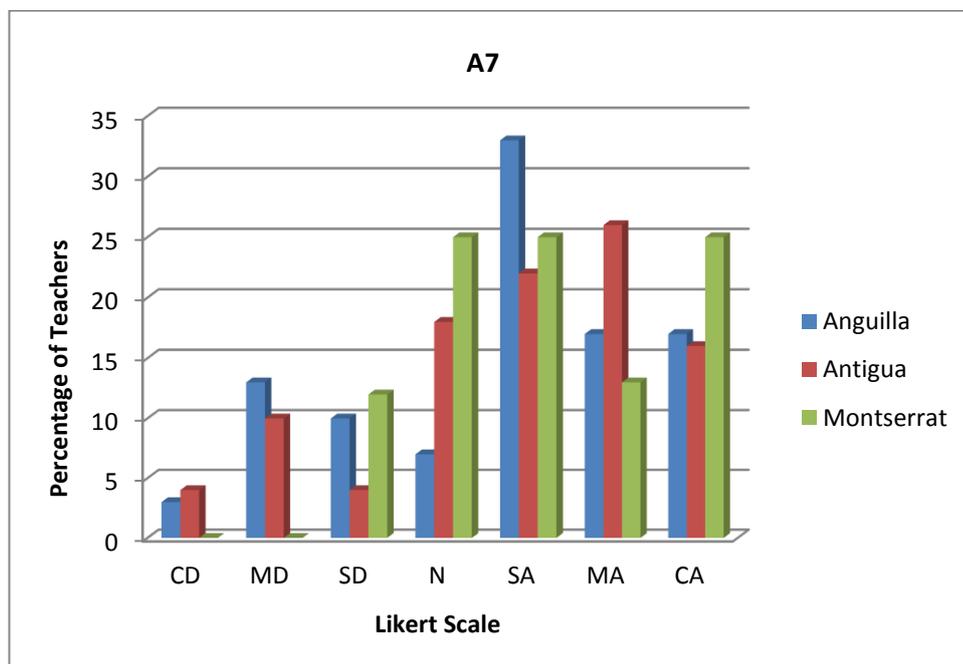
**Figure 11: The aim of evaluation should be for improving learning instead of managing performances.**



Responses from Antigua indicate that 92% of the teachers were in agreement with the statement in A6. Likewise, 88% and 84% of the teachers from Montserrat and Anguilla respectively were also in agreement. Their responses demonstrated that they are claiming that evaluation for them should have a distinct purpose which is primarily concerned with improvement in learning rather than focusing on performances. Although this finding provides some insight as to what they feel the purpose of evaluation should be it does not make any claims as to what actually happens on the ground. What is paramount though is that the teachers across the three islands are of the view that learning should be central to any evaluation activities. The neutral responses

were higher in Anguilla (16%) than the other two islands. The only possible explanation for this trend is that the demographic data reveals that 4 out of the 5 teachers who remained neutral had 1 to 5 years of teaching experience. This may suggest that these young teachers had a different orientation or no opinion about how they view the aim of evaluation.

**Figure 12: We do not have sufficient structures in place that invite participation in fostering an atmosphere of a learning organisation.**

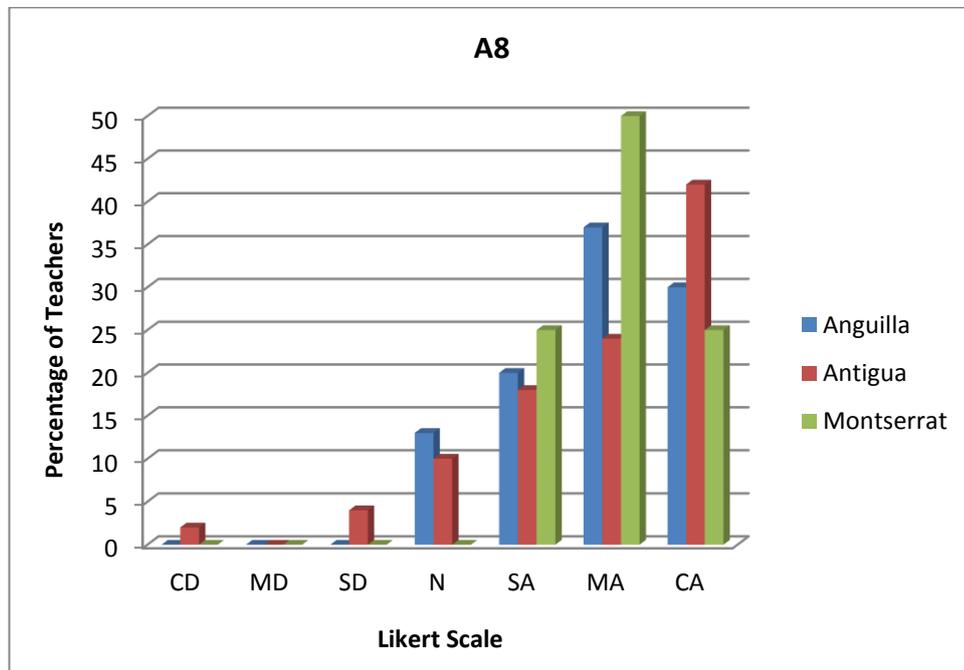


The graph generally shows that there were mixed responses from the teachers throughout the three islands with respect to statement A7. In the first instance, 67% (Anguilla), 64% (Antigua) and 63% (Montserrat) of the teachers were in agreement. The high proportions that agree structures are insufficient suggest there might be a gap between rhetoric and reality. What is also quite interesting about these responses is that the differences between the scores were small

which in essence strengthens the consistency regarding how critical this matter was for the teachers in the three islands.

On the other hand, 26% of the teachers from Anguilla, 18% from Antigua and 12% from Montserrat disagreed. Even though these teachers are in the minority, it can be interpreted from their responses that they felt that there are sufficient structures in place to foster an atmosphere of a learning organisation. These dissimilarities in their views suggest that there were some discrepancies regarding how the teachers express their feelings on the issue in question. With reference to the neutral side of the argument the data show that 25% of the teachers in Montserrat and 18% in Antigua remained neutral.

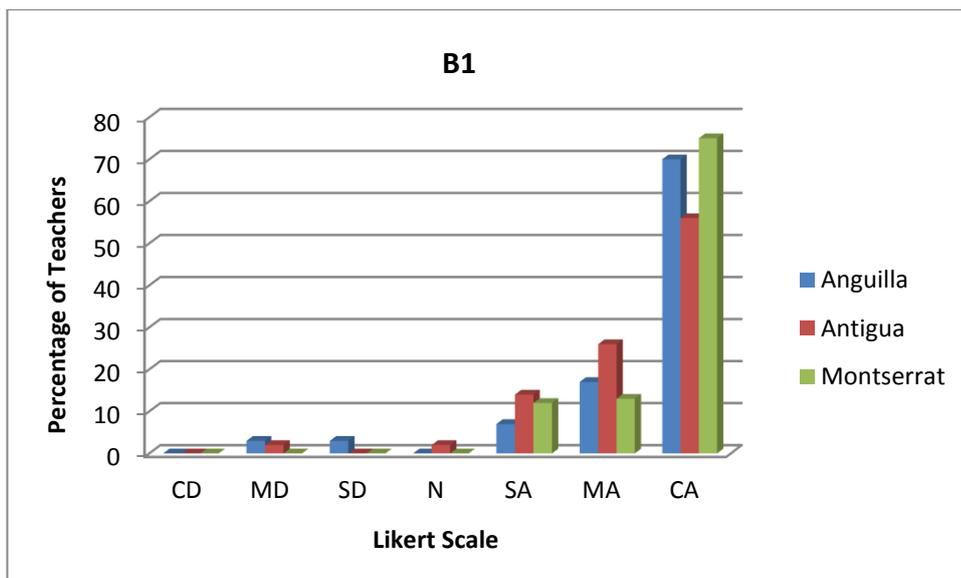
**Figure 13: Sharing teaching experiences to support student learning is a focused strategy for driving success.**



The graph shows a strong sense of agreement for each of the three islands; 87% - Anguilla, 84% - Antigua and 100% - Montserrat. The important point to note is that the majority of the teachers agreed that sharing teaching experience to support student learning is a vital strategy for galvanizing success. This also can be viewed as a type of learning that takes place among teachers and it therefore validates the view expressed in A1 where the teachers consider everyone to be a learner. There were no disagreements or neutral responses in Montserrat.

**4.3.2 Category B: How teachers perceive the role of leadership and the ways in which it is practiced.**

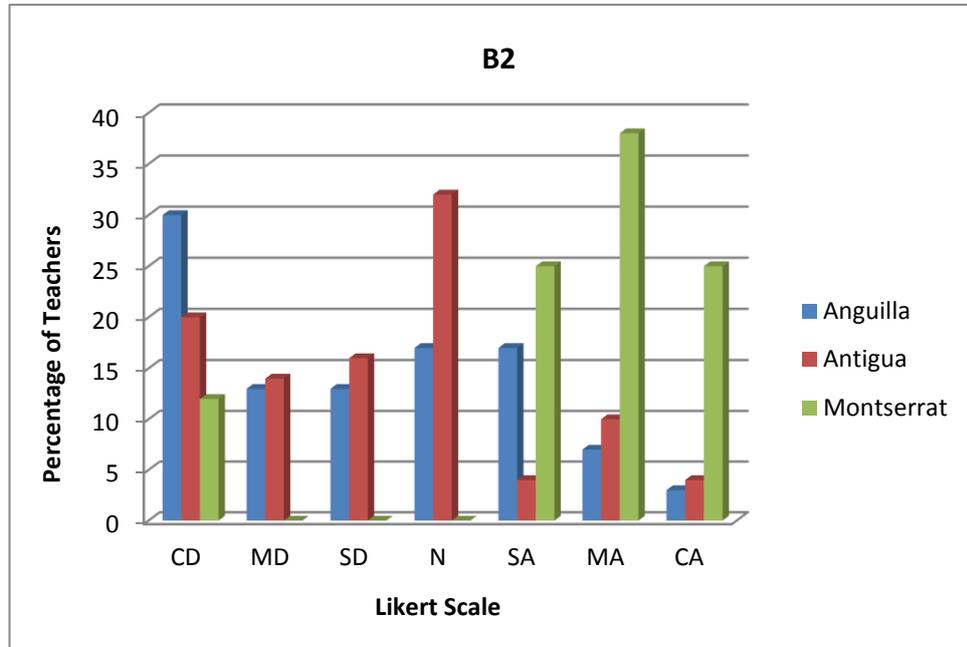
**Figure 14: I think that my head should involve staff in making decisions.**



Teachers were far more in agreement in their responses to this statement. In Antigua 96% of the teachers thought that their Heads should involve them in the decision making process. The percentages were marginally higher for Anguilla 97% and Montserrat 100%. This seems to suggest that a vast majority of the teachers perceive the role of leadership as an inclusive activity particularly where decisions are concerned. The high levels of agreement could also

mean that they strongly view decision-making as a critical part of leadership where teachers must have an integral role in the process.

**Figure 15: The source of authority for my head seems to reside in the power of his/her position rather than on influencing learning.**

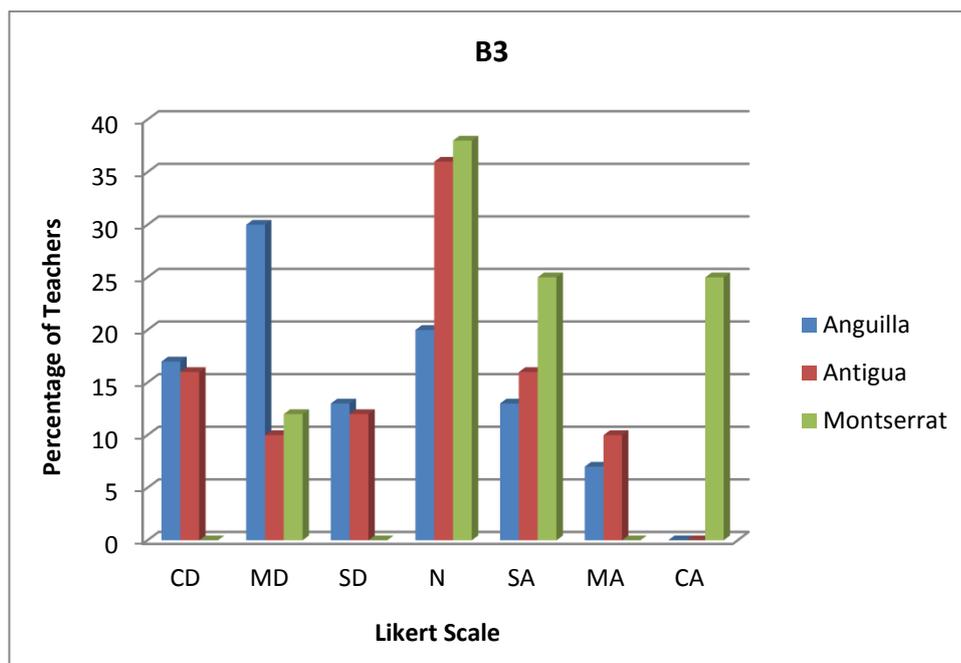


The fluctuations in responses largely indicate that there are exceptional differences in opinions with respect to statement B2, particularly as compared to previous statements. The most striking response is that from the teachers in Montserrat. 88% of them generally agreed which illustrates that they felt the source of authority of their Head exist in the power associated with the position and not in the task of influencing learning. On the contrary, 12% of the teachers felt that the source of authority does not reside in positional power but in the act of influencing learning. Despite the huge difference in views the main picture is suggesting that leadership in the Montserrat context appears to be more about who possesses power and less about learning.

In comparison, 56% of the teachers in Anguilla and 50% in Antigua were in disagreement which means that they felt the Heads in these contexts tend to focus more on learning and not entirely on power of authority. Conversely, 27% (Anguilla) and 18% (Antigua) of the teachers

agreed that the source of authority of their Heads occur in the power linked with the position and not in the responsibility of promoting learning. The percentage of teachers who stated a neutral response was much higher in Antigua (32%) than in Anguilla (17%) and Montserrat (0%). One likely explanation for such higher responses in Antigua may arise from ‘central tendency biases’ where the teachers do not want to appear as non-supportive of the Head. These responses however, do not fully elucidate why leadership in the three contexts is observed in such diverse manner but they help to give a broad picture of the perceived power bases of leadership in different places.

**Figure 16:** There is a very weak sense of collaborative patterns of activities that are focused on learning.

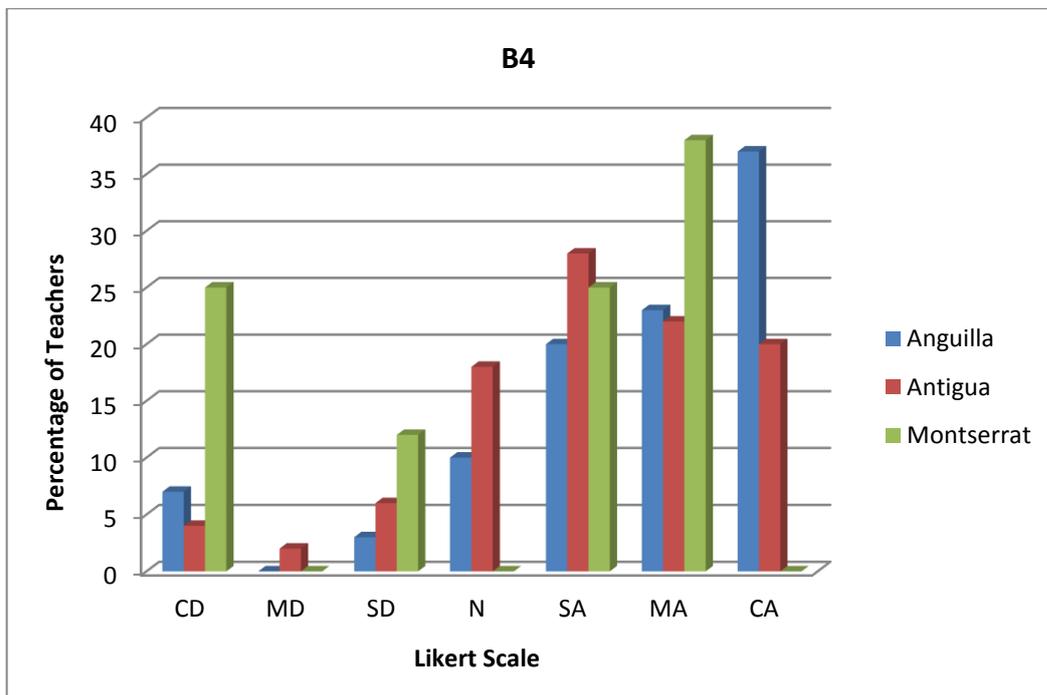


Statement B3 attempted to capture the nature of the type of collaborative patterns of activities which focus on learning in the schools investigated. The responses which appeared different from the established trend came from the Montserrat teachers where 50% of them agreed with the statement. This means that more teachers in Montserrat are confirming that there is a weak

sense of collaborative patterns of activities that are focused on learning in their schools. In comparison, this agreement was weaker for the teachers in Antigua (26%) and Anguilla (20%).

With respect to the reverse side to this finding, 60% of the teachers in Anguilla and 38% in Antigua disagreed with this statement. This gives a reasonable impression that the concerted efforts related to learning seem particularly stronger in Anguilla but weaker in Antigua. Another notable observation is that the neutral responses for the respective islands (Anguilla - 20%, Antigua – 36% and Montserrat – 38%) were much higher than average. This might be an indication that a number of the participants did not fully understand the question or they perhaps restrained themselves from an evaluation of their collaborative actions in their practice.

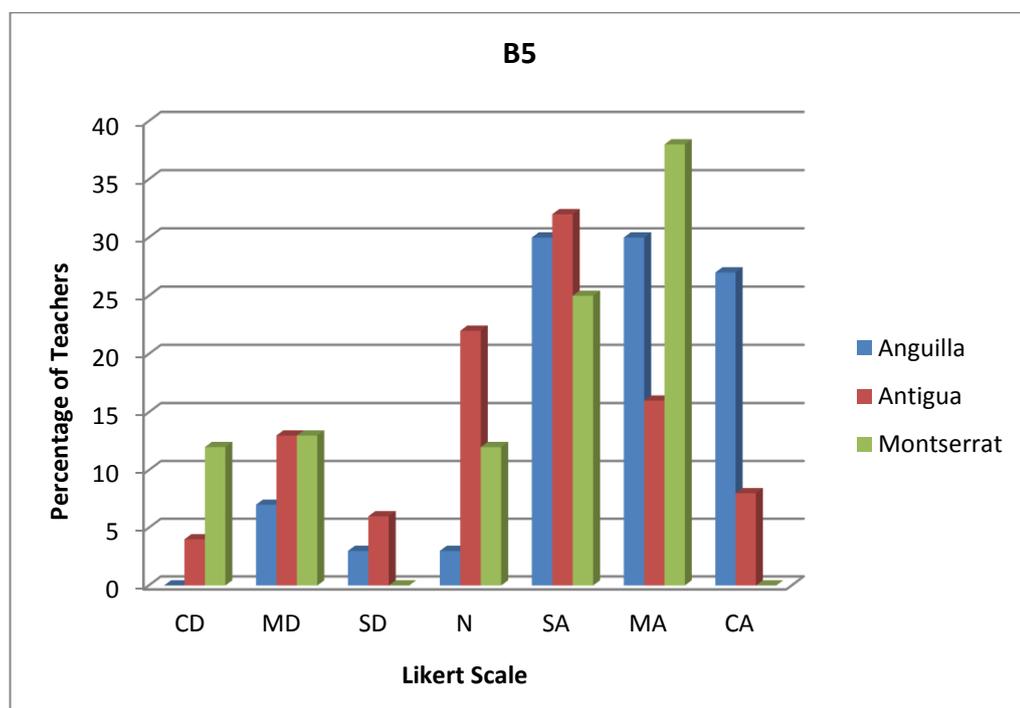
**Figure 17: My head nurtures shared leadership in the day-to-day flow of activities of the school by drawing on the experiences of the staff.**



The graph clearly shows that most of the teachers across three islands (Anguilla - 80%, Antigua - 80%, and Montserrat - 63%) agreed with this statement. This verifies that first and foremost that the Heads in the schools within the islands seem to foster aspects of shared leadership by

tapping in on teachers' experience and skills. Another notable observation from the data is that 37% of the teachers in Montserrat felt that this practice is not nurtured sufficiently in schools. This seems to indicate that the practice of shared leadership is less prevalent in the Montserrat context. 18% of the teachers in Antigua remained neutral.

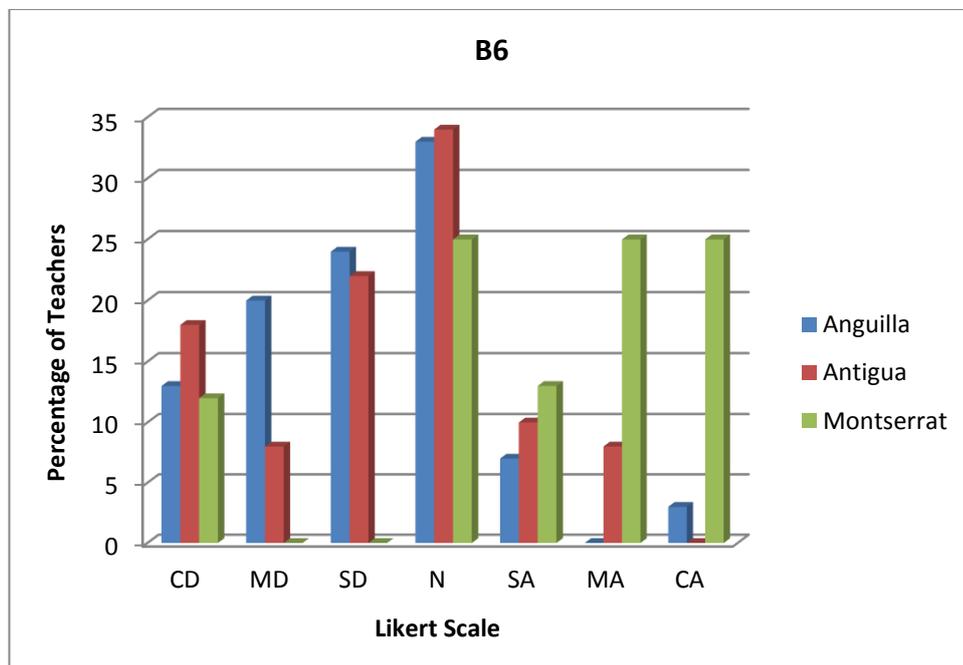
**Figure 18: In my school, teachers, students, parents and other support agencies are involved in team work which generates new ideas for improving learning.**



With respect to this statement the teachers from Anguilla (87%), Antigua (56%) and Montserrat (63%) agreed. Notwithstanding that the scores among the three islands were widely different it still suggests that these teachers perceive that the school community is usually involved in team work which in some ways is responsible for generating new ideas for improving learning. Following on again from previous associations about the role of leadership and the way in which it is practiced in Anguilla it is not surprising that schools in this context espouse higher levels of team work activities that promote learning.

Only 10% of the teachers in Anguilla disagreed while 23% in Antigua and 25% in Montserrat disagreed correspondingly. There is a substantial minority of teachers who disagreed with the view that the school community work as a team to improve learning in Montserrat and Anguilla. However, in the context of Antigua there appear to be some correlation between the long-serving teachers and this particular statement. The demographic data revealed that out of the 11 teachers who responded negatively 8 of them (73%) had been teaching for 11-19 years or over. This seems to suggest that the more experienced teachers had a different view about team work in their schools. The percentage of teachers who remained neutral was much higher in Antigua (22%) than Anguilla (3%) and Montserrat (12%).

**Figure 19: My head pays more attention to the administrative functions of the school.**



Teachers across the three islands had varied opinions about statement B6. Firstly, there was a remarkable difference between the percentages of teachers who agreed. For instance, 63% of the teachers in Montserrat indicated that their Head pays more attention to the administrative

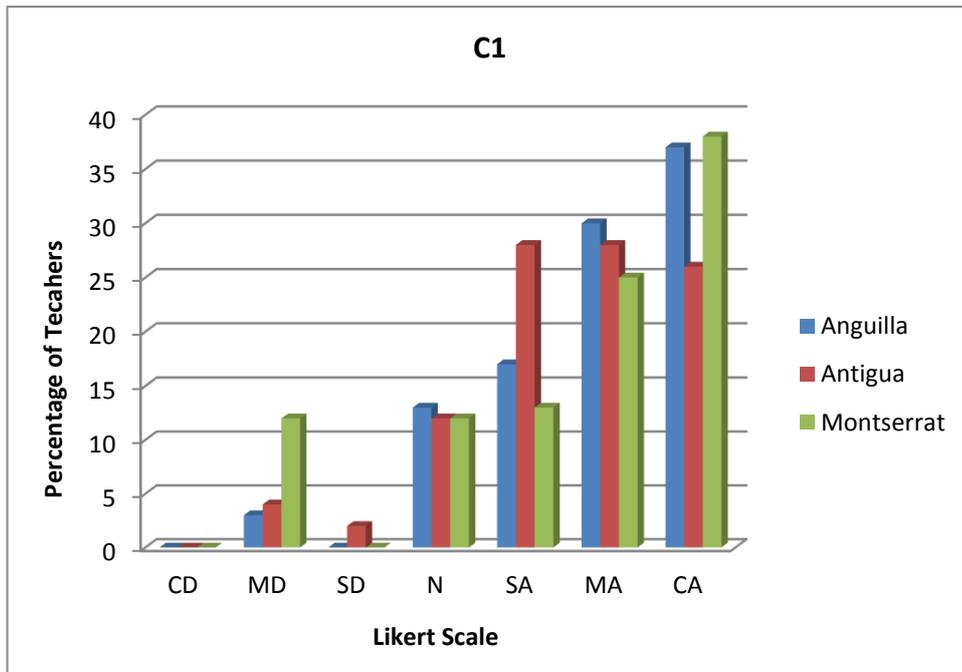
function of the school thus, implying less time is spent on focusing on learning. On the other hand, 10% from Anguilla and 18% from Antigua responded in a similar manner.

The key question here is perhaps the reason why there were such significant differences between the scores for Montserrat and the other two islands. One probable explanation seems to come from the consistent patterns of relationships observed in the responses given to previous statements. Referring back to statement B2 the data revealed that 88% of the teachers from Montserrat concluded that their Head source of authority look as if it resides in the power of the position instead of influencing learning. With this in mind, it is therefore easier to understand why these same teachers are pronouncing that the role of their Head is more grounded in the administrative tasks.

On the other side of the scale 57% (Anguilla), 48% (Antigua) and 12% (Montserrat) of the teachers disagreed thus, suggesting that their Heads do not pay more attention to the administrative functions of the school. In relation to the neutral responses it is apparent that the percentages of teachers (Anguilla - 33%, Antigua - 34% and Montserrat - 25%) much higher than the other statements in this section. The relative consistency in the scores may suggest that the 'central tendency bias' may offer some clarification as to why more teachers opted to remain neutral in their responses. They perhaps feel that they do not wish to be viewed as holding a non-supportive assessment of their Heads.

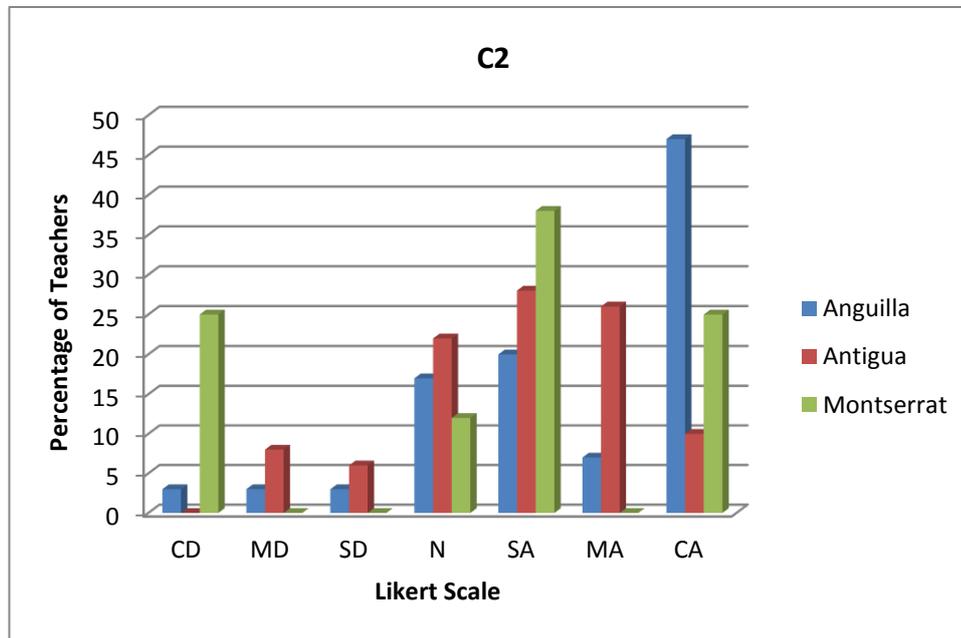
### 4.3.3 Category C: To what extent do teachers feel that they are engaged in leading and learning?

**Figure 20:** In my classroom we listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternatives before linking them into clear modes of thinking.



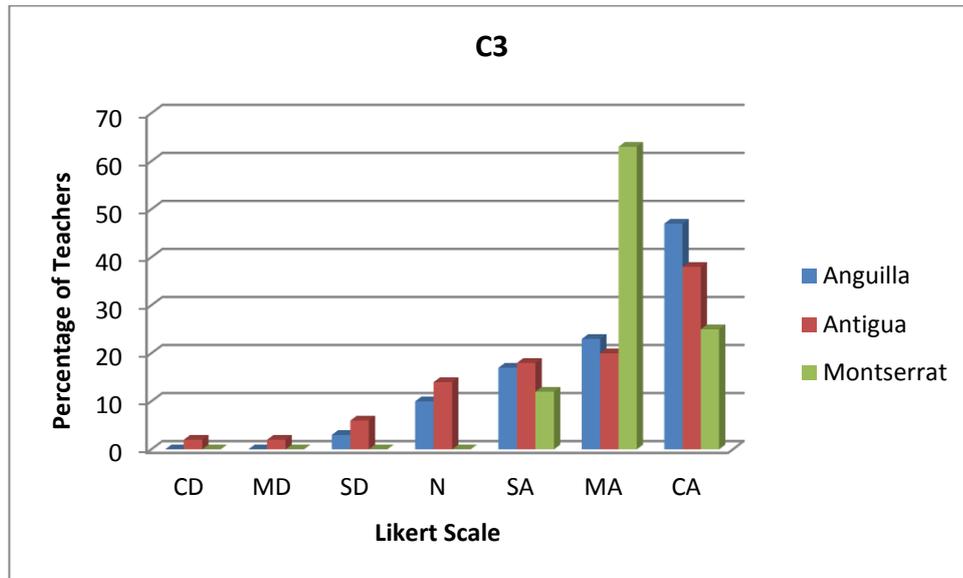
The consistency in responses across the three islands (Anguilla - 84%, Antigua - 82% and Montserrat - 76%) demonstrates the extent to which the teachers in each island felt they were engaged in leading the learning process. This also suggests that teachers are taking more responsibility for learning within their classrooms and it perhaps highlight that there is often a strong presence of leadership roles that usually occur during the teaching and learning process. All three islands reported lower percentages in the disagreement side of the scale (Anguilla - 3%, Antigua - 6% and Montserrat - 12%). This helps to strengthen the agreement responses given by the teachers in relation to their engagement in leading learning. There was also some uniformity in the percentages of teachers who remained neutral in their response (Anguilla-13%, Antigua-12%, Montserrat-12%).

**Figure 21: The head frequently involves me in feedback conversations arising out of a spirit of honesty and trust.**



The teachers were generally in agreement about the frequency with which their Heads involve them in feedback conversations that arise out of a spirit of honesty and trust. The data shows that it was stated stronger in Anguilla (74%) but stated weaker in Antigua (64%) and Montserrat (63%). This suggests that there is an atmosphere within the schools where Heads provide advice for teachers but most importantly they acknowledged that it is sincere. It also gives a clearer picture of the scope to which this type of exchange is taking place across the three islands. However, there are a number of teachers (Anguilla - 9%, Antigua - 14%, Montserrat - 25%) who disagreed with the statement. In the Anguillan context 17% of the teachers gave neither a positive or negative response while in Antigua 22% and in Montserrat 12% responded in similar manner.

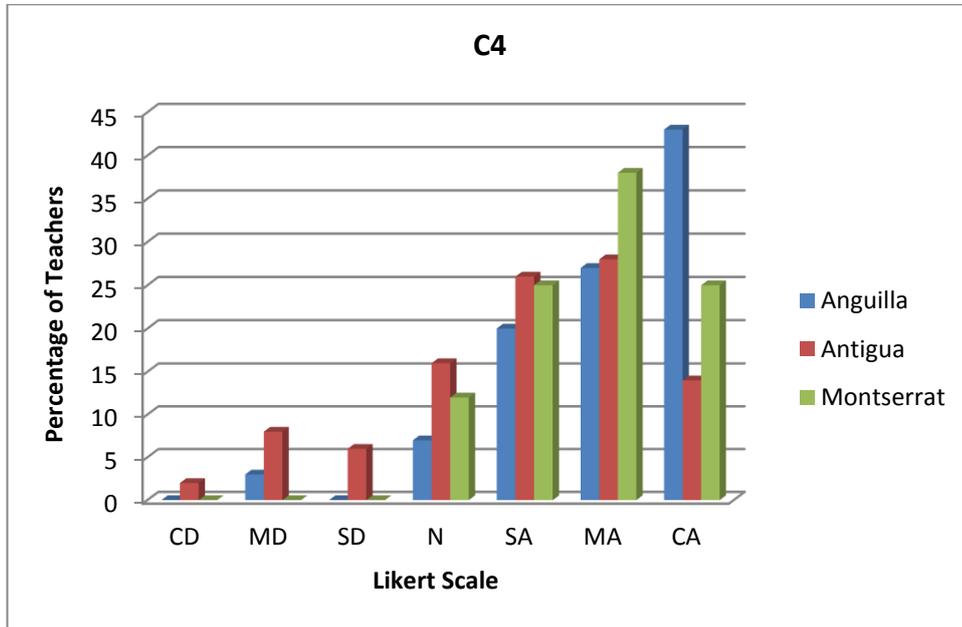
**Figure 22: Having a voice in my school is useful to break open teachers' collective skills.**



It is quite evident from the data that the teachers from two of the islands (Anguilla - 87% and Antigua - 76%) agreed fairly strongly to the statement in question. This suggests that there is fairly strong belief amongst the teachers that their voices play a critical part in opening up the combined skills of teachers. The underlying assumption at this juncture is that a group of teachers on staff usually possess a range of skills but it has very little value unless they are allowed have a say in how to utilise them in their schools' operations.

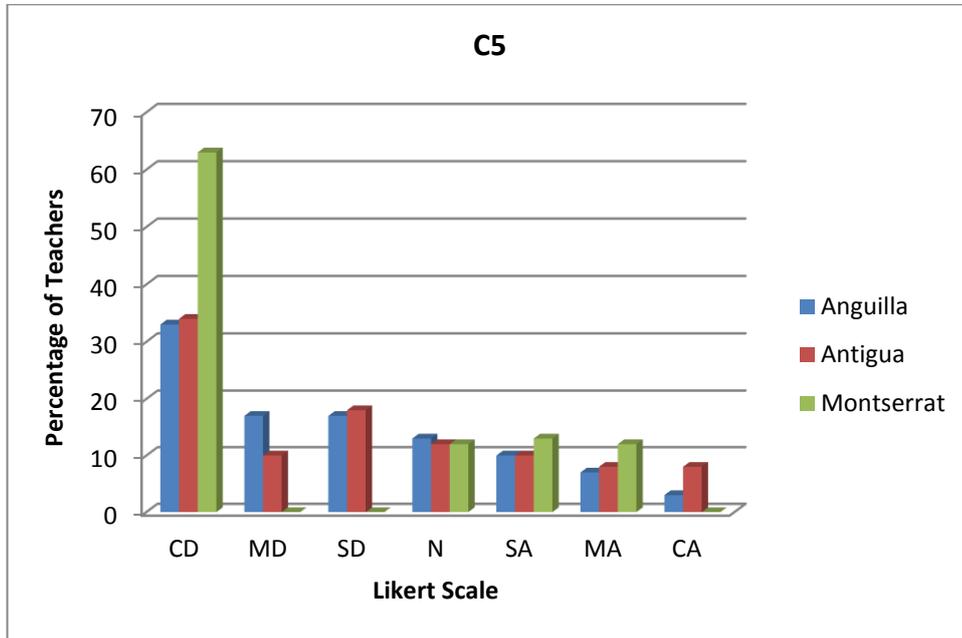
Another remarkable finding that draws some attention is the 100% score given by the teachers in Montserrat. A possible explanation perhaps comes from the response given in B2 where 88% felt that their Head source of authority seem to be located in the position. This seems to suggest that the leadership style of their Head is one of an autocratic leader. It perhaps partly explains why the teachers are suggesting that their voices are a useful feature in maximising teachers' potential. The percentages of teachers disagreed (Anguilla - 3%, Antigua - 10%, Montserrat - 0%) were weakly stated and this helps to strengthen the agreement responses.

**Figure 23: As colleagues we consistently create, refine and share knowledge through formal and informal dialogues.**



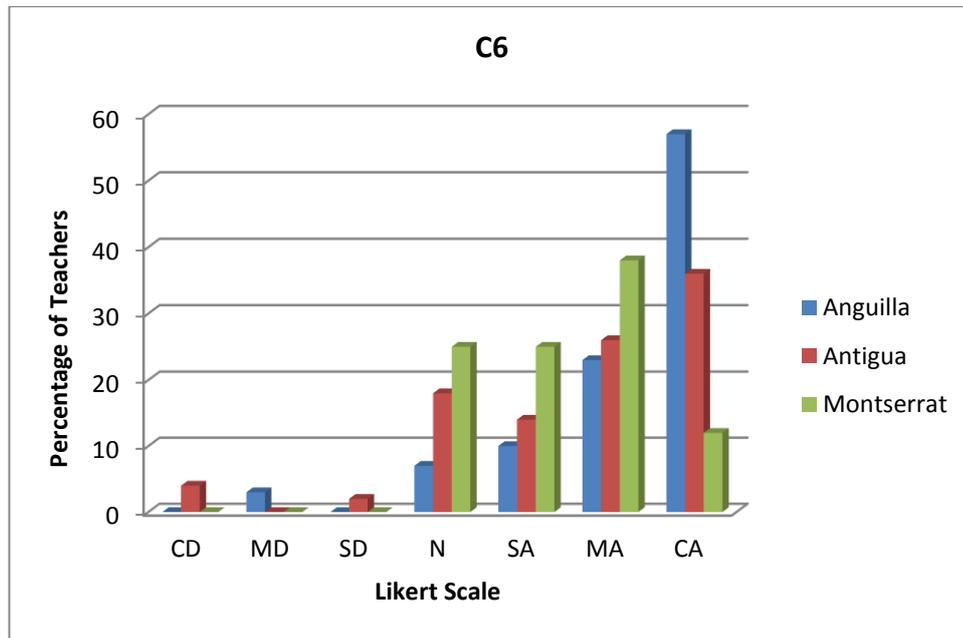
The data essentially highlights the strong collegial climate across the three islands particularly stronger in Anguilla (90%) than in Montserrat (88%). However, the proportioned agreed was considerably lower in Antigua (68%). Nevertheless, the broad picture that is being created seems to suggest that the teachers across the islands are in the habit of sharing knowledge using both formal and informal dialogue. This also brings to the forefront the value placed on these forms of dialogue as well as their importance in sustaining an interconnected unit.

**Figure 24: The head will loose his/her control of authority if he/she allows teachers to lead CPD.**



The noteworthy feature here is the tilting of the responses towards disagreement. The first thing that is worth mentioning is that in total 63% of the teachers in Montserrat completely disagreed thus, making it a strong claim. On the other hand, in total 67% in Anguilla and 62% in Antigua disagreed with the statement. Apart from the scores being relatively close, the interpretation from this is that these teachers feel that the Head Teacher will not lose control of authority if teachers are given the chance to lead CPD. It suggests that teachers perhaps are intimating that they are capable to lead but that does not necessarily undermine the Head's authority.

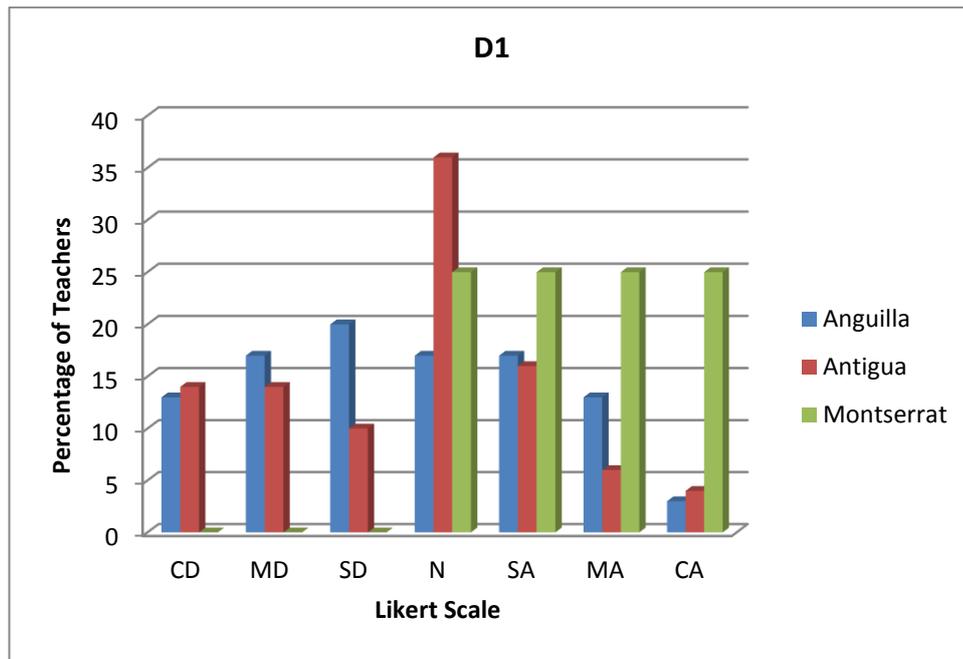
**Figure 25: During staff meetings my head consistently demonstrates the habit of listening which conveys the respect for teachers' views.**



Looking at the data collected from the teachers in this area, it can be noticed that the majority of them (Anguilla - 90%, Antigua - 76% and Montserrat - 75%) were in agreement. However, there seem to be some discrepancies between the findings revealing that the teachers in Montserrat have stated an autocratic view of headship in their context and the moderate strength of agreement accorded by the same teachers to this statement. Notwithstanding this, it still suggests that there are considerable levels of respect from the Heads across the islands with regards to listening to the views of the teachers. The data from B4 has shown that 73% of all the teachers agreed that their Heads nurture shared leadership by drawing on the experience and expertise of the staff which means that they do not just listen but use their views in their leadership roles. This may further help to understand the nature of staff meetings in these contexts and it is perhaps reasonable to conclude that listening and respecting each other views is a central part of such activity. The highest proportions of neutral responses were in Antigua (18%) and Montserrat (25%) respectively.

#### 4.3.4 Category D: How do teachers view CPD and its impact on teaching and learning?

**Figure 26:** My impression of CPD at this school is a set of activities we routinely engage in rather than exploring ways of understanding our practice in relation to pupils' learning.

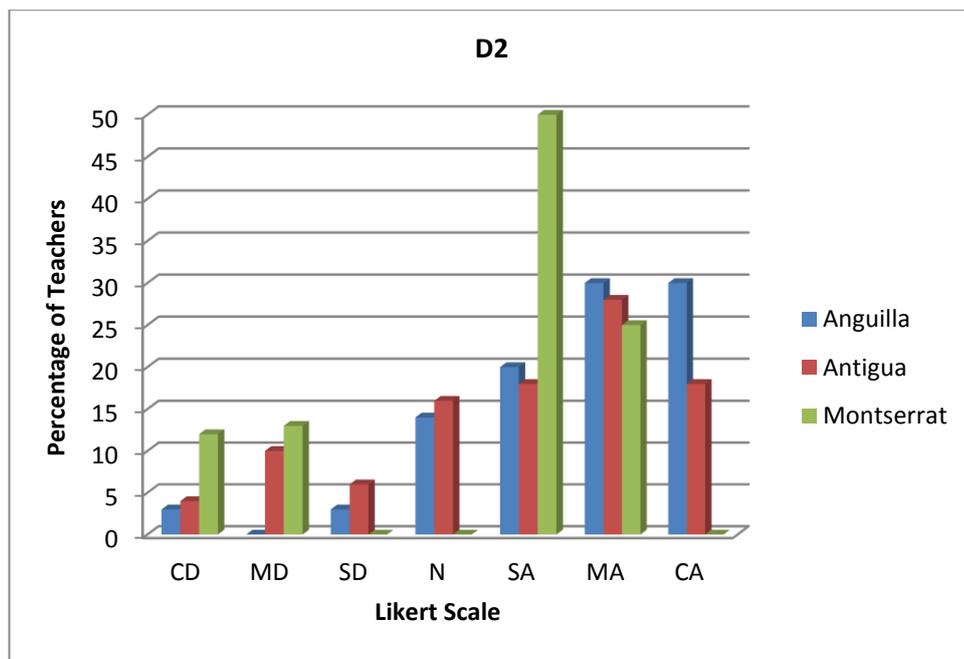


The data demonstrates that the responses from the teachers across the three islands were very mixed. There was not a consensus about their impressions of CPD. Contrarily, and perhaps more distinctly, 75% of the teachers in Montserrat were in agreement. This suggests that the teachers from Montserrat had a stronger view and felt that in their context CPD is probably more about the expectations for them to regularly meet and less about exploring new ways of understanding students' learning. With this view in mind, it appeared that the CPD experiences of these teachers are possibly devoid of the type of rich engagements that concentrate on improving practice.

In contrast, 38% of the teachers from Antigua, and a more significant figure of 57% from Anguilla disagreed. This suggests that these teachers view CPD as a more engaged enterprise

in terms of finding ways of understanding their teaching in relation to students' learning with less emphasis on routine meetings. Interestingly, 17% of the teachers from Anguilla remained neutral while 36% from Antigua and 25% from Montserrat did likewise. While it was not possible to pinpoint any evidence to support the very high neutral responses especially for Antigua, it is quite clear from the data that the views surrounding CPD is conflicting across the three islands and it may suggest that it is a very problematic area in the schools.

**Figure 27: Most of the CPD activities that I have participated in have had a significant impact on my teaching.**

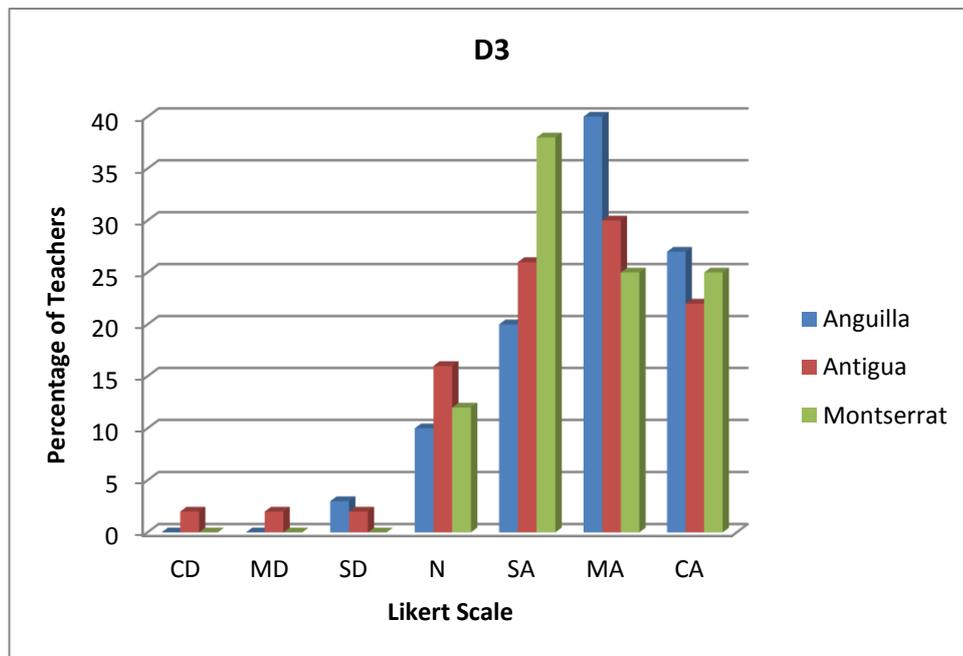


On the issue of the impact of CPD on their teaching a fairly good proportion of the teachers (Anguilla - 80%, Antigua - 64% and Montserrat - 75%) agreed that most of the CPD activities that they have participated in had a significant impact on their teaching. This impact however, appeared strongest in Anguilla but weakest in Antigua. The real dispute here though, is that although there were inconsistent views about the nature and purpose of CPD (as shown in D1)

there is still some optimism that most of the CPD activities definitely had an impact on their teaching. In spite of this controversy the findings still reveal parallel relationships in some responses. For example, in C1 more teachers in Anguilla viewed CPD in their context in a more positive light where the emphasis is on exploring ways of understanding learning. This possibly is a realistic account for 80% of the teachers stating that their CPD experiences have had some impact on their teachers. As a result, the data in this specific context is suggesting that purposeful CPD will more than likely lead to greater impact on teaching.

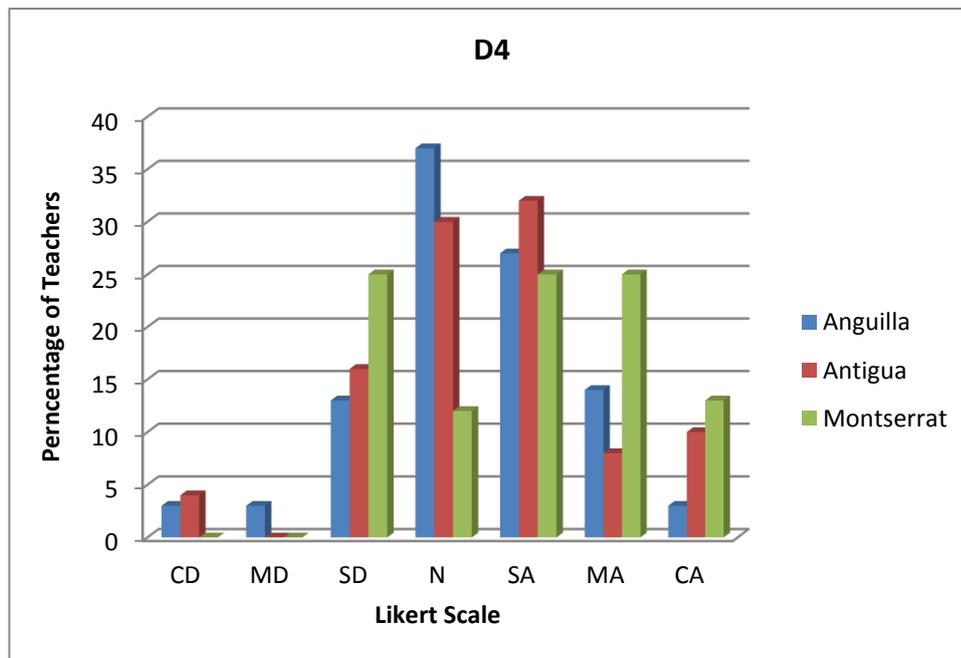
Contrary to this, earlier findings show that 75% of the teachers from Montserrat indicated that their impression of CPD is a set of routine activities with less focus on learning. Bearing this in mind, one would have anticipated that a smaller percentage of the teachers (instead of the 75% shown) would have said that their CPD experiences had less impact on their teaching. This association looks contradictory as compared to the relationship found in Anguilla.

**Figure 28: I regard CPD as the mechanism which adds unity to all activities (informal and formal) that promote adult learning.**



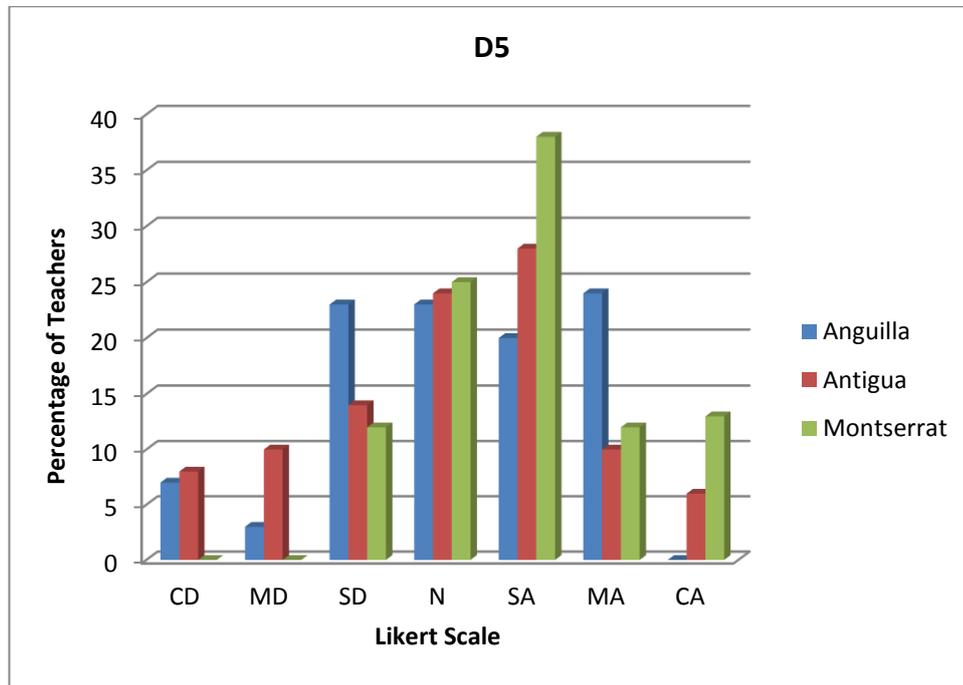
According to the data 88% of the teachers from Montserrat, and 87% from Anguilla strongly agreed with the statement. The agreement however, was more weakly stated by the teachers in Antigua (78%). This suggests that there is a relatively strong belief across the islands that CPD is the mechanism, which adds unity to all school activities that promote learning particularly in adults. It is here perhaps as well that these teachers are making the case for CPD to be utilized as the driving force behind learning in schools. In other words, CPD can be regarded as the cornerstone for all the learning opportunities that are essential for teachers. With respect to the responses of disagreement, the percentages of teachers were rather low (Anguilla - 3%, Antigua - 6% and Montserrat - 0%). Again, this reinforces the high regards that the teachers have for CPD as mechanism for supporting their learning. In Antigua 16% of the sample remained neutral.

**Figure 29: I do not think that our pedagogical needs are adequately taken on board prior to the planning of CPD.**



The data in D4 shows that the views of the teachers were not consistent with reference to the statement. When the teachers were asked about whether or not they think that their pedagogical needs are adequately taken on board before school-based CPD 63% from Montserrat agreed. A weaker response was given in Antigua (50%) and Anguilla (40%) respectively. This suggests that some teachers felt that their instructional needs are not sufficiently addressed before the CPD activities are executed. It may also mean that the teachers (and in particular those from Montserrat) are suggesting that they should be more involved in the planning of CPD activities where perhaps they can help to identify or assess the training requirements. Observing the neutral responses on the other hand, the percentages especially for Anguilla (37%) and Antigua (30%) were significantly higher than the proportions shown in previous findings. An analysis of the personal data of the teachers from Anguilla who responded neutral reveals that there were patterns of relationship between the years of teaching and the response given. Six teachers out of 11 (55%) had only 1- 5 years of teaching experience. It seems therefore that the inexperienced teachers were more likely to remain neutral perhaps because they felt that their limited working experience did not provide sufficient scope for them to make a fair judgment on either side of the scale.

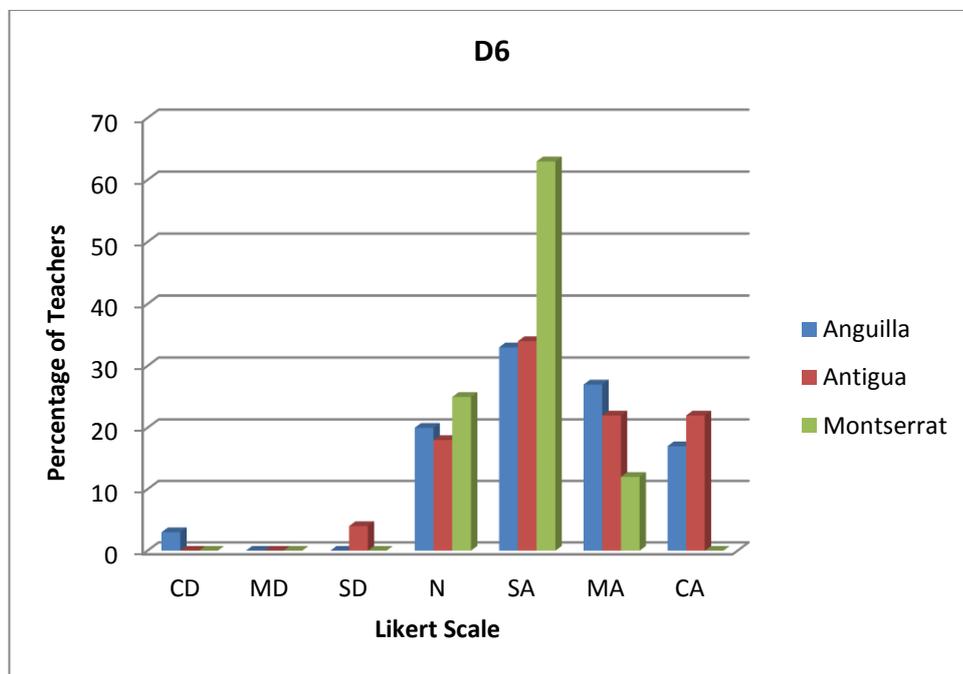
**Figure 30: At this school there is not a clear method of gauging the degree to which students' learning have been improved by CPD.**



The data shows that the teachers from Montserrat (63%) had the highest proportion of agreement although it can be considered as weakly stated. The percentages for Anguilla (44%) and Antigua (44%) were even much lower. Notwithstanding this, the interpretation drawn from this suggests that these teachers assert that there is not a clear method for measuring the impact of CPD on students' learning. If there is no organised system in place to evaluate CPD then there is the likelihood that Heads will not be in a good position to know the type of impact CPD has on teachers' practice. On the disagreement side of the scale, 33% of the teachers from Anguilla, 32% from Antigua and 12% from Montserrat had an opposing view. They felt that there was a clear method of gauging the impact of CPD on students' learning. However, the instrument does not capture any details regarding the nature of methods available to evaluate the impact of CPD.

The neutral responses for two of the islands were fairly close (23% - Anguilla, 24% - Antigua). In the case of Montserrat, only 12% of the teachers gave a similar response. It is not conclusive from the findings as to why there were such differences in opinions. What it suggests however, it that there is not a distinctive view on this matter and the method of gauging the impact of CPD is unclear from the evidence presented.

**Figure 31: I believe that it is through the social relations that emerge from CPD that the ideas of learning can be better understood before it is applied.**



This graph demonstrates that most of the teachers responses were concentrated around the somewhat agree scale. 78% of the teachers from Antigua, 77% from Anguilla, and 75% from Montserrat all agreed that the social relations that emerged from CPD solidify ideas about learning before they can apply them to practice. This suggests that ‘social relations’ in this sense refers to the interactions between teachers especially in terms of the way in which they consult and discuss issues about learning as well as the professional growth they experience over time. Hence, it is perhaps under these circumstances that the nature of learning in the

context of their practice can be fully understood before they are better able to utilise it in their teaching.

On the contrary, the exceptionally low percentages for the disagreement responses (Anguilla – 3%, Antigua – 4% and Montserrat – 0%) suggest that the opposing view was minimal. This reinforces the accord shown with the agreement responses and may highlight the significance of conceptualising CPD in this way for these teachers. The neutral responses from Anguilla (30%) were much higher than the other two islands (Antigua – 18% and Montserrat – 25%). A possible explanation for more teachers in Anguilla giving a neutral response is that 5 out of the 9 (56%) who responded in this way had 1 to 5 years of teaching experience. This perhaps suggests that the notion of social relations perhaps takes time to develop and therefore the junior teachers would not recognise the benefits in such shorter time frame.

#### **4.4 Summary of Findings from Questionnaires**

The broad picture that was created from the data showed both similarities and differences of the teachers' views across the three islands with respect to the concepts of LfL and CPD. There seem to be strong levels of agreement with the statements that pertained to how these two concepts *should be* in the context of their work. On the other hand, the disagreements seemingly were more associated with when they had to draw the distinction between *what was desirable* and *what was practiced* in their schools. The dissonance between what teachers feel should happen and what actually transpire immediately draws on the relationship with respect to how both theory and practice could interface in leadership practices and CPD to bring about change in learning. Equally important is the way in which the local context seems to influence the

convergence, and or divergence of teachers’ perceptions regarding these concepts. The most noteworthy findings that have emerged from the questionnaires are summarised in Table (7).

**Table 7: Summary of key findings for the 3 islands**

<b>Questionnaire Section</b>	<b>Findings</b>
<b>A</b>	Leadership and learning have plural meanings.
<b>B</b>	Leadership is perceived as a shared activity.
<b>C</b>	Dialogue is essential for leading and learning.
<b>D</b>	CPD promotes adult learning but its current structure is rather problematic.

## **4.5 Findings from the Interviews**

### **4.5.1 Section Introduction**

The overall intention of this section is to present the participants’ responses by first stating each question and then highlighting the three themes (major, minor and individual) that emerged from the three islands. The conceptual framework which underpins this approach is grounded in the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985). The major themes were derived from the cases where majority of the participants responded similarly to the same question while the minor theme stemmed from the second most popular ideas. In contrast, the individual theme originated from not only the response which was least common but also where the comment stood out as something intriguing or interesting. In order to structure and present the interview findings in a systematic way, the major, minor and individual themes for each island were presented in a matrix table to give an all-encompassing view of how the participants responded to each

question. Direct quotes from the transcribed interviews were selected to support the different category of themes. Following this, an overarching theme which best described the collective viewpoints of the participants was teased out from three category of themes. This highlighted the dominant idea that was found to span across the three islands.

## **4.6 Question 1 - What do you think should be the purpose of CPD?**

### **4.6.1 Montserrat**

#### **4.6.1.1 Major Theme: Organizational Improvement**

With respect to the purpose for continuing professional development, the major theme is that CPD in schools is primarily concerned with improvements in the organisation. As a result, there is an overall sense of CPD being mainly concerned with developing or making things better. For example, a number of respondents gave the explanations below as supporting details for the reason behind CPD.

*“...is about how we can improve ourselves as individuals in the workplace. It also helps us to work better as a team to see where we are so that we can help each other to fill any gaps in the profession”.*

(Head Teacher AS, MNI)

*“...it can be used to give teachers and opportunity to contribute to the development of the school. But also it develops the organisation so that the organisation can grow along with the people that work in it”.*

(Ministry - MNI)

#### **4.6.1.2 Minor Theme: Knowledge Extension**

With respect to the minor theme, the participants from Montserrat identified CPD as being useful for knowledge extension where it essentially broadens their prospect to learn more. It

seems that in this case one's prior learning is regarded as an important aspect of CPD. Two teachers gave testimony to this when they stated that;

*“Continuing professional development should enable those who are receiving that training to build on either a weak area in their profession or extend knowledge of what they may already know a bit further. Or you can give me new area because you realise in education every year basically you find something new coming out. You may know something before but you can get something else new to supplement it”.*

(Teacher NT, MNI)

*“I think that we are always open to learning as we do not know it all and I think we as teachers should be exposed to as much training opportunities as possible... opportunities where we can broaden our horizon and learn more...”*

(Head Teacher AS, MNI)

#### **4.6.1.3 Individual Theme: Individual Enhancement**

At the individual level, it was quite noticeable that a participant felt that CPD is a significant factor in promoting and enhancing personal development. The difference between this individual response and those that referred to improvement and learning is that CPD in some ways seem to give a sense of pride or worth in making personal contributions to the wider society. What this suggests is that it is very important not to underscore the value of how a teacher personalised the process. One teacher proffers this idea by saying;

*“I think first of all the purpose of CPD is to enhance the individual with their self-esteem... and to use what they have attained to...build society. It is to develop an individual so that they can use it to bring about changes...”*

(Teacher AN, MNI)

## 4.6.2 Antigua

### 4.6.2.1 *Major Theme: Keeping Abreast with New Ideas/Information*

The major theme that stood out from the participants in Antigua was that they considered CPD as the driving force behind keeping teachers abreast with new ideas and information. This presumes that the underlying assumption is that the teaching and learning environment in schools are constantly changing and as such, teachers in particular, need to keep up with such pace by engaging in CPD. Correspondingly therefore, is the conception that teachers' ability to grapple with up-to-date ideas in teaching is conceivably reliant on CPD. The participants below, for example, described how they felt about CPD contributing towards making teachers well informed about their practice.

*“It is to help sharpen teachers’ skills. Sometimes teachers go off to college and they come back but after a while they forget things, they learn – so it’s like a refresher course.... Another thing you have to keep abreast with technology. For example, we are using a lot of technology in the classroom so as a teacher you have to keep up with what is going on. Even as a doctor you have to be up to date with the latest procedures and medicine and so on”.*

(Teacher 1, ANU)

*“I think it is all important to have continuing professional development because we live in a world where times are changing, children are changing and nothing remains the same we need to keep ourselves upgraded – we need to offer continuous training so that teachers can be abreast of new ideas to get the children engross in the work. We have a lot of resources that are available on an international scale but they might not be available to us. Teaching now is just more than teaching out of a book as children want to be on-line, using computers and doing other things that will keep them active”.*

(Teacher 6 - ANU)

*“Continuing professional development keeps us abreast with any new information and new ideas that are coming on hand. It also helps to remind us of things we learnt in our beginning years in teaching...so that we are not left behind and we are abreast with what is going on in education and around the rest of the world”.*

(Head Teacher - ANU)

#### **4.6.2.2      *Minor Theme: Gaining Additional Skills or Techniques***

Taking a closer look at the minor theme emerging from the Antiguan context, it highlights that there were some teachers who felt that CPD should provide opportunities for them to gain additional skills or techniques. Techniques and, or skills in teaching, whilst not being offered as a major theme, were viewed here as more or less a secondary reason for conducting CPD in primary schools. These participants are of the opinion that CPD activities could contribute to their ability to obtain the type of skills necessary for their practice. The remarks below are reflective of these participants’ perspectives.

*“Well if I take myself although I have a Bachelor’s in Special Education I am still limited in certain areas because I am still young so getting professional development from older and more experienced persons will be very good for my ‘technique’ and how I do things. You have the technology side to it now as government is introducing it into the classrooms so most teachers especially the older ones will need professional development in this area”.*

(Teacher 12 - ANU)

*“It will help teachers to enhance their skills in things that are new in terms of helping students to learn much better – so as those new ideas come forth and teachers get to know them he or she will be able to use that knowledge to have an impact on the kids”.*

(Teacher 15 – ANU)

*“I’m thinking that it should be a means to for our persons to gain additional skills, for persons to gain additional skills yes but also for them to learn more about the context in which they work so that they can respond to the changing needs that present themselves...”*

(Ministry - ANU)

#### **4.6.2.3 Individual Theme: Personal Development**

Tied closely to a more personalised view of the purpose of CPD was that it is quite beneficial in developing personal goals as well as further qualifications. The issue of personal development seems important for these two participants as indicated by their views;

*“CPD is something to enhance what I am doing presently. It is also an opportunity to uplift oneself because no one wants to be a position for too long as you get frustrated – so it is good to lift you up personally”.*

(Teacher 7 – ANU)

*“It should be used to target a person... I do not think a person should pursue something because it is there - it must be of some necessity to the person. It can also be to develop oneself if you have personal goals...”*

(Teacher 2 – ANU)

### **4.6.3 Anguilla**

#### **4.6.3.1 Major Theme: Continuous Training and Learning**

The findings showed that majority of the participants in Anguilla reported that purpose of CPD is associated with continuous learning and training. This narrative, while it may convey some resemblance in meaning to some of the themes from the other islands, it seemed to have a

specific meaning for the participants in Anguilla. However, it appeared that the concept of ‘continuous’ has a different emphasis for both Head Teacher and Official. On one hand, the Head Teacher refers to ‘continuous’ in terms of learning while the Official looks at ‘continuous’ in relation to training. A possible explanation for such meanings is that they both framed ‘continuous’ from the context in which they work and operate. The following excerpts confirmed the thinking of these participants.

*“Everything that is continuous should provide improvement in ‘learning’. You have a number of workshops and when teachers attend these...it helps them to continue their professional learning”.*

(Head Teacher, AXA)

*“Well the name suggests it. We expect teachers to be professional and therefore one way of assuring that we are giving them ‘continual training’ where they can develop professionally”.*

(Ministry, AXA)

#### **4.6.3.2      *Minor Theme: Sustaining High Standards of Teaching***

The minor theme, which emerged from the Anguillan context, was that CPD appeared to be the catalyst that sustains high standards. One participant strongly made reference to the point that any failure to ensure such standards will lead to ‘*mediocre performance*’. The implied assumption here is that in order for schools to maintain high quality of teaching and learning they must utilize CPD in a manner that will led to such outcomes. The responses below helped to echo the views described above.

*“It is to ensure that we have a high standard of learning within the system and not mediocre performance. We expect a lot from students so therefore we should expect the same from teachers. Of course you would want to know that teachers know what they are teaching and therefore you would need continuous professional development to enhance their previous knowledge”.*

(Teacher 4, AXA)

#### **4.6.3.3 Individual Theme: Personal Development**

The findings confirmed that one participant felt that there is a place for personal development in the process. For instance, the participant emphasized that CPD is not solely to gain knowledge but also to develop in all aspects of education including ‘personal development’. This indicates that this person view the personal growth of teachers as a vital part of the reason for carrying out CPD. The interviewee thought was captured below;

*“...To gain knowledge, to develop in all aspects of education along with personal development...”*

(Teacher 6, AXA)

**Table 8: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 1**

Countries	Thematic Categories	Participants				Overarching Themes
		Teachers	Heads	Officials	Predominant Themes	
Montserrat	<b>Major</b>	Influencing others to execute job better	Improving the workplace and promoting team work	Keeping practice relevant with latest innovations	Workplace/job improvement	<b>Improvement in organisational practices and personal development</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Extending and supplementing prior knowledge	Broaden horizon to learn more	Improving organization	Knowledge extension	
	<b>Individual</b>	Enhancing teachers' development and self-esteem	Improving self	Developing individual	Individual enhancement	
Antigua	<b>Major</b>	Continuous cycle of learning to keep teachers informed and abreast with new ideas to improve learning	Keeping abreast with new ideas and information	Collaborate and respond to the changing learning needs	Keeping abreast with new ideas/information	
	<b>Minor</b>	Improving classroom techniques and adapting to changes	Gaining knowledge to teach	Gaining additional skills	Gaining additional techniques/skills	
	<b>Individual</b>	Developing personal goals and qualifications	Personal development	Drives strategic planning	Personal development	
Anguilla	<b>Major</b>	Keeping abreast with new knowledge and technology	Continuous learning provide improvement in the organisation	Continual training	Continuous learning and training	
	<b>Minor</b>	Ensuring a high standard of teaching and learning	Increase knowledge and skills with the latest in technology	Improve the quality of teaching and learning	Sustaining high standards/quality of teaching learning	
	<b>Individual</b>	Personal development	Personal engagement with different educational strategies	Professional development	Personal and professional development	

## 4.7 Question 2: What do you feel are the common practices or features of CPD?

### 4.7.1 Montserrat

#### 4.7.1.1 *Major Theme: Lectures with repetitive content.*

The major theme which, stood out from the participants in Montserrat in relation to the question, is that repetitive content was presented in lecture style format. The participants reported that the most common features of CPD activities is that they are conducted where someone gives a lecture on the topic identified for training. A number of teachers pointed this out in their accounts below.

*“In my experience, it is irrelevant because some of the topics have been covered previously. Nothing new has been added which makes it repetitive”.*

(Teacher NT, MNI)

*“Well it’s more of a lecture style...we go there and knowledge is imparted on to us.*

(Head Teacher AS, MNI)

*“Basically you have lectures. There are different topics areas and persons would come in and like speak to a topic whether the topic is relevant to the participants or not ...So just persons coming in and speaking to a topic and when you finish you might have a discussion or questioning. ... but it’s more of a lecture base with question and answer.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

#### **4.7.1.2 Minor Theme: Lack of interest by teachers to attend training**

Drawing primarily on the information obtained from the case studies, the conclusion that emerged as a minor theme is that teachers frequently demonstrate a lack of interest in attending the training sessions. The ways in which they tell their stories in the scripts below supports this minor theme.

*“Those involved are not so interested in what is put forward because somehow they have that background knowledge so it does not make any sense being there.”*

(Teacher AN, MNI)

*“... some teachers would say point blank that what they are doing really do not add any value to them. More or less, what they are hearing is repetitive. Often it is something they have done before and there is not much scope for growth. However, I think there should be a divide because to be hearing the same thing repeatedly is not even a refresher. It is like a waste of time. You would go and sit but it is not of any benefit, like a wasted day for professional development. I heard a junior teacher said*

*this is a waste of my time. The person complained about listening to the same thing from one year to the next so you become tired of the activities.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

#### **4.7.1.3 Individual Theme: Rapid training prevent full implementation**

This individual theme is somewhat striking and deviates slightly from the other themes outlined above. The lone teacher in this case felt that the training sessions were too frequent and but more importantly, provided very little time to put the ideas they have learnt into practice. This seem to suggest that this teacher felt that there was more value in allowing the full cycle of implementing ideas in comparison to training sessions which occur too regularly. The quote below highlights the view of the interviewee;

*“...there is also a high turnover ratio. This year something is brought forward and you get trained in it and later something else is done to replace it. So you haven't really gotten the time to implement it fully before something else is being thrust at you. The trainings are too close for the life cycle of the process to play out.”*

(Teacher NT, MNI)

### **4.7.2 Antigua**

#### **4.7.2.1 Major Theme: Topic presented by an expert in a large group**

The interviewees from Antigua reported that the common feature of CPD is the simply where a topic is presented by an expert in a large group. The distinction here is that they seem to be more interested in emphasising that experts mainly carried out the presentations in large groups. Their views were expressed in the following accounts.

*“I find the sessions done by the ministry are done in big batches and too many persons at one time... I find that they tend to appear like conferences....”*

(Teacher 12, ANU)

*“Most times when I go to these sessions I notice that the ministry officials would get an expert in the topic and they have them come in and make a presentation on the topic and that’s basically...”*

(Teacher 7, ANU)

#### **4.7.2.2      *Minor Theme: Returning to classroom norms after the training***

As a minor theme, some participants felt that there was a tendency for teachers to return to their classroom and continue teaching the way they are accustomed to with perhaps low contemplation for the training received. This suggests that there might be some mitigating factors, which make teachers, appear unwilling to maximise the full use of the knowledge or skills acquired in CPD. The extracts below help to shed some light on their feelings.

*“For me and some others there is always a sense of excitement to learn something new. But what I find after that, persons go back to the norm. Yes there is sometimes this eagerness to get trained or update on information and everything but then if there is no motivation for them to continue improve or push within that school you find that we just go back to the normal ways...”*

(Teacher 3, ANU)

*“After teachers try out some of the new things that they learn for a short period they go back to their old ways of doing things. The other thing is that you find some of the teachers who really need the training do not readily accept and open themselves up to the sessions.”*

(Head Teacher, ANU)

### **4.7.2.3 Individual Theme: Sessions are not interactive**

This theme emerged from an individual report, which solely raises the issue of the lack of interactive sessions in CPD. This person places a lot of emphasis on the need for more teacher interaction in order for CPD to generate greater interest in learning the ideas that are presented in the sessions. The passion in the interviewee's voice was echoed in the following report.

*“A lot of talking – persons come and they tell you everything they want to see happen and they tell you what they want to see you implement but they are not doing anything to demonstrate how. I have been to a workshop that we have every year and the lady present the same thing all the time. You do see anything concrete as all they do is to present these grand ideas but they never blossom into anything. Even when they have something that you might be interested in like Special Needs there is no actual teacher interaction. If you are having professional development and you are telling me to do this, why not model what you are telling me? – make it interesting rather than just telling me as you would lose my attention.”*

(Teacher 2, ANU)

## **4.7.3 Anguilla**

### **4.7.3.1 Major Theme: Mainly workshops conducted by overseas trainers**

Most of the interviewees in Anguilla referred to CPD as predominantly workshop activities, which are conducted by overseas trainers. This suggests that CPD session in this context has a particular form with respect to how it is being structured as well as the type of personnel that is responsible for delivering the training. These transcripts provide support for the theme identified.

*“I mainly see workshops. You have new ideas coming in. You have people from Canada, USA and England and then we work and come back to school and implement.”*

(Teacher 6, AXA)

*“At the administrative level most of the times we are invited out to workshops... They bring in other professionals from overseas to do things in Maths and so on...”*

(Teacher 7, AXA)

*“...Sometimes they have workshops before the school begin so to get teachers ready and motivated for the school year. Normally a speaker would come from away. My first workshop they had a speaker from somewhere in the States...”*

(Teacher 8, AXA)

#### **4.7.3.3      *Minor Theme: Everyone goes to the same training***

The minor theme emerging from the Anguillan context showed that at least two interviewees were of the view that CPD is basically where all the teachers attend the same training. One teacher seems to think that having the teachers appearing at the same training together often prove counterproductive. In contrast, an Official indicated that the students’ performance in certain subjects frequently give rise to national training in the areas of concern. Their responses in the extracts below help to clarify their perspectives.

*“What I would like to see is in order to train me there has to be some sort of an assessment for my training needs. Everybody goes through the same training and I think that is not necessary. You must identify my training needs with assessment over time and then give me training in that area.”*

(Teacher 5, AXA)

*“...from my knowledge and experience with this department the focus for continuing professional development has been on the areas of Maths and Literacy. I think predominantly the focus was on these two areas... but by and large the focus was on those two areas because it is viewed that the performance in Maths is not very good... it is perceived that the teachers’ understanding of Maths is weak so those areas are*

*considered crucial so therefore most of our professional development are geared towards those two areas”.*

(Ministry Official, AXA)

#### **4.7.3.3 Individual Theme: Not interactive**

This singular outlook seems to focus on the collaborative aspect of CPD. The interviewee in this case points out that the training sessions are not sufficiently interactive. This suggest that while teachers are brought together for training the impact is somewhat lost since teachers spend less time interacting and engaging with each other. The thoughts of the interviewee are expressed below.

*“...what is most common is that most times they are not interactive. Like most times you sitting down hearing what is going on and maybe a few questions but most times teachers want to be involved especially to solve problems. Most of the information is just thrown at you and you have to take it apart.”*

(Teacher 7, AXA)

**Table 9: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 2**

Countries	Thematic Categories	Participants			Predominant Themes
		Teachers	Heads	Officials	
Montserrat	<b>Major</b>	Lectures with repetitive content	More lecture style	Focus mainly on Maths and Language	<b>Repetitive content delivered in lectures</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Rapid training sessions prevent full implementation cycle of ideas	Imparting knowledge		
	<b>Individual</b>	Lack of interest by teachers to attend training	Hearing the same thing over		
Antigua	<b>Major</b>	Topic presented by an expert in a large group	Sharing ideas and experiences	Not much use of research in developing teachers	<b>Lack of enthusiasm to sustain implementation of ideas</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Returning to classroom norms after the training	Often short term reactions to training received		
	<b>Individual</b>	Sessions are not interactive	Individual changes in a few teachers		
Anguilla	<b>Major</b>	Mainly workshops conducted by overseas trainers	Skilled teachers model lessons	Centralised training	<b>Non-interactive centralised training delivered by external personnel</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Everyone goes to the same training	Unwillingness to try out good practice		
	<b>Individual</b>	Not interactive	Communities of Practice		

There was no overarching theme that could be applied to all three islands as it seemed that there was a strong sense of dissatisfaction with CPD for a range of reasons. The narratives however, produced a predominant theme across the responses from the three different participants for each island as shown in Table (9).

## 4.8 Question 3: What do you view as the challenging factors of CPD?

### 4.8.1 Montserrat

#### 4.8.1.1 *Major Theme: Planning and resources.*

Most of the interviewees stated that the major challenges that are associated with CPD are hinged on planning and resources issues. They emphasised the inadequacies of the plans that are put in place as well as the unavailability of sufficient resources to support the actual training and the implementation of strategies. However, it appeared that term ‘resources’ were interpreted differently by different groups of participants. For example, a teacher viewed resources in terms of finance while commenting on the ineffectiveness of planning in the narrative below.

*“I think more or less finance could be an issue because even the ideas are brought to the forefront to engage in professional development and the finances or resources are not readily available that will pose a challenge. Also I see effective planning as one of the challenges. Sometimes you are notified about what you will be doing for continuing professional development at the last minute or just a day or two before...”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

On the other hand, the Ministry Official describes resources as a challenge in relation to persons with the knowledge to conduct CPD. This was clear in the following response.

*“...it is a small community so it is difficult at times to find persons with the requisite skills to share with teachers. And when you do find someone they are often busy at work and are reluctant to deal with anything in the evening. So resources within a small community are difficult to tackle and I know that there is online stuff that teachers can do. But then you do not want to leave it up to the teachers to go home and do this because often it does not happen. You want it to be done in a structured environment where they can be discussion and sharing.”*

(Ministry Official, MNI)

#### **4.8.1.2**      *Minor Theme: Teacher reluctance and motivation*

Some of the interviewees indicated that teacher reluctance and motivation pose a challenge for CPD. This suggests that there seems to be levels of unwillingness and lack of inspiration by some teachers to attend CPD sessions. A few respondents were quite open with their views.

*“Teachers having spent a whole day at work are reluctant to stay back in the afternoons to do CPD. So this makes it difficult to sell the needs for CPD... So getting teachers to stay back in the afternoons after work could be challenge. And you do not want to mandate it or use a “big-stick” to make it happen as you want teachers to buy into it.”*

(Ministry Official, MNI)

*“Punctuality...I find that teachers are not punctual...maybe they are not feeling motivated to get up. You also have the problem of active participation or being more open in their expression...they just come to the sessions and sit...they do not really have much to contribute.”*

(Head Teacher, MNI)

#### **4.8.1.3**      *Individual Theme: Rewarding teachers*

This individual theme was unique in that it came from the interviewee at the Ministry rather than perhaps from one of the teachers whom it may have a more direct impact on. The fact that the Official viewed the rewarding of teachers as a challenge for CPD suggests that the Ministry envisaged that there is perhaps a connection between providing some tangible incentives for teachers and their involvement in CPD. It was explicit from the comment made that it was felt that teachers should be compensated for their effort.

*“...but the other thing is credit. Teachers do not get credits for their learning and throughout the year. They come back with their degree and get paid for it but the on-*

*going training there is no remuneration, there is no credit for having done the work so that too represents a challenge...”*

(Ministry Official, MNI)

## **4.8.2 Antigua**

### **4.8.2.1 Major Theme: Inappropriate planning and lack of resources**

The interviewees stated that inappropriate planning and lack of resources appeared to be a main challenge for CPD. This might suggest that the participants perhaps view the linkages between planning and resources as an important feature in CPD. These reports help to understand the comments made with respect to this theme.

*“If we have things planned better we would accomplish more. Proper financing...Planning and financing are two key things for CPD so that everybody knows what is going to happen and when it is going to happen.”*

(Teacher 2, ANU)

*“...we need resources. Right now we don't have a projector so we lack resources. We sometimes improvise but it is not always the best thing.”*

(Teacher 4, ANU)

*“...implementation of the ideas suggested – we need to see those ideas used in the classroom and provide the recourses to support them.”*

(Teacher 6, ANU)

### **4.8.2.2 Minor Theme: Inappropriate training schedules**

A few respondents articulated that the training schedules for CPD are often inappropriate. Specific reference was made to the trainings being conducted either during school time or after teachers have completed a full working day. However, they seem to place more emphasis on

the problems caused when CPD they are away from their classrooms. According to them they feel that meaningful use of their instructional time is lost which has an impact on their classroom activities. The following reports illustrate the views of these participants.

*“Time constraint and scheduling... Sometimes when these things are scheduled it clashes with the things you as the classroom have planned for the term. So in the end you feel that you are going to be losing time with your children...”*

(Teacher 3, ANU)

*“...sometimes the times at which the sessions are held – most teachers prefer from 9am – 3pm as they are not willing to give up some of their vacation time or time after school. When it takes place during children’s contact time it causes a problem.”*

(Teacher 9, ANU)

#### **4.8.2.3 Individual Theme: Showing reluctant behaviours**

Reluctant behaviours in this context seem to refer to when teachers are unwilling to share ideas as well as not readily embracing change. The interviewee reported on the matter in the following way.

*“Some people are not willing to share. Some teachers have information and they hide it. The other thing is that you find some of the teachers who really need the training do not readily accept and open themselves up to the sessions. People stuck in their ways of doing things. For example, one person would say I have been doing this forever and it works so they are not open up to change.”*

(Teacher 13, ANU)

### 4.8.3 Anguilla

#### 4.8.3.1 *Major Theme: Scheduling of CPD*

Most of the interviewees spoke about the challenge linked with the scheduling CPD in terms of timing. A number of teachers expressed their concern about when CPD is timetabled especially if it takes place after school or during summer. The difficulty for them seems to rest on the fact that it cuts into their family time. One person supported this view in the following way.

*“...it also has to do with the timing of CPD. After school it is more difficult for teachers because we have families...”*

(Teacher 4, AXA)

Another interviewee described timing in relation to the period or stage at which CPD is done. The concern expressed in their reporting is that certain types of CPD need to be conducted at the point where it would have maximum effect.

*“Our training is usually done during summer. I also have a concern with our induction because the new teachers are inducted while they are already in the practice and that needs to be corrected as I think they should be inducted before. But when it comes on to training timing is a big issue.”*

(Teacher 5, AXA)

#### 4.8.3.2 *Minor Theme: Lack of Resources*

With respect to the lack of resources a few interviewees referenced it indifferent ways. One teacher described resources in relation to the problems encountered in using technology to enhance teaching. In this instance, lack of resources was seen more in terms of not having

access to the medium that would add meaning to delivering the lesson. The teacher highlighted both the challenge and importance of technology as a resource by saying:

*“The challenging part is technology. Everyone telling you about technology at the workshops but when you come back to the school you can’t move on with what you learn at the workshop. ...the programmes usually depend on the internet... If there is something you want to do in your classroom you will have problem with the internet because we have no access. This too discourages a lot of the teachers. Teachers are willing to try things but the resources are a problem.”*

(Teacher 7, AXA)

In contrast, two other interviewees linked resources with money. However, quite interestingly their views seem to complement each other. On one hand, a Ministry Official acknowledged that the tough economic situation reduces the availability of financial resources. Consequently, this state of affairs seems to cause teachers to buy materials out of their personal funds. Their voices supported each other in the following ways.

*“One, I would say financial resources to a large extent especially given the tough economic times most countries are going through now...”*

(Ministry Official, AXA)

*“If you do not have the resources we sometimes have to go in our pockets to buy resources to use...”*

(Teacher 6, AXA)

#### **4.8.3.3 Individual Theme: Low levels of interaction**

The findings revealed that one teacher raised the issue of the perceived low levels of interaction in CPD especially those that are organised at the school level. The notion of low levels of interaction here looks as if it is referring to when teachers are unprepared or disinclined to participate in discussions during CPD. According to the interviewee a possible reason for teachers to be disinclined is partly due when teachers have interpersonal problems. The interviewee outlined this perspective in the following manner.

*“...when you give teachers materials to read before a session some read and some don't...so you do not get the lively discussion that should take place. The challenging thing for me is when you have teachers from other groups or schools who are very passive. They are not interactive. Sometimes if a teacher is not getting along with another teacher he/she does not want participate or give feedback in the sessions.”*

(Teacher 3, AXA)

**Table 10: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 3**

Countries	Thematic Categories	Participants				Overarching Themes
		Teachers	Heads	Officials	Predominant Themes	
Montserrat	<b>Major</b>	Ineffective planning and availability of resources	High levels of inactive participation	Organising the resources and structuring the environment to conduct CPD	<b>Planning and resources</b>	<b>Strategic planning and teacher motivation</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Not enough interaction between colleagues in large group settings	Teachers not motivated	Reluctance by teachers to stay back after school for CPD	<b>Teacher reluctance and motivation</b>	
	<b>Individual</b>	Little follow-up to see the impact of CPD	Punctuality of teachers	Teachers do not get credit or remuneration for their involvement	<b>Rewarding teachers</b>	
Antigua	<b>Major</b>	Planning and allocating resources to support training obtained	Some teachers are not motivated	Lack of proper strategic planning	<b>Inappropriate planning and resources</b>	
	<b>Minor</b>	Scheduling of CPD after school and loss of students' contact time	Training often not geared towards the needs of teachers	Not addressing core problems	<b>Inappropriate training schedules</b>	
	<b>Individual</b>	Some teachers not readily embracing change	Unwillingness by some teachers to share ideas	Resources	<b>Reluctant behaviours</b>	
Anguilla	<b>Major</b>	Timing is a big issue	Focusing on quantity and not quality	Teachers attitude towards CPD	<b>Scheduling</b>	
	<b>Minor</b>	A lot of problems concerning resources	Low teacher motivation	Lack of financial resources	<b>Resources</b>	
	<b>Individual</b>	Not interactive	Unwillingness to prepare and participate in discussions	Not getting values for money after training	<b>Low levels of interaction</b>	

In summary, the data in Table (10) shows that the participants raised a number of challenges faced in CPD. Problems such as lack of planning, unavailability of resources, teacher interest, inappropriate scheduling, reluctant behaviours, weak interaction and no incentives for teachers were all stated as some of the core challenges of CPD. What was apparent however, is that some of these issues overlapped across the three islands hence, confirming that they are clearly common issues that schools encountered in CPD. Despite the differences, it seems that these

challenges mainly address matters that pertained to planning and teacher motivation. Therefore, these two themes can reasonably represent the challenges of CPD as reported by the participants.

## **4.9 Question 4: What you regard as the enabling factors of CPD?**

### **4.9.1 Montserrat**

#### **4.9.1.1 Major Theme: Teachers' voice in selection of areas for training**

On the question of the enabling factors to make CPD more meaningful some interviewees reiterated the point that there must be allowances for teachers to have a voice in the selection of the areas for training. This suggests that as it currently stand teachers perhaps have very little input with the decisions taken on identifying their training needs in CPD. Some of these views were voiced in the following ways.

*“When you get support from staff ...it will be more successful especially if you hear the views and opinions of those who are going to be involved.*

(Teacher AN, MNI)

*“... As I always say even as it relates to the policies everything starts at the school so let the teachers have a say in the choice of topics for the training.”*

(Teacher NT, MNI)

#### **4.9.1.2 Minor Theme: More cohesiveness and teacher involvement**

Accordingly, more cohesion was viewed as one of the enabling features of CPD. However, it was more described in terms of teacher involvement. Here it seems to mean pulling together the skills of local teachers to conduct CPD so as to have the effect of other teachers gravitating

towards their own. This assumes that there will be a greater acceptance or appreciation of CPD if there is more interconnectedness among teachers regarding the purpose and expectations of the training sessions. The excerpts below provide evidence to substantiate the theme above.

*“We need to have more cohesiveness in that we need more teacher involvement. I think if teachers have a say in what these development sessions are about they will be more readily accept these sessions. I also think at the ministry level they should use more locals ...every time they having a session they want to bring in international people ...try to harness your locals to do the same job because sometimes the teachers would gravitate towards they own.”*

(Head Teacher, MNI)

*“...Helping the individuals to get a clear understanding or purpose as to why they are going to do a certain course and the expectations after.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

#### **4.9.1.3 Individual Theme: Receptive venues for training**

One nuanced findings is the viewpoint of an interviewee regarding the place where CPD are held. The individual pointed out that CPD is often hosted in the school settings and teachers need a break away from such environment so that they can it can change to the atmosphere in which operate. The interviewee offered some specific details as to how and why the training sessions should occur in venues that have the type of atmosphere which could make teachers feel more comfortable and interested in the training. Support for this idea was enunciated in the following way.

*“When you doing continuing professional development activities you would want that the ambience of venue is such that you are relaxed so that you can be receptive. Most of the time, it takes place in schools. Now this is the same school in which you work day*

*in day out. You want a change in venue because the whole environment can make a difference to how you function. Depending on the topic for training I think you can have them outside the normal setting because teachers will feel good sometimes if they are in a nice air-conditioned room or away from the school because you have many things to distract you like the phone or parents. So the environment is important.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

## **4.9.2 Antigua**

### **4.9.2.1 Major Theme: Establishing links between staff needs and CPD**

Most of the interviewees in Antigua spoke at length about the urgent need to establish an active communication chain which can create the balance between identifying the staff needs at the schools and the planning of CPD. Communication chain here seems to refer to structured conversations about potential training needs between staff and Heads in schools in the first instance, and then relaying this information to the Ministry. Teachers explained their views about this theme in the reports below.

*“Better communication between administration and the staff. Again going back to something I said earlier about knowing the needs of your staff so that you are better able to channel the training into the area that they need it most. I think if you know the needs of your staff you are better able to motivate and encourage them to be involved in these CPD’s.”*

(Teacher 3, ANU)

*“For professional development to be more successful I think they need to consult with the teachers – see what it is they need in the school or what is the main or common problem they have in the schools – To me, you need to look at what the teachers need most. I think that they do not consult much – they just come in with what they think is needed but it is not perhaps the best way...”*

(Teacher 12, ANU)

#### **4.9.2.2      *Minor Theme: Dedicated teachers who are more open to change***

A few teachers commented on the issue that some teachers are not dedicated to teaching and therefore they are often unwilling to embrace change. Dedication from their accounts seems to mean when teachers are more inclined to take new ideas and trying them out in their classrooms. A Head Teacher suggested that the use of preliminary sessions to help teachers understand the purpose of CPD can perhaps change the attitude of some teachers. Their viewpoints are summarised in the transcripts below.

*“More dedicated teachers who are open to taking new ways of making things better by trying out things. Sharing and collaborating will make it work better.*

(Teacher 13, ANU)

*“Having introductory sessions on what CPD is all about will perhaps change the mindset of some teachers and make them more willing to accept the need for these sessions.”*

(Head Teacher, ANU)

#### **4.9.2.3      *Individual Theme: Utilizing research work in CPD***

This individual theme focused on the utilization of research work in CPD. It is interesting therefore to see that someone has suggested the use of research work but from a more localised context. The fact that the interviewee emphasised the need to use more research data from the region is suggesting that there should be a stronger link between empirical data and the way in which it is integrated in CPD. This theme was supported by the following comment.

*“...very little of research especially when it comes to developing teachers as action researchers... Well I am happy that you are doing this research in the Caribbean because there is not a lot of research especially in the small islands. I hope that the findings of your research is shared with the ministry so that they would realise that CPD should be meaningful and intentional.*

(Teacher 2, ANU)

### **4.9.3 Anguilla**

#### **4.9.3.1 Major Theme: Use surveys to conduct assessment about CPD**

A number of respondents said that they feel that is necessary to collect information about CPD. However, one particular interviewee was more explicit in terms of the way in which the idea was used. Reference was made to the use of questionnaires to collect information from both teachers and students. The teacher argued the point in the comment below.

*“In order for CPD to happen you must carry out some sort of an assessment. That’s how I see it. A questionnaire or survey and not just look at questions from the teachers but you look at students’ track records for a whole class or particular group of students that need to be addressed. From that assessment you pick out the areas and move on and get feedback into it. In order for CPD to happen there should be form of assessment.”*

(Teacher 7, AXA)

#### **4.9.3.2 Minor Theme: Foster motivation**

The issue of motivation surfaced as an enabling factor. Nurturing teacher motivation appears to be one of the ways in which you can engaged teachers more in CPD. One Head Teacher describes fostering motivation as the support given combined with consistent dialogue between

schools. Another teacher saw it as the effort to create an awareness that would allow teachers to buy into the process especially at the beginning stages.

*“Lots of support ...so the motivation should come from the support where you have persons in place who can say yes we can do that and have the constant communication between schools. You can have the grade levels teachers meeting regularly to share and discuss ideas rather than competing against each other. We have a principal group and we have our own professional development sessions that we do every two weeks ...so it is best to work in unity than in competitions.”*

(Head Teacher, AXA)

*“I think first you need to inform teachers of what it is and the importance of it. I do not think we create a buy-in at the beginning... I think once teachers understand the importance of it they will be more willing to buy-in the process.”*

(Teacher 3, AXA)

#### 4.9.3.3 Individual Theme: Continuous review of curriculum

This individual theme looks at curriculum review as a way of improving CPD. The interviewee explained how this was done by making reference to a practical situation which took. However, the important point to note here is that the interviewee is possibly suggesting that the curriculum and CPD should be connected where the former informs the latter.

*“...using our education plan and curriculum... Just recently we started the child centred programme so that require a lot of training for teachers to be more knowledgeable in that area. We also had sessions with the education development plan where we had consultation with the ministry officials about assessment and right now we are concentrating on Mathematics.*

(Teacher 5, AXA)

**Table 11: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 4**

Countries	Thematic Categories	Participants		Predominant Themes	Overarching Theme
		Teachers	Heads		
Montserrat	<b>Major</b>	Establish a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of CPD	Allow teachers to have a voice in the selection of areas for training	<b>Teachers' voice and involvement</b>	<b>Structured dialogue</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Solicit teachers input and interest	More cohesiveness and teacher involvement		
	<b>Individual</b>	Selecting venues that are more receptive for sessions	Use of more local facilitators		
Antigua	<b>Major</b>	Communication chains to establish links between staff needs and training activities	Introductory sessions on the importance of CPD	<b>Developing teacher awareness</b>	
	<b>Minor</b>	Dedicated teachers who are more open to change	Changing the mind-set of teachers		
	<b>Individual</b>	Reduce lectures with videos of tested research work	Building teams and interpersonal relationships		
Anguilla	<b>Major</b>	Use surveys to collect pre and post data about CPD	Constant dialogue among schools	<b>Consultation and collaboration</b>	
	<b>Minor</b>	Teachers' attitude and willingness to participate	Foster motivation		
	<b>Individual</b>	Continuous review of curriculum	Share/discuss ideas and reduce competition		

The thematic categories from the findings summarised in Table (11) highlighted the ideas that the interviewees felt were imperative to enable CPD. In each island there seems to be some distinctiveness between the relationship of the thematic categories and the wide-ranging ideas that were recounted by the participants. The interviewees were basically saying that the best way to improve CPD in their context is by ensuring that their voices are heard and that they have greater input particularly in the planning stages. Throughout the responses given by the participants action words such as discuss, make aware, voice, solicit, communicate and share were quite common to the narratives across the three islands. As a result, it seems that the all-encompassing theme to the question of enabling factors of CPD is ‘*structured dialogue*’.

## **4.10 Question 5: How do you perceive leadership?**

### **4.10.1 Montserrat**

#### ***4.10.1.1 Major Theme: Building consensus to accomplish desired goals***

The question of leadership seemed to have sparked the liveliest discussions in the interview process. Building consensus to accomplish the desired goals emerged as the major theme in the Montserrat context. Expressive actions such as guiding, harnessing and articulating were used to give some insight as to what they feel leadership is all about. This suggests that leadership is therefore perceived as plural and as such, it is unlikely that school leaders will be able to accomplish much on their own without the input of teachers. The accounts below support this major theme.

*“...the leader has to have those qualities whereby he or she can get a group of persons working together. Leadership is important and it has to be guided and people have to act according to the standards laid out for them in their role...”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

*“When you are a leader you have to be there as a guide and you must have that sort of mentality that it is not “you” but “we” and a team approach where you have everybody on board...and by having the cohesive support the whole setting would be much better.”*

(Head Teacher, MNI)

*“School leadership is about setting the school on an upward or improving track. The leader of that organisation has a key role in meeting their objectives. It involves articulating clearly what the strategies are, what the vision is, what is it the school is trying to achieve.”*

(Ministry Official, MNI)

#### **4.10.1.2      *Minor Theme: Delegating and supporting***

The minor theme which emerged from the responses is about delegating and supporting. It is clear from these descriptions that these interviewees believe that leadership by its very nature has both shared and supportive characteristics. The following quotations provide confirmation in supporting the minor theme.

*“...leadership role entails also delegating responsibilities because one person cannot do everything. And if all hands are on deck you will find that persons will be more receptive or responsive because they will claim things. You will find that they put themselves out more and it is important for the effective running of the school. Delegation is very, very important because if one does not know how to delegate and if he or she feels indispensable and have to do everything they will get burnt out easily. And at the end of the day you still accomplish nothing.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

*“...as a leader you there also to assist and impart knowledge to your teachers because there are teachers that you will need to help to make become better in their practice...you seek avenues to provide training opportunities for them...the thing with leadership you have to be an advocate...”*

(Head Teacher, MNI)

#### **4.10.1.3 Individual Theme: Interpersonal relations**

At the individual level one interviewee spoke about the interpersonal relations that are attached to leadership. Particular reference was made to the leader possessing different personality traits in order to deal with the diverse social behaviours that exist among a staff. The individual spoke about this theme by outlining a scenario.

*“...Leaders should also be able to distinguish between home and school. ... Because you are dealing with different personalities, persons with different character traits so you have to be mindful that there are things that people would take differently. So when you go to address certain situation especially those that you do not have to address generally. Like if you have a problem with me or if I have done something wrong and you need to speak to me you do not come to a general meeting and say teachers doing that or doing this. I think the onus is on the leader to pull me aside because the problem and the issue is with me and not with someone else. So as a result pull me aside and speak to me rather than coming into a meeting to make everybody feel guilty and raising eyebrows about the situation.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

## 4.10.2 Antigua

### 4.10.2.1 *Major Theme: Professional knowledge and behaviour*

Leadership here is closely linked to the possession of professional knowledge and behaviour. There seems to be an assumption here that school leaders should be knowledgeable and resourceful while at the same time modelling certain professional actions. On the other hand, professional behaviour was described as the expected ways in which leaders direct their actions. These ideas were found in the reports below.

*“...the persons in leadership positions should know how to take charge in leading a school and staff. They should have an idea of what is going on and how to deal with issues as they arrive...”*

(Teacher 8, ANU)

*“...they must be organised and prepared about how they are going to execute their job and be persons who are knowledgeable and resourceful about expressing ideas and getting around certain things.”*

(Teacher 2, ANU)

*“The leader has to be professional and that is what you pass on to your staff. My idea of professionalism in terms of being a leader is that I have to conduct myself in certain ways so my staff can catch on. For example, I need to arrive on time...I need to manage my time...they can come to me with a problem...they need to see me keeping my word and taking my job seriously as a leader.”*

(Head Teacher, ANU)

#### **4.10.2.2**      *Minor Theme: Distributed leadership*

A number of interviewees emphasize the importance of school leaders delegating responsibilities to other teachers. However, it seems that their view of distributed leadership is much more than the action of the leader dispersing tasks. For example, an Official describes the concept in terms building and inspiring teachers so that they become fully in charge of their work. Another account looks at distributed leadership as a way of balancing the work of the teachers and students without necessarily micromanaging the range of skills and talents that are available. These transcripts help to illustrate the theme in question.

*“...you should be able to inspire others as well and to be able to delegate responsibilities so that you build the persons who are within your care because well you should be developing persons to take charge of whatever areas they are responsible for.”*

(Ministry Official, ANU)

*“...they should know how to delegate as well rather than taking on all the pressures so that they can balance the work of the teachers and students and be also diplomatic.”*

(Teacher 8, ANU)

*“...someone who know how to keep things flowing and delegate properly but not micromanage too much and knowing the skills and talents of the staff and use them wisely. You have to know how to distribute your human resources.”*

(Teacher 12, ANU)

#### **4.10.2.3**      *Individual Theme: Moral values*

The issue of moral values and social attitudes were articulated by one interviewee. The teacher stressed the need for school leaders to display good ethical standards and positive behaviours

as they carry out their key functions. These standards or behaviours include virtues such as honesty, trustworthiness, integrity, caring and fair-mindedness.

*“A leader should be honest, have integrity, and can forge good relationship with others... As leaders you need to be role models, being able to relate well with staff and students in a respectable way and not because you are in authority that you should act pompously, you should be able to listen and accept advice since that you cannot know everything, and dress appropriately because others are looking up at you... a person who is trustworthy – a person who is caring and willing to ensure that every child matters – a person who is fair-minded – a person who is charismatic.*

(Teacher 4, ANU)

### **4.10.3 Anguilla**

#### **4.10.3.1 Major Theme: Influencing and motivating the team**

Most of the interviewees from Anguilla seemed to perceive leadership as a mechanism for influencing and motivating the team to achieve the goals of the school. Some the central meanings that were attributed to this conception of leadership included offering guidance to support teachers and students in solving problems, communicating and leading by example, and determined and passionate to maximize potentials. The following quotes illustrated how the interviewees perceive leadership.

*“For me as a leader the main thing that should come out is influencing the team and motivating them to accomplish the goal that is set up for the school. That person should be determined and have that passion and drive and recognise their potential and skills and build them up in that area. Exploring and supporting your staff and creating a partnership with students, parents and the community. When I see leadership that is what I think about. You have to be diverse in all areas.”*

(Teacher 5, AXA)

*“When I think of school leadership I think of one who guides the school but also solve things. It is not because you are the Head you can do everything but you look for and give suggestions. But you also present what you are doing as a leader – this is how we are progressing, give feedback to those who needs assistance. Not just abuse your powers but use it in a way to solve problems. That’s how I see a leader.”*

(Teacher 8, AXA)

*“Leading by example...I firmly believe in leading by example and a simple thing like coming to school on time...if the leader comes to school when he/she feels like then you are sending the same message to your staff... Communication is a very important aspect and it much reach right down to the parents where teachers are willing to share information with parents inside and outside school time.”*

(Head Teacher, AXA)

#### **4.10.3.2      *Minor Theme: Accountability***

A small number of the respondents looked at leadership through the lenses of accountability. They seem to feel that schools leadership is all about the responsibilities that everyone in the school community has to take with respect to what they are expected to do and how they should behave in ensuring that such expectations are reached. Accountability in this context seems to mean when the principal, staff, students and the wider community working together in order to make the school run smoothly. Particular reference was made in light of the view that while leaders are in charge and they must check up on teachers to ensure they do the correct things, it is still important to have the whole body running the school. The reports below highlight this theme.

*“The first thing that comes to my mind is starting with the principal and the teachers coming together as a community and working together as a team in order to make the school runs smoothly. The school leader should now give a lot of support, make sure that teachers understand what they are doing, make sure they check up on them. When it comes to leadership you have someone in charge but you have the school running by a whole body; you have the principal, your teachers and then students – a whole trickle-down effect. You also need to get the outside community involved because you can have leaders outside who can help assessing students.”*

(Teacher 7, AXA)

*“Leadership of course has to do a lot with planning, curriculum development, pushing the curriculum, supporting teachers, and ensuring that teachers have the skills and resources available to make teaching worthwhile for the children. Ensuring that children are in a place where they can learn from the teachers. You have strategies to curb behaviours so that you do not have disruption in learning so that you have a flow. You have to find strategies to get parents involved in children’s learning.”*

(Teacher 5, AXA)

#### **4.10.3.3 Individual Theme: Teachers as leaders**

One respondent looks at leadership in two folds. On one hand, reference was made to teachers as leaders in their classroom and on the other hand, principal as leaders in terms of the senior management position and direct responsibilities. The individual stated that a school leader generally plans, implements, motivates, delegates, and evaluates different aspects of the school functions. Similarly, the same thing is done by the teachers in the classroom. The interviewee elaborated on this idea in the response below.

*“All the teachers are leaders in their classroom and then you have the senior management team which have their responsibilities and the principal is there in charge.”*

*But I feel that I am a leader inside my classroom and I have to lead my students as I delegate to them. You then have other leaders in the departments to whom you have to respond to as well. A leader should be responsible, you plan, you motivate, you control and you implement. So in terms of school and the classroom it is the same thing you are doing. You cannot teach without a proper plan. You have to control behaviour, how you do what you do, evaluate and do all those things. Those are the roles as a leader and it is the same thing you are doing as a teacher in the classroom.”*

(Teacher 6, AXA)

**Table 12: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 5**

Countries	Thematic Categories	Teachers	Heads	Officials	Predominant Theme
Montserrat	<b>Major</b>	Guiding people to act and work together according to the expected standards	Harnessing the cohesive support of everyone including parents and the wider community	Articulating the vision and implement the strategies required to achieve it	<b>Building consensus to accomplish desired goals</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Delegating responsibilities to build team work	Always seeking avenues to provide training opportunities for teachers	Using data to focus on what needs to be done and how it should be done	<b>Delegating and supporting</b>
	<b>Individual</b>	Possessing different personality traits to address diverse social behaviours	Leading by example for others to follow	Core element for school to function	<b>Interpersonal relations</b>
Antigua	<b>Major</b>	Someone who is quite knowledgeable and resourceful in executing their job	Being proactive in leading change by knowing by identifying and addressing issues	Understanding the dynamics of leadership skills to maximise the talents of teachers	<b>Professional knowledge and skills</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Being a diplomat and democratic person	Delegating properly and avoid micromanaging	Inspiring others and delegating responsibilities	<b>Distributed leadership</b>
	<b>Individual</b>	Capable of forging good social relationships by being fair-minded	Appreciating people as individuals instead of just simply for the task they perform	Reach out and promote honest and trustworthy relationships.	<b>Moral values and social attitudes</b>
Anguilla	<b>Major</b>	Offering guidance to support teachers and students in solving problems	Communicating and leading by example	Shared planning and timely feedback	<b>Influencing and motivating the team</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Designate roles to other teachers	Balancing power dimensions to allow school run by the whole body	Being accountable of what is happening	<b>Accountability</b>
	<b>Individual</b>	Determined and passionate to maximize potentials	Coming together as a team	Creating partnerships with students, parents and community	<b>Sustaining school partnerships</b>

Broadly speaking, the summary in Table (12) shows that there are significant differences in the perceived meanings associated with how the interviewees thought about leadership. Several themes were developed from the narratives provided by the participants across the three islands which indicated that leadership has multiple meanings. While a few of the themes were similar to some extent, most of them were distinct thus, making it difficult for them to overlap and by extension producing an overarching theme.

## **4.11 Question 6: What do you think is the role of the Ministry in CPD?**

### **4.11.1 Montserrat**

#### **4.11.1.1 Major Theme: Enhance learning through training**

When asked about the role of the Ministry in CPD most of the interviewees in Montserrat stated that it is to enhance the learning of teachers through facilitating the training needs suggested by teachers. However, it was also clear that the teachers felt that they should suggest the training needs. Here is how a few interviewees described the Ministry's role in CPD.

*“Support and facilitation...Support in that they should be able to enhance the learning of the teachers by facilitating their needs. So if the Ministry takes what the teachers give them as areas that they are interested in and facilitate training in those areas I think it will work better than the Ministry just coming up with a topic and say this term this what you are going to do.”*

(Teacher NT, MNI)

#### **4.11.1.2 Minor Theme: Support with finance and other resources**

A few respondents reported that the Ministry has a lead role as it relates to the provision of all necessary resources are available to support CPD activities. Resources in this situation seem to mean both monetary and physical. The extract below makes reference to this theme.

*“I think they are there to act as a guide. They are the policy-makers and they should be familiar with the needs of the teachers. They need to seek to find out what is required and have proper things in place for teachers to grow professionally. But I think they play a vital role in supporting these programmes but they must be aware of the needs of the teachers and supporting those needs.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

#### **4.11.1.3**      *Individual Theme: Comfortable working environment*

One teacher suggested that the place where CPD are held ought to be comfortable so that it can mentally prepare teachers to be receptive. This respondent seems to be making a link between the mental processes and the physical space.

*“...Another role is to endure that their workers are mentally stable in that where ever they are they are comfortable. If your mind is not stable then you will not want to develop yourself educationally”.*

(Teacher AN, MNI)

#### **4.11.2**      **Antigua**

##### **4.11.2.1**      *Major Theme: Continuous dialogue to identify needs*

Majority of the respondents said that the Ministry’s role in CPD should be focused on constant communication or dialogue with school leaders and teachers and ascertain the type of skills that need to be developed through the use of formal methods.

*“If there is continuous communication based on end of term appraisals they should be able to know from the school leaders what the weaknesses are and then divert the skills of the teachers to deal with the weakness. The Ministry should know what the needs are before they do any training.”*

(Teacher 3, ANU)

*“However, we have to consult with the people on the ground to determine what their needs are because sometimes we at the higher level of the scale may not know what the real needs are out in the schools. So we need to work collaboratively with schools whether it is the Ministry of Education technical officers and also build that sort of synergy between ourselves, the schools and teachers to get ideas as to exactly what the needs are so that we can appropriately respond.”*

(Ministry Official, ANU)

#### **4.11.2.2** *Minor Theme: Organise resources and personnel to deliver CPD*

This theme focused on the Ministry's responsibilities as they relate to ensuring that the necessary resources and in particular the personnel are in place for CPD activities. Some comments even looked at the source of the training needs as part of the process.

*"The ministry should ensure that all teachers get an opportunity in CPD activities. Using the national results they can see which areas need addressing and find the resources and personnel to conduct the training"*.

(Teacher 4, ANU)

*"Currently the role that I see them playing is mandating when we are going to have CPD and I believe they can go deeper than that and organise for a set of professionals to go to different schools to deliver the presentations for CPD. For example, you had a researcher who went into one school and found that on the National Test in Mathematics the children were performing poorly. They worked on that area and now the school is performing above the National average"*.

(Teacher 8, ANU)

#### **4.11.2.3** *Individual Theme: Sensitising parents about CPD*

This individual theme appears very interesting since it exclusively brought the parents into the process. It might suggest that the participants felt that parental involvement should take into account an understanding of the purpose of continuing professional development.

*"...But maybe they should work together and get the teachers as well as sensitising the parents too"*.

(Teacher 10, ANU)

### **4.11.3 Anguilla**

#### **4.11.3.1 Major Theme: Informed planning**

Most of the interviewees in Anguilla suggested that the key role of the Ministry is to collect data from the schools which would inform the planning of CPD. However, they did not clarify what form the data collection process should take in assessing the training needs.

*“... They should ensure that teachers are engage in these training. They need to be more actively involved and come out and see what is happening in the schools. So that when you select the training it is actually what needs to be done. They need to be proactive in this regard.”*

(Teacher 6, AXA)

*“... I think sometimes they could find out from teachers what course they would like to have training in rather than giving us something which we may find unnecessary at times.”*

(Teacher 4, AXA)

#### **4.11.3.2 Minor Theme: Allocating resources**

The allocation of resources was seen as an important role for the Ministry in conducting CPD. One participant made mention of having staff to train teachers. No specific references were made regarding the details on the nature or type of the recourses referred to by the participants.

*“Their role is to allocate resources. .... their role is to allocate all the resources that will make all of these things possible ...”*

(Teacher 5, AXA)

*“They should make sure that they have the best quality stuff to train teachers. Teachers should also teach to with the best quality things so that their methods are up to date.”*

(Teacher 8, AXA)

#### 4.11.3.3 Individual Theme: Utilising local talent

A different viewpoint came from this interviewee concerning the issue of using persons locally to train teachers. There is an underlying assumption that talent from the island is underutilised which is also supported by previous comments on the prevalence of experts from overseas.

*“I think they could identify persons on the island who can assist teachers”.*

(Teacher 3, AXA)

**Table 13: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 6**

Countries	Thematic Categories	Participants			Overarching Theme
		Teachers	Heads	Officials	
Montserrat	Major	Enhance the learning of teachers through facilitating the training needs suggested by teachers	Having a lead role in collaborating with school heads in planning and organising CPD	Lobby with Central Government for additional resources to support CPD	<b>Accessibility</b>  <b>Gathering data to inform planning of CPD and allotting human/financial resources to address the identified needs</b>
	Minor	Provide the finance and other resources to support CPD activities			
	Individual	Ensure that working conditions are comfortable for teachers			
Antigua	Major	Continuous communication or dialogue with school leaders and teachers to ascertain the type of skills that need to be developed	Ensuring that CPD is available and accessible to all teachers	Lead out in offering CPD which responds appropriately to the needs identified in schools	
	Minor	Organise resources and professionals to deliver CPD			
	Individual	Sensitizing parents about CPD			
Anguilla	Major	Collecting school data to inform the planning of CPD	Provide all the necessary support for CPD opportunities	Overall responsibility for identifying and facilitating areas that need improvement	
	Minor	Allocate resources to support CPD			
	Individual	Identify persons locally who can assist with CPD			

As shown in Table (13), the participants emphasized that the main responsibilities of the Ministry is to provide both the financial and human resources that is necessary to facilitate CPD. Being able to lead out in offering CPD by gathering data to inform the planning and allocating human and financial resources to address the identified needs is considered as a

crucial step in the process. Tracing the narratives across the three islands it seems that the overarching theme is about *accessibility*, that is, the Ministry should ensure that CPD and the essential elements are available to all teachers.

## **4.12 Question 7: Who do you think should lead CPD?**

### **4.12.1 Montserrat**

#### **4.12.1.1 Major Theme: A knowledgeable person**

The question regarding who should lead CPD generated much lively discussions from the interviewees. The account below fully captured the point that majority of them made about who should take the lead on CPD.

*“The most knowledgeable person on the topic and that could be anyone. I do not think we have to stand on the premise that you have to hold a particular office or a number of degrees in order to be able to speak on a topic. It may turn out that a person in the classroom may know more about a topic than a person with a Doctorate because I know the in’s and out’s because you study it in a classroom but I interact with it on a daily basis. I have found sometimes that persons come to do development training and they spend more time trying to figure out what they want to say in addition to straying away from the topic. Use the persons who absolutely know their topic and can deliver it.”*

(Teacher NT, MNI)

#### **4.12.1.2 Minor Theme: Education Officer, Primary**

A few respondents stated that the Officer responsible for primary schools is perhaps the best person to conduct CPD with the assumption that they are qualified to do the training.

*“Anybody qualified but not just the qualifications as experience too is important. It is import to get someone who can deliver the training. Well it could involve in my case Education the Officer for Primary”.*

(Teacher AN, MNI)

#### **4.12.1.3 Individual Theme: The Ministry**

The Ministry was identified as taking the lead in conducting CPD. Ministry here might be referring to any officials who work within the department.

*“Well, as I said before CPD should be led at the Ministry end. If it is at the Ministry it depends on who is at the Ministry because the Director, the PS or even the Minister can come in and do a presentation”.*

(Ministry Official, MNI)

#### **4.12.2 Antigua**

##### **4.12.2.1 Major Theme: Resourceful teachers or principals**

The interviewees in Antigua indicated that teachers and principals are capable of leading CPD activities once they have the skills to carry out such role. One particular interviewee commented about teachers are not sufficiently used as well as the potential benefits of using teachers.

*“School administrators should more or less lead – well planning for it and not necessarily leading it. They should be able to use the strengths of the teachers. If you use your own colleagues because you know that you are on the same level the teachers respond better. I find they are not using teachers enough. There are a lot of teachers who have skills and are trained in certain areas but they are not utilized. It is always somebody coming in. Even if means taking a teacher from one school to another”.*

(Teacher 3, ANU)

*“It can be a teacher because we have teachers who have their degrees and they are capable of hosting these sessions. The principal and head of department also can lead. As long as you have the qualifications I think you can cope”.*

(Teacher 11, ANU)

*“I believe it varies. The principal can and it depends on the topic. You can also use a resource person for example, in science and technology. If we have a topic in Language and we have a teacher who is good at it then we can use that person”.*

(Teacher 4, ANU)

#### **4.12.2.2      *Minor Theme: Education Officers***

This theme is quite similar to the minor theme for the respondents in Montserrat. In both cases the participants seem to feel that the Education Officers in particular should take on this role. The assumption is that when the Education Officer works closely with the school it is more profitable for teachers.

*“Education officers from the ministry because they know their plan or path – they should now sit with the principals where there is a wholesale discussion about what to do. When the ministry officials sit down with the principals then the information get trickled down to the teachers. The education officers, the principals and the teachers all have a responsibility for CPD”.*

(Teacher 2, ANU)

*“I think they should have a team on both ends working together- maybe the ministry has a team and someone from represent the school on that team. So the education officer as the person in charge at the ministry should be working with the schools”.*

(Teacher 10, ANU)

#### **4.12.2.3 Individual Theme: Members of the community**

This individual theme was very interesting because it was rather different from the other themes. The respondent made the case for other persons outside the immediate domain of the school to play a lead role in facilitating CPD activities. Community personnel, retired teachers and parents are all considered as stakeholders who could make an input in training sessions.

*“People from the community, teachers who are retired, and parents can make an input”.*

(Teacher 9, ANU)

### **4.12.3 Anguilla**

#### **4.12.3.1 Major Theme: Competent persons**

The respondents reported that anyone who is competent could lead CPD. Competence in this case seems to refer to possessing the capabilities or being fit to carry out the required training. Making reference to ‘anybody’ seems to suggest that the person could be internal or external to the school environment.

*“At the school level anybody who is competent in a given area should be given the opportunity to lead CPD. It doesn’t necessarily have to be the principal, or deputy. If you go to the class and you observe a teaching doing something very well you can have that person sharing because we can all learn from it. At the departmental level usually it is the education officers”.*

(Teacher 5, AXA)

*“I would say retired principals, persons who are at that level and even people from the Ministry once they have the skills or know how to make excellent presentations and not just paper work. So for me it should be past principals, officials from the Ministry and principals who are capable in those areas”.*

(Teacher 4, AXA)

#### **4.12.3.2      *Minor Theme: Education Officers***

The use of Education Officers re-emerged once again as the person who should take a lead role in CPD. This perhaps signals the type of role that such officers should play in schools.

*“Basically Education Officers, with their degrees”.*

(Teacher 8, AXA)

#### **4.12.3.3      *Individual Theme: Trained professionals***

This particular respondent expressed the view that trained professionals should conduct CPD. It is quite observable from the account given that trained professional is associated with having the skills in key areas which could come from a wide spectrum of persons.

*“I believed trained professionals in the key area should lead those activities. I believe teachers can lead if they are skilled in certain areas. You may have experts in the local community, education officers or parents who work in different fields who may be skilled as well. There are some students who are very talented and you can use them. I do not see much teachers being used only principals”.*

(Teacher 6, AXA)

**Table 14: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 7**

		<b>Participants</b>		<b>Overarching Theme</b>
<b>Countries</b>	<b>Thematic Categories</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Officials</b>	
<b>Montserrat</b>	<b>Major</b>	Most knowledgeable person on the topic	Heads should plan and lead CPD	<b>All capable persons with focus on local experts</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Education Officer Primary	Capable staff members can lead CPD	
	<b>Individual</b>	Ministry	By any official or an expert from overseas	
<b>Antigua</b>	<b>Major</b>	All resourceful teachers or principals	Principals	
	<b>Minor</b>	Education Officers	Teachers can lead	
	<b>Individual</b>	Members of the community	Ministry Officials with requisite knowledge	
<b>Anguilla</b>	<b>Major</b>	Anybody who is competent in the given area	Someone grounded in theoretical knowledge	
	<b>Minor</b>	Education Officers	Using local teachers to deliver CPD	
	<b>Individual</b>	Trained professionals	School teacher	

In relation to the summary in Table (14) above, the persons who they felt should lead CPD seem to encompass Ministry Officials, principals, teachers, retired educators, parents and expert from overseas. This suggests that the teachers perhaps are of the view that knowledge is located in different places, that is to say, internal and external to the school, and as such it should be tapped into during CPD. However, the overarching theme that seemed to thread throughout the narratives was that all *capable persons with a focus on local experts* should lead CPD.

## 4.13 Question 8: What mechanisms or systems do you use to evaluate CPD?

### 4.13.1 Montserrat

#### 4.13.1.1 *Major Theme: Non-specific*

In Montserrat, the data collected from the teachers and head teachers indicate that the mechanisms used to evaluate CPD are rather unplanned with very little emphasis on the purpose of the evaluation. This evidence from the sample seems to suggest that there are no specific guidelines in place to ensure that there is a strong link between CPD sessions and how it is measured to discern its desired impact. One teacher along with a head teacher expressed their views below to explain the current state of affairs in their context.

*“Well I can’t even say if there is an evaluation. It’s like you do whatever activities are assigned and at the end of the day nothing really happen. Of course they do lesson observation but when they are assessing you because a lot of the things that you do in CPD are not directly related to your work then there is no emphasis on the link. There is an assessment schedule which they use when they are grading the lessons but I do not see anything on it which measures anything regarding to CPD.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

*“I cannot remember doing any evaluation of CPD. Maybe something is given verbally evaluation but nothing written”.*

(AN, MNI)

#### **4.13.1.2**      *Minor Theme: Broad assessment*

The participants stated that the current system in place to evaluate CPD is broad-based. In most cases the external facilitators use a simple checklist while Heads basically ask oral questions to get a sense of how the training was conducted.

*“Usually the facilitators will use the normal checklist use find out how thing went...or it is done orally. I have not had the teachers evaluate the sessions for the school purposes”.*

(Head Teacher AS, MNI)

#### **4.13.1.3**      *Individual Theme: Attendance and punctuality*

This respondent raised the issue concerning the real focus of CPD and what is actually perceived. Accordingly, the focus seemed to be on whether or not teachers show up for the session rather than on evaluating the outcomes.

*“With the Head Teachers I think they have a better sense of the individuals on their staff having working in close quarters with them. What they mainly focus on is if you attend the sessions, and if you were on time. They observe from your mannerism as well. I am not certain of evaluation after the sessions”.*

(Teacher NT, MNI)

## 4.13.2 Antigua

### 4.13.2.1 *Major Theme: Informal evaluation*

The responses from the participants in Antigua were more explicit in describing how they felt about the question. Some of them referred to the mechanism in place as mainly informal where not much monitoring to see if CPD strategies are implemented. Others described the situation as one of which that is dominated by occasional verbal communication. This in many ways overlaps with the responses given by the participants in Montserrat and it therefore strengthens their views regarding the non-structured mechanisms currently in place to evaluate CPD.

*“I would have to say that we do not have any structured mechanism in place but we are in the process of putting things together to have a system whereby we can evaluate all the things that we do.”*

(Head Teacher, ANU)

*“It can be better. I know most of these sessions are outside of the school and they give you an evaluation form at the end. Internally when you have CPD there is nothing like that and it really has to with checks and balances where you make sure that teachers are putting what they learn into practice”.*

(Teacher 9, ANU)

*“Informally but I think they should by using a formal assessment activity to make sure that teachers are doing the things that they have been taught”.*

(Teacher 15, ANU)

#### **4.13.2.2**      *Minor Theme: Verbal communication*

The participants were of the view that Heads in particular frequently used verbal form of communication as way to evaluate CPD activities. In such cases, a few questions are usually asked at the end of the training sessions to get a sense of how they feel but nothing substantial as it relates its impact.

*“Sometimes they will ask for oral feedback where some teachers will say how they feel”.*

(Teacher 4, ANU)

*“I cannot remember doing any proper evaluation of CPD. Maybe something is given verbally evaluation but nothing written”.*

(Teacher 7, ANU)

#### **4.13.2.3**      *Individual Theme: Insufficient monitoring*

One participant reported that CPD is rarely checked to measure if things are implemented or whether they have the desired impact. This seems to suggest that it is difficult to know or make any links between CPD and learning.

*“The evaluation needs to be more forthcoming. There is some evaluation but you do not get a feel that they are looking what you are doing in light of what was done in CPD. I think they need to make a connection to see if CPD is helping or teachers are benefiting from the sessions – Are we seeing changes or improvement in my classroom or school? They need to do more – asking questions and finding out how things are going.”*

(Teacher 17, ANU)

### 4.13.3 Anguilla

#### 4.13.3.1 *Major Theme: Simple evaluation forms*

With respect to Anguilla, the teachers spoke about similar issues regarding the informal ways of evaluation of CPD. The only difference in comparison with Montserrat and Antigua is that they made specific reference to the use of evaluation forms to collect data on the impact of CPD in some cases although it is problematic since the teachers often do not complete the forms or return them in a timely manner.

*“Whenever we have a session the Head would get us together and ask questions about ways in which we can improve. You sometimes get an evaluation form at the end of the sessions but most times teachers do not complete the open-ended questions. Instead they just tick the short answers and leave the others blank so you do not get a true evaluation of the session.”*

(Teacher 3, AXA)

The head teacher also spoke about the occasional use of simple evaluation forms but also emphasized the presence of oral feedback in appraising CPD.

*“Simple evaluation...maybe word of mouth or give feedback orally...or something written on an evaluation form. So you have a sort of informal and somewhat formal system.”*

(Head Teacher, AXA)

#### **4.13.3.2**      *Minor Theme: Indirect feedback*

With reference to this theme, feedback is sometimes given but it not directly related to CPD. The comments below indicated how the participants felt about the evaluation of CPD in the current context.

*“Sometimes we have meetings and we will share ideas. The Head comes around and observes or sits in the classroom. But I do not feel that you get the type of feedback which is important to tell how you are doing as it relates to CPD”.*

(Teacher 8, AXA)

#### **4.13.3.3**      *Individual Theme: Informal mechanism*

This individual theme overlaps with what have been suggested previously in Montserrat and Antigua. There seems to be no real structure or order pertaining to the way in which the Head evaluates CPD activities. This view is expressed below by one respondent.

*“We usually have a meeting to discuss and give feedback. I think that is very good but then again at the end of the day when you get that feedback from the teachers where do you go from there? When you pool all the responses from the CPD feedback you should be able to hear what the general comments are about CPD and I think that part of it is lacking. The feedback is given but rarely do you hear anything about it. The current mechanism is informal”.*

(Teacher 7, AXA)

**Table 15: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 8**

		<b>Participants</b>		<b>Overarching Theme</b>
<b>Countries</b>	<b>Thematic Categories</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Heads</b>	
<b>Montserrat</b>	<b>Major</b>	Mon-specific	General evaluation at the school level but external facilitators normally use checklists	<b>Unstructured informal feedback</b>
	<b>Minor</b>	Broad assessment regarding CPD		
	<b>Individual</b>	More focus is on attendance		
<b>Antigua</b>	<b>Major</b>	Very little formal evaluation after in-house sessions	No structured mechanism in place currently	
	<b>Minor</b>	Occasional verbal communication after training		
	<b>Individual</b>	Not much monitoring		
<b>Anguilla</b>	<b>Major</b>	Administer evaluation forms	Oral feedback	
	<b>Minor</b>	Indirect feedback		
	<b>Individual</b>	Informal mechanism		

Table (15) shows that the majority of the teachers and head-teachers felt that the mechanism that was in place to assess CPD is largely informal thus, making it difficult to know the type of impact the training sessions had on teaching and learning. It would appear therefore that the overarching theme that emerged from all of the accounts was that the mechanism used to evaluate CPD in the context investigated could be best described as an *unstructured and informal system*.

## 4.14 Question 9: How do you feel about linking CPD to teacher accreditation?

### 4.14.1 Montserrat

#### 4.14.1.1 *Major Theme: Valuing teachers' effort*

The conversations concerning linking CPD to teacher accreditation generated a lot of discussion and it was quite obvious that the teachers were very passionate about expressing their feelings about this issue. Most of the teachers in Montserrat were particularly concerned about the numerous hours spent in training sessions and need for valuing their efforts. This seems to suggest that they are perhaps not inspired by the current relationships between CPD and their expectations of obtaining appropriate types of qualifications. Although they were not always precise about what the actual value should be, it was clear that they strongly felt that something more tangible be linked to their participation in CPD.

*“It is very important that CPD is accredited because I like to say time is money. When people know that their time and effort are being valued they are more likely to give more or to put more into what they are doing. But if there is no accreditation for something you are doing because somebody wants you to do it then you go, sit and you are present. But it does not mean that you have learnt anything. In order for something to be accredited it will mean more work, a time frame and a structure. People like to know that as long as they are giving up their time and they are making sacrifices, then they want to see some value place on their time. I do see the need for it to be accredited.”*

(Teacher YE, MNI)

*“I think it is a good idea because I feel teachers will be more motivated...that I am attending this session and at the end I am going to get my certificate. You often hear teachers say I do not want to attend the sessions...what use it is to me? What paper am I going to get? I just go and attend...they take attendance to say that I was there but if there was a system which show that at the end you will get something that will worth the time”.*

(Head Teacher, MNI)

*“Before I go any deeper I would like to see a professional standard for teachers. So that you have a hierarchy; level one, level two teachers and so on. CPD could be one of the ladders that get you from one level to the next. So I like to look at accreditation in that way rather than just having a certificate but a professional value. We started a conversation about it sometime ago but I would really love to see a professional standard where every teacher knows what must he/she needs to do to move from that level to the next. What CPD courses, what this or that I have to do, what skills I have to demonstrate, and what results I must get to take me from that level to the next making clearly objective.”*

(Ministry Official, MNI)

#### **4.14.1.2      *Minor Theme: Inadequate award***

Judging from a few reports, there were teachers who were totally dissatisfied with the current recognition system in place. As it stands, teachers normally obtain a certification of attendance for participating in CPD. However, they felt that their work and time worth more than just a simple endorsement of them being present.

*“All you get most time is a certificate of attendance. I do not know how much weight it has when they give you a certificate. When you just get a certificate of attendance or participation especially when you are there for a let us say 3 months you really consider the amount of work that you do to be more than just participation and attendance. I think it worth more than that”.*

(Teacher AN, MNI)

#### **4.14.1.3**      *Individual Theme: Useful for higher education*

This theme was quite intriguing because the focus seems to be associated with a long term goal. In this particular instance, the respondent felt that their involvement should be directly linked to their future professional aspirations.

*“It is very, very, very important. If you calculate the number of hours of a teacher’s life outside the classroom that is taken for training you would have perhaps done a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree with the number of time they spent sitting in training sessions. Even if I wanted to develop professionally by going to an institution of higher learning I cannot take the certificates of attendance to show what sort of prior training or knowledge that I have. I may have gathered something from the CPD’s but what real value is that when a teacher’s life is measured to everything.”*

(Teacher NT, MNI)

#### **4.14.2**      **Antigua**

##### **4.14.2.1**      *Major Theme: Enhance motivation*

Most of the teachers in Antigua had a difference in opinion from those of Montserrat. They felt that accreditation could serve as a booster or motivation for teachers’ involvement in CPD. This seems to suggest that it would in some way arouse their interest to participate in the training. Another interesting report is that accreditation appears to be more suited for those teachers whose traits are more associated with extrinsic rewards.

*“From an academic perspective it could be a booster for teachers. But perhaps teachers are not motivated because they do not see the real value in it. Every time you learn something new you should get accredited for it because people love extrinsic rewards.”*

(Teacher 2, ANU)

*“There should be something for it and that is why I said it should not be during school time...so you have to sacrifice some time doing it and then you should be rewarded for what you have done. When you have CPD when the children are out and you are away during your work you have not sacrifice any of your time but if you make the effort then you should get a certificate or something. This will make you more interested in the sessions and willing to learn new things.”*

(Teacher 18, ANU)

*“I don’t think our participation in the session is rated. Someone in a discussion some time ago suggested that we get a certificate for our involvement. I think this can be motivation for some teachers especially if it can be used to say that you have participated in such and such sessions. I think for me though the real matter is going and learning from more experienced teachers or people”.*

(Teacher 6, ANU)

#### **4.14.2.2      *Minor Theme: Beneficial for promotion***

Another viewpoint tabled by some respondents is that accreditation should include recording teachers’ knowledge and skills and eventually overtime so that it could become a useful guideline for promotion. The assumption here is that where teachers do not have the prerequisite qualifications for a higher position the system could use the information from the accreditation process to appraise the decision.

*“One session cannot be accredited but if we go through intense training for say two weeks then we need to be given a certificate to show that we have completed a course in a particular area and add it to teachers’ files. So if a position becomes available in that area that teacher can be recommended for the position”.*

(Teacher 11, ANU)

*“Very important because that’s the only how you can go up the ladder. So if it is going to make you get more remuneration and carry up your status then it is important for that purpose.”*

(Teacher 14, ANU)

*“I think it is a very good idea. It is part of self-development so it can be used when you want to move on in the field”. The recent upgrade of teachers or the reclassification of teachers is linked to the work that teachers would have done over the course of time and so then you can move from one level to the next and CPD is tied to that as well”*

(Teacher 5, ANU)

#### **4.14.2.3 Individual Theme: Inspiration for further studies**

Specific reference was made by one teacher that accreditation is beneficial in providing a stimulus for advanced training. In light of this view, it seems to suggest that CPD programmes should be aligned in such a way that teachers could visualize them as pathways to higher education.

*“I think you should be rewarded especially if it’s in your field – you put in all these extra hours and at the end you be given something to boost you and help you to move on. I feel that it may even inspire you to go on and do further studies – you might not have gone to do a degree but when you put all these training sessions together they may give you credits to move on higher. I think recognition of all these is important.”*

(Teacher 17, ANU)

#### **4.14.3 Anguilla**

##### **4.14.3.1 Major Theme: Reflect acquisition of skills**

According to most of the teachers in Anguilla the significance of linking CPD to teacher accreditation is to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that they have acquired over a period

time from the training sessions. They also feel that their efforts should be rewarded with suitable certificates.

*“At the end of the day you need to have something to show that you went through this process. You have this form of knowledge or what have you. Usually they give you a certificate. I think it is very important because if you looking for another job you have those certificates show that you underwent the training.”*

(Teacher 5, AXA)

*“Honestly people always think that they have to be rewarded and the kids think that way too. It depends on the amount of work that is involved but I always think that you should be given a certificate. You should be credited and the department should take note of it. You do go to a number of sessions over time but at the end there is no statistics and it should be on a form. The number of sessions you attend in the year should be on your appraisal form.”*

(Teacher 3, AXA)

#### **4.14.3.2 Minor Theme: Value-added**

When asked about linking CPD with teacher accreditation, teachers felt that when they are given certificates it add value to their résumé which is comparable to when other professionals obtaining their qualifications in their work. The Head teacher from Anguilla stated that the accreditation will look good on your curriculum vitae. This seems to suggest that tangible rewards are ideal ways of adding value to the reason for teachers to participate in CPD.

*“This was suggested by a teacher in a meeting where she said we should be given certificates because it can add to our resume. But it should be done in way that teachers can see that they have done a course and have skills in the CPD area and I can now go and teach someone else at least up to the level that I know or even pass it on to my*

*colleagues. You wouldn't want to go into a doctor's office without seeing some type of accreditation."*

(Teacher 4, AXA)

*"It looks good especially on your CV. You are involved in these things and it is something that you have attained so I think that in itself is a way of motivating teachers."*

(Head Teacher, AXA)

#### **4.14.3.3 Individual Theme: Building careers**

The theme that was highlighted at the individual level mentioned that the collective training from CPD sessions could enhance prospective training as well as developing their profession. This resembles similar themes referred to in Antigua and Montserrat and therefore indicates its importance in the narratives.

*"I think it is very important. You do all this training and you do not have anything on your file to say you have done training in these areas which could be used to allow teachers to do future training or build their careers. I think it should be accredited. Yes, you should have something to show that you have done the training and you are qualified"*.

(Teacher 3, AXA)

**Table 16: Thematic matrix showing findings for question 9**

		Participants			Overarching Themes
Countries	Thematic Categories	Teachers	Heads	Officials	
Montserrat	Major	Valuing teachers' effort	Good idea to motivate teachers	It can create a professional standard	Reward for teacher motivation and career advancement
	Minor	Inadequate awards	Reduce the notion of questioning the value of CPD	CPD can be the ladder to establish such standards	
	Individual	Useful for higher education			
Antigua	Major	Enhance motivation	A very good idea for self-development	It can be a catalyst to motivate teachers	
	Minor	Beneficial for promotions	Can be used when you wish to move into another area	The recent upgrade or reclassification of teachers is linked to CPD	
	Individual	Inspiration to pursue further studies			
Anguilla	Major	Reflects acquisition of skills	Attaining something is a way of motivating teachers	It appears relevant for teachers	
	Minor	Value-added	It would look good on teachers CV	The challenge will be how you link the two ideas	
	Individual	Building careers			

The findings from Table (16) revealed that there was a harmonised view among the respondents across the three islands. The majority of them strongly felt that there should be a link between CPD and teacher accreditation. However, the descriptions that they used to show the type of linkages that should be established were similar in some cases. However, there were some distinct terms used which created some nuances in the explanations given. Notwithstanding the variations in the responses, it was clear that the overarching theme which emerged from the narratives is that linking CPD with teacher accreditation can *function as a reward to motivate teachers as well as advancing their careers in education.*

## **4.15 Findings from the Focus Groups Discussions**

This section summarizes the focus group findings conducted as part of the methodological process. The findings are based on focus groups that were conducted in primary schools across three islands (Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla). Focus groups comprising of six members discussed the ways in which they perceived school leadership and CPD. In an effort to present the findings in a logical manner, first, the responses were grouped into sub-themes for each island. Following this, a predominant theme is highlighted to indicate the broad concept that was considered most important within each island. Finally, an overarching theme which best define the shared view of each focus group was identified. However, for writing purposes only the overarching themes supported by transcripts are commented on in the presentation.

### **4.15.1 Question 1: What do you think should be the purpose of CPD?**

In general, the focus group participants were extremely positive and fervent when talking about the purpose of CPD. The data analysis revealed three predominant themes that were distinct to each island. These predominant themes seem to conceptually overlap; hence underscoring their significance in the way how CPD is perceived.

#### **4.15.1.1 *Montserrat - Predominant Theme: Pedagogical improvement***

In the Montserrat focus group participants reported that the purpose of CPD is to obtain new ideas from the wealth of knowledge created by scientific research. This will enable them to work with different ability groups. Participants further discussed that CPD assist with finding alternative methods of ‘how to make things work’ in different situations. A prominent sub-theme identified is that most respondents who viewed CPD as a way of matching practice with

theory also reported that research makes it necessary for teachers to be current in their methodology. As noted:

*“The world is changing...children are different...You have different behaviours to deal with, different levels of knowledge and so forth. In terms of professional development it helps you to deal with the different sets of children I get year after year. To me CPD is about getting new ideas, building on your knowledge so that you can work with a group of children not matter what abilities they have because of the knowledge gained from CPD.”*

(F1G, MNI)

Similarly, a respondent who reflected on how technology has changed over time stated that:

*“It also helps to match practice with theory as you would be able to discuss how or why things happen as well as new information...from time to time scientist would do new research and content will change based on the needs of our society...also knowledge will change. For example, in my day you did not have the computer but now computers are part of our everyday life.”*

(F2D, MNI)

Another respondent supported the point raised above by acknowledging the importance of incorporating researched-based knowledge in CPD where teachers need to update themselves particularly where methodology is concerned.

*“New research makes it necessary for teachers to update themselves especially when it comes on to methodology...the different learning styles. We live in a global world now and things are done differently so teachers need the training to know how to cope.”*

(M3D, MNI)

One soft-spoken member of the group said that CPD is primarily about change but it must be in line with the research that available in the wider world. This seems to suggest that CPD

should be designed in ways that would inform them about the theoretical knowledge that exist in the research community.

*“I think our CPD are geared for change but we cannot focus on one set of ideas. Researchers are always coming up with new ideas so sometimes we have to change what we have in the curriculum to match what is out there in the world.”*

(F4L, MNI)

#### **4.15.1.2 Antigua – Predominant Theme: Improvement in learning**

In the Antiguan focus group, participants discussed a variety of characteristics that were connected to the purpose of CPD but at the same time also have an impact on their practice. A changing environment was noted as one such feature. Respondents raised concerns about the challenges presented by the rapid changes in the school setting. However, they assert that it is important for them to have access to CPD since it can help them to deal with the issues when they arise especially during their classroom instruction. As stated by one respondent:

*“CPD is good...as you know we live in a dynamic world...things are changing...people changing...every year the children are not the same. So you have to have ideas about things you can do to get to these children...so CPD is very important.”*

(S6M, ANU)

Respondents also discussed other reasons for their involvement in CPD. For example, one participant said that there is always the need for new ideas to stimulate learning because ‘teacher exhaustion’ can cause teachers to lose confidence in their teaching sometimes. The said respondent noted:

*“I think CPD is geared for us teachers because sometimes you feel burnt out or you feel like I do not know how I am I going to get to these children in my grade and I need*

*fresh ideas...something different from what I did last year...so CPD give new ideas and new technology that are out there which you can use.”*

(S4F, ANU)

The sub-theme that emerged from most of the other respondents' discussions emphasized the point that teachers must find new ways of learning as reported by the participants:

*“We need to learn new things in our work so CPD can provide it for us as we learn new things every day.”*

(S1F, ANU)

*“Children learning styles can open our minds to new ways of doing things so we have to be prepared for such challenges.”*

(S5F, ANU)

#### **4.15.1.3 Anguilla - Predominant Theme: Professional Growth**

The general views expressed by the teachers were focused around the ideas of teacher knowledge, specific improvements and personal development. Respondents in this focus group associate the concept of 'growth' in relation to the profession itself as well as the individual. The advancements made in technology and the differences in the age gaps of a number of teachers cause concern for some respondents. Professional growth in this sense seems to refer to the habit of being at the forefront of the knowledge domain where CPD is central in keeping teachers in the 'know'. As stated by one interviewee:

*“You will have teachers training all the time and so you would not have to be always hiring new people to do thing. Teachers will not be stagnant as they can be trained and move on...so it give growth to the profession. You also want teachers to be always on top of knowledge especially it is something we are imparting...we need to be on top of the game...right now we have technological age so teachers from the early eighties are still around so they need to be able on board with the technology. So CPD is important to keep you in the ‘know’.”*

(FS2, AXA)

One participant gave an intriguing account for the purpose of CPD. According to the respondent it can be utilized at the individual level where such subjective development is linked to a personal experience. The respondent explained that while her child attended school there were certain kinds of information that was unknown to her which perhaps made it difficult to assist in that area. However, she added that the void was filled in the course of a CPD session and this gave her a sense of personal growth.

*“It is also for your own personal growth. For example, when my child was in school I realise that there are some bits of information that I did not know so CPD can help you get that information.”*

(FS5, AXA)

**Table 17: Thematic matrix summarising focus group findings on purpose of CPD**

	<b>Focus Groups</b>		
<b>ISLAND</b>	<b>MONTSEERRAT</b>	<b>ANTIGUA</b>	<b>ANGUILLA</b>
<b>Sub-themes</b>	-updating knowledge - instruction for different groups and context -matching practice with theory -alternative methods	-exposure to new ideas -use of technology -continuous learning -individual learning	-professional advancement -teacher knowledge -specific improvement -personal growth
<b>Predominant Themes</b>	<b>PEDAGOGICAL CHANGES</b>	<b>IMPROVEMENT IN LEARNING</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL GROWTH</b>
<b>Overarching Theme</b>	<b>Changes in school practice and individual growth</b>		

It is clear from Table (17) that the teachers in the focus groups were able to identify a number of ideas that were considered important reasons for CPD. The focus group participants were sensitive to how different their personal views were partly because of the human dimensions as well as the contextual factors. The participants typically reported that CPD was about accessing new ideas and knowledge that ultimately brought about changes in school practice individual growth. This theme is strikingly similar to the overarching theme for the interviews which suggests that both methods supported the claim made about the purpose of CPD. However, there seems to be some connection between how the ideas are conceptually framed. Although the predominant themes were distinct to each of the three islands (Montserrat - pedagogical changes; Antigua - improvement in learning, Anguilla - professional growth) they appear to overlay theoretically. The ways in which teachers grow professional would conceptually depend on changes and improvement in pedagogy and learning. This strengthens the point that the context helps to shape the way in which CPD is perceived.

#### 4.15.2 Question 2: Perceptions of leadership

Judging from the length of the transcripts it was obvious that the members in the focus groups across the three islands were quite interested in this topic. Their discussions were very lively and a lot of cross talk took place. They seemed to have a great deal to say and as a result, it generated an enormous amount of data.

##### 4.15.2.1 *Montserrat - Predominant Theme: Management Structures and Systems*

Across the focus group, respondents reported a number of features which they felt best explain their views about how they perceived leadership. Many of them reported their experiences in terms of how they think about leadership as well as how it is actually practiced in their school. Most of the respondents in Montserrat perceived management structures and systems as central features to school leadership. It seems that management structures in this context refer to organising and controlling school activities in ways that would create less confusion. Discussing these parallel ideas two respondents noted:

*“Right now I am a bit confused as to what is going on around me and as one teacher points out there should be some sort of structure where everybody has to run to one person for all the different areas...you have discipline, you have things to do with the syllabus...all the different things ok. I look at discipline...we have a lot of problems with it and in terms of leadership there is no way that our present leadership should be burdened with coping with this massive problem on a one to one. There should have been a deputy or a lower school head or some seniority in terms of assistance where they can work with the Head and filter information down. In our case that is not what happens. There is just one main person who has to take on every single thing that goes on in the school. It has affected children and teachers.”*

(F2D, MNI)

*“I think about the general management of the school...you have to deal with a lot of things...children and development and management of all the school activities.”*

(F4L, MNI)

Another respondent supported the point made above but used a slightly different term where reference was made to the ideas structure or hierarchy when she thinks about leadership. The said respondent further pointed out that when structure and procedures are not clear the leader may need to rely on research or other sources to find ways to improve the school. Illustrating this in the school's context the respondent noted:

*“The first thing that comes to my mind is structure or the hierarchy of the school. But I find that everything has to be done by the head Teacher and the management structure needs to be strengthened. Having to deal with teacher issues, children issues and parents issues make it hard...it needs some strengthening. Maybe some department heads would help the situation...and there is not a clear structure and procedures. The leader has to be constantly researching and so forth...finding new ways to improve the school.”*

(M3D, MNI)

In other instances, it seems as though leadership rests squarely on the notion of team effort and not just a single person. One participant was quite vocal about how the school leader can structure the school into sections where each section has someone responsible for supporting staff members rather than everything converging on the leader. These accounts express the views of two respondents.

*“The school should be run by a team and not just one person. That one person can't do it. They will make the final decision but there are certain other steps should be in place. Yes, this is small school but you have lower, middle and upper sections...so if I am in the lower school there should be someone that I can go to for assistance instead of having to go all the way up to the Head Teacher. In my opinion I consider from Grade*

*K to 1 as lower school, 2 and 3 as middle and then 4-6 as upper. You need a team and not just the Head teacher in charge but there should the Head, a deputy...although we do not have one right now and a teacher representing each section of the school. So in terms of leadership it should be a team and not just one person...that person makes the final, final decision but getting there should be more than one person.”*

(F1G, MNI)

*“May I interject here? I think we got some paper work on discipline and something else but it was very hard to roll out because there so many other things...management skills has to come into play...you have to manage every sector of the school...the staff, the children, the parents, the curriculum, the log book and so on.”*

(F2D, MNI)

#### **4.15.2.2 Antigua - Predominant Theme: Procedures and Processes**

Both procedures and processes emerged as prominent themes which represent the ideas that the respondents felt that leadership is primarily concerned with in their context. Procedures seem to mean when the school leader engage in specific actions in a particular and consistent manner that will ensure everyone is part of the process. There was also a strong emphasis between linking planning with monitoring what is happening so as to avoid being reactive to the problems when they arise. One participant explained:

*“I think leadership entails planning...everything that has to do with the plant...teachers, children equipment...everything. It also involves monitoring classrooms...monitoring what is going on inside the classrooms...be upfront and say when things are wrong. To me it is the most important part when it comes to leadership...monitoring what is happening and solve it as they see fit. If you don't do that then you allow things to fester and will eventually cause more problems.”*

(S4F, ANU)

Another respondent supported the idea of planning but pointed out that it is equally important to ensure that all stakeholders are involved with the planning and the need to communicate with each other. As one respondent noted:

*“As the supervisor for nursery school planning is everything but what I do is to involve everyone...all the teachers. I do not make a decision without letting them know what is going on. I also like to involve the parents. I also listen to the children...so if I am going to plan a trip I listen to what the children are interested in and then plan it around those ideas. You have to communicate with people around you and make sure that you are approachable.*

(S5F, ANU)

Following on with the above perspective it is perhaps the reason why another respondent said that that leaders need to have communication skills especially where setting clear guidelines and rules are concerned.

*“Also with the leadership the leader must have skills and set clear guidelines or rules but sometimes when you look around and see other teachers doing things which are not part of those rules then you say why can't I do that as well? The thing is that the leadership must communicate all the rules within the school regardless of what work each person does. We just do not want rules for teachers only...because we are not the only ones who work at the school”*

(S4F, ANU)

An additional sub-theme which emerged from the discussion is that leadership should have an inclusive element which embraces the entire school community. This respondent indicated that inclusion should go beyond just teachers but instead spread the whole spectrum of all who work at the school irrespective of the type of duties that they perform. Involvement according to the respondent supresses tension and allow things to operate smoothly at the school.

*“Leadership should not only involve teachers but I think security guards, cleaners even the students should be given a chance to deal with the plans of how things are going run at the school and I think if that does not happen you will have people pulling against each other. So for example by including the security officer that person will know how and when to lock the gates. So leadership is not just being the principal...it must also include Heads of Department to have a say in how they think things at the school should operate.”*

(S6F, ANU)

Further support for this sub-theme came from the eldest person in the group who spoke about the need for everyone to get the chance to play their part in what happens in the school.

*“I think if everyone gets a chance to have an input they will put in more in what they do at work. Leadership should involve everybody and they all must play a part in what should be done.”*

(S1F, ANU)

#### **4.15.2.3 Anguilla - Predominant Theme: Practices and Personality Traits**

For many, leadership was described and conceptualised in two ways which appear to be inseparable. First, they seem to view it in relation to someone promoting certain good practices. Second, they felt that leaders must display particular kinds of personal traits or qualities that will augment the practices during the time they are executed. For instance, one respondent discussed leadership in terms of someone who takes charge but simultaneously looks out for the interest of staff and students.

*“When I think of leadership I think of someone who is an overseer and who is in control...someone who looks into the welfare of both teachers and students. Well I have worked with different Head Teachers and there are some weak ones and some strong ones. With a leader there are different leadership styles and personally I do not like when a leader is autocratic...in that they tell you what to do without discussing. But I*

*like the ones who are democratic where they discuss things even if you do not agree fully. I also do not like the leaders where anything goes...do as you please.”*

(S3F, AXA)

Another respondent discussed leadership as a ‘cycle of exchanges’ where the focus is on the reciprocity among heads, staff, and students. Being knowledgeable can determine who the leader at any given point is hence, making resourceful persons to be viewed as part of the leadership cycle.

*“Leadership is like a cycle...I give you and you give me. A leader guides but sometimes they need to look up to you for suggestions. My students in my class can see things in a different light which I did not realise and they can share it with the whole class. So a leader does not have to be the person at top managing but rather the person with the most powerful view...so that person is the leader at that time. Yes, the leader guides the process but we all share...as it goes back and forth.”*

(S2F, AXA)

A different respondent substantiate this point by highlighting the importance of ‘teacher leadership’ in the give-and-take process. Arguably, teachers are considered as leaders and they can be given the opportunity to lead during CPD or staff meetings.

*“But in a staff meeting and let’s say a teacher has particular knowledge in an area...everybody learns from that person so at that point you are the leader. The main leader might guides the discussion but the teacher is the leader...so we all grow together...and especially in CPD where you are given an opportunity to exhibit what you are capable off then you may be motivated to do other things. When they force you to do stuff you do not have the interest as compared to when you have the desire to do it.”*

(S4F, AXA)

The issues of support and giving an account of what teachers do were forcefully raised by a respondent who seemed quite ardent about the topic. The practices of circulating and assisting appear to be very important for this respondent as well as others and there was a feeling that leaders cannot appraise teachers properly if they do not cultivate the practice of supervising the teaching and learning process. When they do not engage in such practices it often leads to tension between leaders and teachers.

*“I find that they do not come to your classes often so I just wonder where they get some of the information from to fill out your appraisals. They do not have much talk with you as to what you are doing to improve your work. How would you know what my skills are like in classroom management? It is not accurate to use informal ways to assess me fully as a teacher. Come and assess a lesson and see how I teach. Because they do not come often enough and when they come you get tense.”*

(S3F, AXA)

Apart from discussing the practices which they feel constitute an understanding of leadership most of the respondents stated strongly that there are some personal traits which are necessary to complement the accorded practices. One participant contends that the way in which school leaders are selected is deeply flawed as there is the tendency to give more weighting to experience.

*“Another thing I feel is that leaders must have certain qualities but they seem here in Anguilla to be straying away from it. You can most times tell who is going to be the next leader in a school because they tend to use the teacher with the most experience...but not because you have more experience makes you a good leader.”*

(S5F, AXA)

The qualities associated with the conception of a ‘good leader’ seem to refer to specific traits that are essentially part of an individual personality. However, personality is considered as a behaviour that has to change constantly in order to deal with individual differences in the school setting. One respondent reiterated this view by drawing on a prior experience.

*“When I was working in the bank I had to have different personality of every customer that I serve. You have to have a different personality for each person that you are dealing with. You cannot have a mono or single personality...it will not work. As a leader you have to transform and come to the level of each of those persons you are leading. I have been to many leadership workshops and I have learned a lot but at the end of the day it boils down to your personality.”*

(S2F, AXA)

Traits such as fairness, approachable, trustworthiness and open-mindedness are all deemed as vital qualities for a leader. Interpersonal relations appeared to be another quality that was emphasized most by respondents. Teachers need to feel comfortable in approaching their leader. Discussing these traits one respondent noted:

*“A leader should be very fair and not biased. You need to feel comfortable to go and talk to your leader about most things. There must be that good relationship. If you do not have that trust in them then you would not have that good relationship. You should not be so stuck up that teachers are afraid of you but at the same time not meaning anything goes...there should be that balance and you should be able to go to the leader as a friend.”*

(S3F, AXA)

**Table 18: Thematic matrix summarising focus group findings on perceptions of leadership**

<b>Focus Groups</b>			
<b>ISLAND</b>	<b>MONTSEERRAT</b>	<b>ANTIGUA</b>	<b>ANGUILLA</b>
<b>Sub-themes</b>	-management and supervision -experience and maturity -structure and hierarchy -teamwork and processes	-planning and monitoring -expectations and roles -clear rules and guidelines -inclusiveness and openness -communicating and listening	-professional and knowledgeable -motivator and transformer -democratic -guide and supportive -particular characteristics
<b>Predominant Themes</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS</b>	<b>PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES</b>	<b>PRACTICES AND PERSONAL TRAITS</b>
<b>Overarching Theme</b>	<b>No distinct theme emerged but the predominant themes combine to demonstrate the view that leadership has multiple meanings</b>		

Table (18) illuminates the salient characteristics that the focus groups expressed as important in defining school leadership. Each island seemed to focus on a specific theme thus, making rather difficult to distil an overarching theme. This essentially supports the findings from the two other methods where leadership is viewed as concept with multiple meanings.

#### **4.16 Chapter Summary**

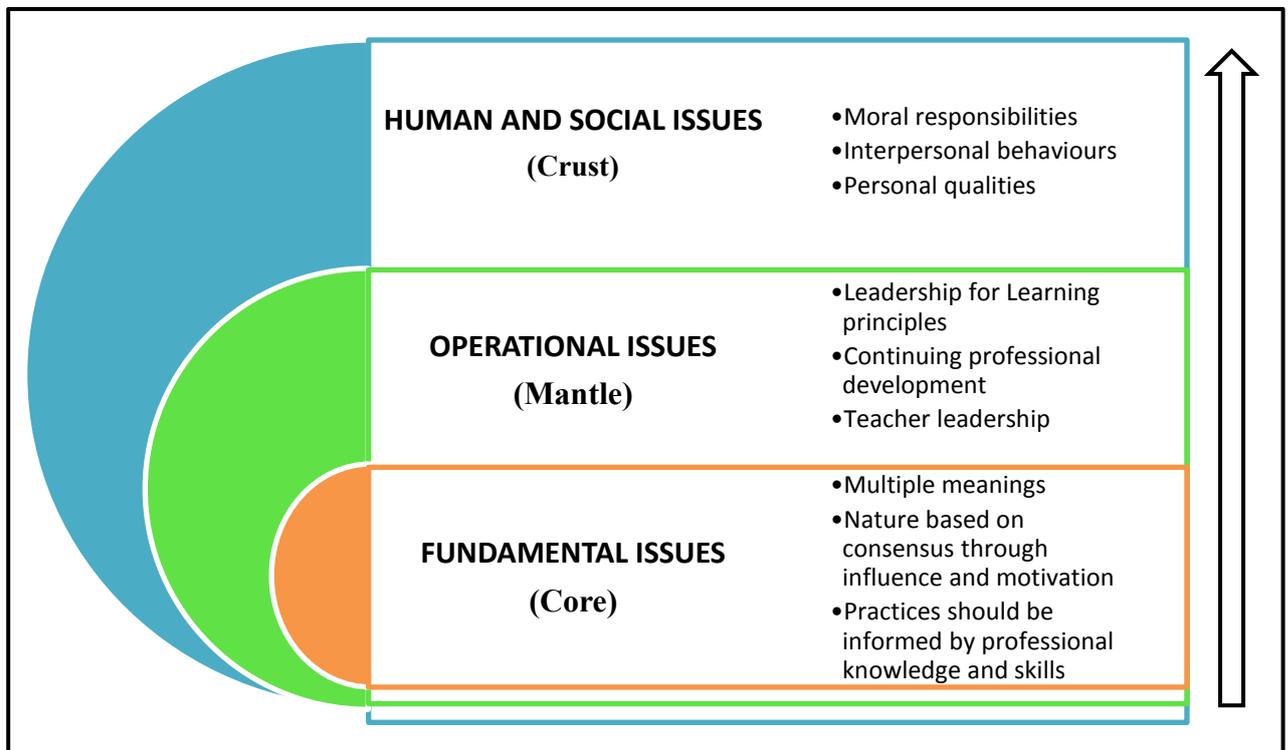
This chapter has presented the findings from all three methods of data collected from the teachers, head teachers and ministry officials across three islands. The findings sought to provide a deeper understanding into how both LfL and CPD are perceived and practiced in primary schools in Anguilla, Antigua and Montserrat. Common themes, similarities and differences have been identified and described and summarised throughout the chapter. However, the intention of this section is to identify and prioritize the important key findings

that best condense the cross-island similarities and differences for the three methods that were used to collect the research data.

The data clearly outlines corresponding perspectives about school leadership and CPD in the three cases. The themes that were found to be consistent were categorised into three major constructions which represented what school leadership meant in the islands. Participants seemed to first emphasize a number of fundamental principles - 1) school leadership is multidimensional; 2) its nature is based on building consensus through influence and motivation; 3) leadership practices must be informed by professional knowledge. These seemed to frame a narrative around the core ideas that best captured the essence of school leadership in their context. Second, they outlined some activities and or actions that can be classified as operational matters which are necessary for supporting leadership practices. Third, there were human and social dimensions to the ways in which they perceived leadership.

In an attempt to apply a more conceptual framework, I have used the representation of the cross-sectional view of the Earth to bear resemblance to these constructed ideas. The commonly known three-layered cross-section characterises the three broad constructions where the fundamental concepts radiate from the core followed by the operational ideas which represent the mantle and human and social issues signify the crust. These three constructs although they emerge at separate entities they in fact are interconnected. The core ideas are appear to have very little meaning without there is some relationship between the operational matters as well as the human and social issues. Figure (32) below condenses this analogy with respect the proposed comparative synthesis.

**Figure 32: Conceptual framework showing constructs of leadership.**



In addition to these major constructions, there were also noteworthy differences. These differences seem to signpost a particular narrative in each island. The findings from the questionnaires in particular disclosed that in the three islands school leadership practices and the perceptions of CPD were different in the following ways. The findings in Figure (33) show that Montserrat is quite different from the other two contexts and therefore can be considered as the outlier with respect to the key issues that were investigated. These individual differences emphasise the point that context does matter in developing an understanding of the nature of leadership as well as how CPD are developed and executed.

Figure 33: Island context differences

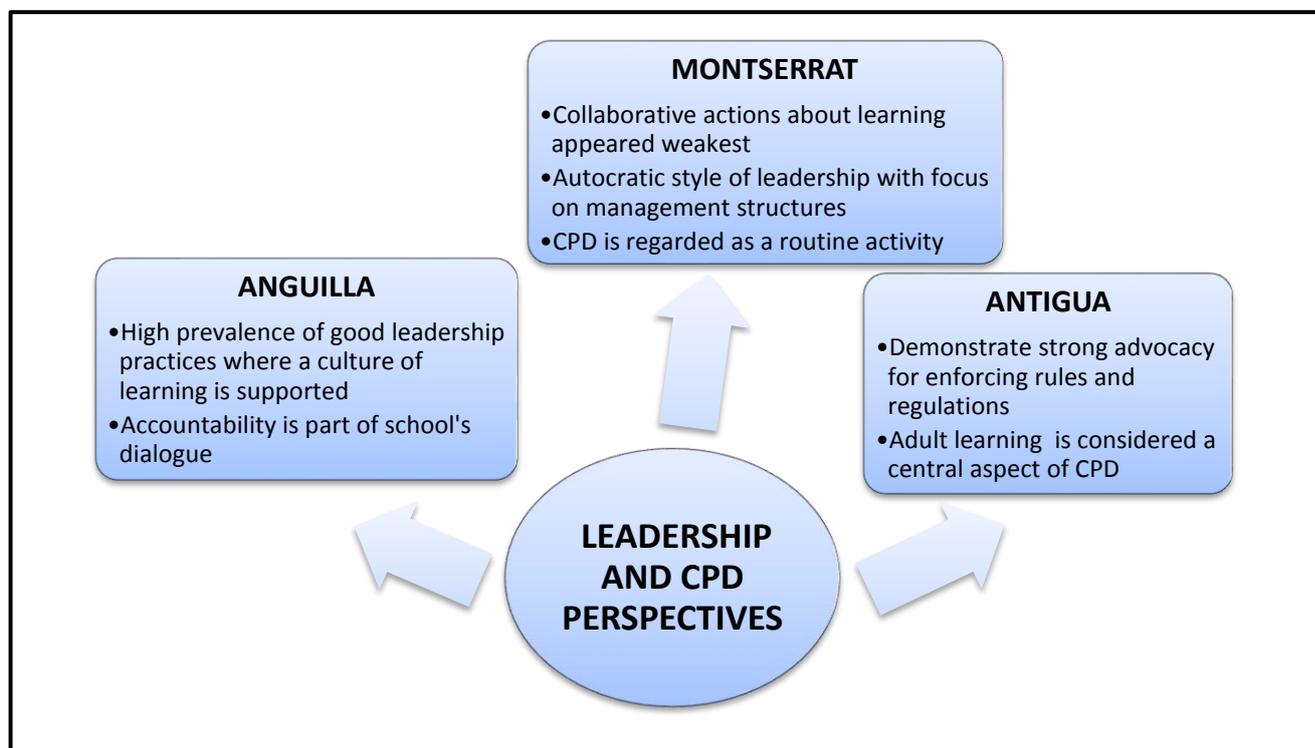


Table 19: Thematic matrix summarising the findings for all 3 sets of data

CROSS-ISLAND FINDINGS				
Key Issues	Data Collection Method			Central Themes
	Questionnaire	Interview	Focus group	
<b>Purpose of CPD</b>	Improvement in understanding practice in relation to pupils' learning	Improvement in organisational practices and personal development	Improvement in methodology and learning	<b>IMPROVEMENT IN SCHOOL PRACTICES</b>
<b>Challenges of CPD</b>	Lack of input from teachers	Inadequate preparations and teachers motivation	Establishing critical training needs	<b>INADEQUATE STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>
<b>Enabling factor for CPD and Leadership</b>	Teacher dialogue	Planned dialogue	Open dialogue	<b>STRUCTURED DIALOGUE</b>
<b>Evaluating CPD</b>	Unclear methods of gauging impact on learning	Unstructured and informal feedback	Little monitoring of teaching related to CPD	<b>NON-PURPOSEFUL PRACTICES</b>
<b>Perceptions of Leadership</b>	Leadership is a plural construct which should focus on developing an atmosphere for learning	Leadership has different meanings which is either related to skills or human relations	Leaders must possess multiple personalities	<b>MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONCEPT</b>
<b>Teacher Engagement</b>	Head teacher will not lose control when teachers lead	Teachers should lead CPD	Teachers should be involved in the decision-making process	<b>VALUING TEACHER LEADERSHIP</b>

Table (19) presents a comprehensive view of the findings across the three islands as well as the three sets of data that were collected. It highlights that in some cases the themes overlap which is a clear indication that there are similarities in the responses given by the participants. The differences on the other hand are context specific and this suggests that each island has its own peculiarities with respect to the concepts investigated. Having summarised the findings in the following ways, it is these central themes that will guide the discussion chapter where further explanation and arguments will be developed by linking the findings with the reviewed literature.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

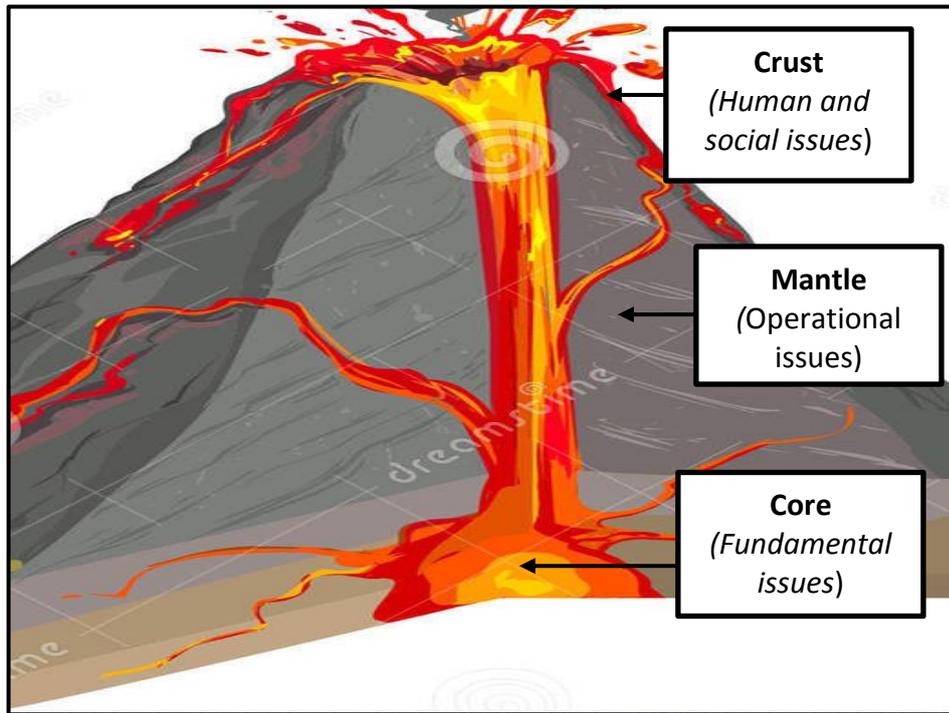
The discussion chapter has developed principally as a result of an interpretative and discursive process. It is therefore devoted specifically to an examination of the main emerging themes which are 1) core ideas about leadership, 2) the operational matters which support leadership and 3) the human and social issues linked to leadership. These in turn are matched with the research questions as well as their relevance in relation to existing literature. As a result, it enables the assessment of the contribution of the research findings to the field and an evaluation of the practical significance of the study.

This study explored key issues that relate to the conceptualization of LfL and CPD in primary schools in three Caribbean islands (Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla). The study sought to fill the gap in the research on how principals, ministry officials but more specifically, teachers perceived and understand these issues. The supposition of this study was that a better understanding of how leadership and CPD are conceptualized as well as the personal and contextual variables in play could inform policy decisions and into the design of practical interventions that could strengthen leadership and CPD capacities. A qualitative dominant mixed-method design was used to examine the views that were considered important to the participants. Data were collected by administering a questionnaire followed by interviews and focus group discussions.

In the following sections of this chapter the main research findings are discussed in light of the literature review. An analysis of the implications of these findings for future research has been also taken into account. The discussion however, is structured around the three main

constructions of leadership that were outlined in the summary section of chapter four. This is due mainly because I sensed that the narratives which seemingly emerged across the three islands were best captured by these broad ideas. There were also some linkages between these constructs and how the themes were developed. For example, the major themes seemed to highlight three fundamental ideas about school leadership; the minor themes represented the operational matters and the individual themes focused on the human and social issues. These ideas resemble a cross-section of the Earth where the fundamental ideas represent the inner core and the operational aspects and human and social elements characterise the mantle and crust respectively. Interestingly, one of the islands (Montserrat) has an active volcano and stages of an eruption could be a useful way to look at this conceptualisation. The way in which I envisage how these ideas are conceptually linked is that fundamental concepts move from the core along the conduit in the mantle which in turn operationalized the roles and responsibility issue. The process (as shown in Figure 34) eventually reaches the crust where the human and social issues give some indication to the learning outcomes. Most importantly, it is this phase of the process that the three broad ideas are intricately weaved together to form a dynamic relation between the concepts.

**Figure 34: Conceptual linkages between the leadership constructs.**



## **5.2 Participants Conceptual Understanding of School Leadership**

### **5.2.1 Core Idea 1: Multiple Meanings**

Drawing primarily from the research question about how school leadership is perceived, the major conclusion that emerged was that leadership meant different things to different individuals from the three contexts (Fullan, 2003; Earley, 2013). What this suggests is that school leadership is largely perceived as a plural concept which constitutes multiple dimensions (Miller, 2013). This perspective is quite vividly captured by Bolman and Deal (1997) who refers to leadership as ‘conceptual pluralism’ which is characterized by the multiple voices and actions within the school contexts. It also aligns with Cuban (1988) who argues that although there are an abundance of definitions on leadership hardly any of them presents an explicit understanding as to what differentiates a school leader from staff

members. Other researchers Sergiovanni (2001) and Yukl (2002) confirm that there is no single view of leadership which stands out as an all-inclusive meaning of the concept. Even Bush and Glover (2003) acknowledge a postmodern construction of leadership by intimating that there is no neutral viewpoint from which to access the validity of knowledge claims regarding the definitions of leadership. Bringing into line this type of thinking with the key theme in question, it seems to suggest that the participants are perhaps committed to the view that what they consider to be knowledge assertions about leadership is the result of their combined perceptions which is informed by their contextual experiences (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). The numerous ways in which school leadership is defined in the literature corroborate with this finding which shows that the conceptualisation of leadership is created through a diverse sense of what goes on in schools (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012).

While these claims are grounded in research conducted in the developed world – namely – the United States and UK, Miller (2013) argues that the evidence from the Caribbean points to the fact that a single meaning of school leadership would minimise the multiple ways in which the concept is applied across different islands. The methodological approach used in my study reveals that the context (including the positions from which individuals operate) plays an important role in providing a deeper understanding of how leadership is perceived by teachers, heads and ministry officials (Dempster, 2009). Further alignment with the literature comes from Earley *et al* (2002) who strongly argue that a key dimension of leadership involves the interaction between the local contexts, people and communities. Such findings seem to be pushing the debate away from the popular discourse of viewing leadership mainly from the perspective of the routine practices they carry out into focusing more on how they direct their collective actions to create meaningful interactions with other members of the school environment (Miller, 2016).

### **5.2.2 Core Idea 2: Building Consensus**

The evidence from this study shows that within each context leadership was viewed in distinctive ways. For example, in Montserrat leadership was chiefly perceived as building consensus for the common good of the school. Studies that have described leadership in this manner highlight that leaders spent considerable time in establishing a commitment to agreed goals (Sergiovanni, 2002). Yukl (2010) and Sergiovanni (2001) found that building consensus was quite useful in assisting leaders to make their schools become places of shared responsibility. This strengthens the argument in the international literature about the notion that leadership practices and processes are aimed at harmonising and bringing members together to shape the goals of the organisation (Sergiovanni, 2005).

A notable difference however, between this core idea and what is commonly found in the literature is that some researchers have used the term ‘leadership vision’ to build their argument around the fact that leaders must first have a mental picture of the desired future after which it must be shared with everyone in the school community (Beare *et al.*, 1989). This seems to suggest that there is a gap between what the participants suggest as a core idea about leadership (building consensus) versus the notion of vision as an essential but more specifically a precursory aspect of school leadership. However, this finding do provide empirical support for previous work of writers such as Bennis and Nanus (1985) who characterized leadership as a means of persuading teachers, students and parents to follow the leader’s vision. Planning the vision collaboratively is perhaps a better way of getting all on board rather than attempting to get others to buy into something that fails to solicit their initial input. In my view, this collectivism seems to be linked to the ‘island story’ which is perhaps a postcolonial perspective and appears different from the first world standpoint (Thomas, 2014).

### **5.2.3 Core Idea 3: Professional Knowledge**

The evidence from this study demonstrates that professional knowledge was another core idea which the participants felt was deeply connected to leadership. The notion of specialized know how as suggested by this study bolsters the argument that the leader's self-development is pivotal in acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for leading (Bush and Jackson, 2002). The acquisition of professional knowledge has become an essential matter within the leadership field since there is a gradual push to advance the competencies of school leaders (Earley *et al.*, 2002). The importance of this thrust runs contrary to what the finding disclosed where some teachers reported strongly that possessing a degree in management or having several years of teaching experience does not equate to being a good leader. This chimes with Miller's (2013) argument that while education ministries across the Caribbean allocate funds for the development of leaders, it is not always the case that the provisions adequately address the current challenges which are associated with approaches to leadership. Rather, he argues that there are some propensities for such training to buttress what Holman (2000) refers to as 'academic liberalism' which is primarily geared towards the acquisition of knowledge about how to manage.

However, the question that remains at the heart of the debate is why the findings in Antigua view leadership through the lens of professional knowledge? Although the study did not set out specifically to examine this question, references from the data do indicate that a number of teachers were dissatisfied with the way in which their heads lead as well as the method by which they are recruited; hence their expressions seem to signify that possessing an understanding of leadership practices is a noteworthy factor to consider in any perception of school leadership (Earley, 2103).

Notwithstanding the above narrative around professional knowledge as a core idea for leadership, there are still unexplained issues regarding the types of knowledge that leaders could use to help them to create successful schools. According to Simkins (2005) the type of knowledge which the participants seem to be referring to runs parallel with the concept of 'knowledge-for-practice' which is one of the three forms knowledge proposed by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999). In my view, the underlying assumption that the participants appear to be making is that the professional knowledge leaders require originates from scientific investigations where standards of practice are established and then prescribed as guidelines (Simkins, 2005). In other words, they are only consumers of knowledge instead of creators (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003). The discrepancy between what my findings revealed and the evidence in the literature is that there are other types of knowledge (for example, knowledge-in-practice and knowledge-of-practice) which are equally important in order for leaders to have a sound understanding of their knowledge base as it relates to leadership (Simkins, 2005).

#### **5.2.4 Core Idea 4: Influencing and Motivating**

Another narrative from the data indicates that the teachers strongly perceived leadership in terms of influencing and motivating school practices. This finding is well chronicled within the body of literature where several definitions confirm that one of the necessary elements of leadership is the process of influence (Bush and Glover, 2003). Other confirmations include that of Heifetz (1994) who refers to leadership as influencing parents, teachers and students to identify and find solutions to the problems they face. In a more contemporary description of leadership (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003) reference it as mobilising, motivating and working

with others to achieve shared objectives. The critical thing to note is that the operative word that can be distilled from these definitions of school leadership is ‘influence’. Whether the leadership task is to lead a vision, finding solutions to problems or working together as a team, this study (and in particular from Anguilla) affirms that the concept is a distinctive feature in understanding what leadership means and as such it gives more credibility and support to this claim within the main stream literature (Spillane, 2006). While this conclusion represents one of the multiple meanings associated with school leadership, it is still unclear as to why it was a preferred perception in the context of Anguilla. This therefore calls for the use of future research into, and an understanding of, this type of contextualised perspective of school leadership.

## **5.3 Leadership Practices in the Caribbean**

### **5.3.1 The Mantle – LfL Principles**

#### **5.3.1.1 *A Focus on Learning***

The results provided empirical evidence on how LfL is understood in three Caribbean islands. A vast majority of the research participants indicated first and foremost that everyone (leaders, teachers, students and parents) is a learner. This finding implies that if each category of persons associated with school is a learner then it stands to mean that learning is the central purpose of school practices. In accordance with previous research, the theoretical model on LfL reaffirms that a focus on learning is strategically positioned at the top of the model so that it demonstrates a serious commitment to make learning the number one priority in schools (Frost, 2006).

In the midst of leadership practices the question of whose learning is central appears rather tricky since that teaching is the most common activity in schools (Timperley *et al.*, 2007). Leaders must therefore recognise that teachers in conjunction with their practices are fundamental to the task of learning particularly where student performance is concerned (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2010). This is mainly due to the fact that meaningful teaching would be difficult without some prior learning on part of the teacher and likewise, learning cannot take place unless there is some aspect of teaching (Yukl, 2006; Leithwood *et al.*, 2006). Arguably, what can be extracted from this analysis is that while teaching remains the chief routine activity it is the learning of everyone that becomes the crucial feature of school practices (Spillane and Seashore-Louis, 2002). Taylor (2000) and O'Sullivan (2003) have substantiated this view by suggesting that there is an increasing trend in schools where they are refocusing their attention on learning instead of being driven by the traditional forms of teaching.

Furthermore, in line with other studies that support the view of a focus on learning, MacBeath (2009) strongly argues that teachers should not confine their task to just the technical aspects of their work but rather expand their learning through a variety of ways which include reflection, probing, collaboration with colleagues and utilizing theories from new trends in education. These types of deliberate actions are often associated with leaders who hold strong views about sustaining a vision of learning that is clearly articulated and understood by teachers in particular but also by the entire school community (Murphy *et al.*, 2009). Interestingly though, the data within the scope of this study showed that there were significant differences among the three cases regarding the extent to which their school climate nurtures the learning of all its members. For example, the findings showed that the teachers in Anguilla reported higher levels of supporting a culture of learning in their schools as compared to

Montserrat and Antigua. The difficulty here is that there is insufficient evidence available to fully explain why there was a more supportive learning environment in Anguilla.

However, an analysis of the demographic data demonstrated that almost three quarters of the teachers within the sample had between one and ten years of teaching experience. In addition, all of the Head Teachers in Anguilla hold a master's degree in education and related fields. This seems to imply on one hand that the teaching-staff in Anguilla is relatively young and the professional background of the leaders might have an impact regarding how they address this issue. Clearly, this raises a number of questions with respect to whether higher professional qualifications determine the type of supportive learning provided by Heads and which level of staff members benefit most from such assistance (Hoyle and John, 1995). Consequently, there is the need for further research to explore the relationships between what the leaders do to promote a nurturing culture of learning in an environment of young and new teachers.

### **5.3.1.2**      *An Environment for Learning*

Macbeath and Dempster (2009) point out that there is a clear distinction between the physical and cognitive learning environments in schools. They argue that an environment for learning constitutes a dynamic process which involves the interchange among the knowledge, skills and moral duties of teachers, the attitudes of students, as well as the value and emphasis placed on learning by the leader. Factors found to be influencing an environment for learning have been explored in several studies. For example, Goleman *et al* (2005) emphasise the responsibility of leaders to sustain novel thinking and behaviours that stimulate learning and dutiful human relationships among all members of the school community. In more precise

terms, research such as that conducted by Dempster and Bagakis (2009) outlined five areas that need be taken into consideration as part of the process for creating a learning environment in schools. According to them, learning must be grounded in classroom activities, provide developmental opportunities, offer a conducive physical surrounding, encourage parental involvement and nurturing a positive school culture.

However, in relation to these suggested practices, the findings from this study showed that participants echoed similar feelings of only two of the areas mentioned above. First, they strongly agreed that the level of student learning is enhanced by the teaching experiences created in the classroom and second, sharing teaching practices to support student learning is a focused strategy for driving success. This seems to suggest that leadership and learning are intricately linked and deliberate attempts must be made by the leader to coordinate and integrate practices that would support learning (Collinson and Cook, 2007). While these findings reaffirmed certain claims made by Dempster and Bagakis (2009), there were some discrepancies regarding what took place in the actual contexts. The findings indicated that most of the schools in question did not have sufficient structures in place that invite participation in fostering an atmosphere of a learning organisation (Hargreaves, 2007). This might potentially be a consequence of an assessment which highlights the gap between what should happen and what currently exist in schools. The argument therefore is that although participants concur with the literature with respect to the importance of leaders facilitating the preconditions necessary for learning, they were also vocal about the fact that there was a disconnect between rhetoric and reality (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). This suggests that the specific factors that are associated with the reason for the detachment between what is prescribed by theoretical underpinnings and the current leadership practices should be

verified through further research so that lessons could be drawn in order to advance appropriate interventions.

### **5.3.1.3**      *A Dialogue for Learning*

The discourse on the process of a dialogue for learning is well documented in the LfL literature where there is strong emphasis on acknowledging that language is the critical medium through which leaders create shared meanings in order to impact learning in schools (Swaffield and Dempster, 2009). Broadly speaking, this study has provided some insights into the degree to which this principle was embedded in the schools that were studied. The data from the questionnaire showed that there was strong agreement amongst the participants that the collective voices of teachers could play a very important role in enhancing the capacity to promote learning. This reconfirms the importance of the third principle of the concept of LfL (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). It also matches the work of MacBeath and Dempster (2009) who advocate for the establishment of platforms in schools that promote these types of dialogues which concentrate on specific conversations that are geared toward engaging everyone in learning within the school community.

In this study however, the dialogue in schools seemed to occur at two independent levels as well as varying depths. The quantitative evidence showed that the discussions which normally take place within the classroom between teachers and students are based on listening, sharing ideas and considering alternatives before linking them to learning. This dialogic conception of teaching and learning breaks down the power relationships of the classroom and encourages a more inclusive classroom as pupils who customarily do not speak in class gain the confidence to contribute (Alexander 2004). Judging from this, there seemed

to be some attempt by teachers to move away from the traditional classroom talk (Carnell and Lodge, 2002b) to more collaborative forms of dialogue so that learning can be maximised. This type of dialogue also runs parallel with Alexander (2004) analysis of dialogic teaching where he suggests that dialogic learning should be collective, reciprocal and purposeful. However, he extends his argument further and suggests that this type of dialogue should not be only confined to the classroom but be included in the learning of adults in schools.

At the second level, the quantitative findings showed that Head Teachers do involve teachers in feedback conversations although it was not conclusive from the evidence the exact nature of the comments. However, the fact that the conversations are used as feedback suggests that it is an event which basically takes place at the end of an activity. This also suggest that they are perhaps summative in nature since that such discussions are likely to be centred on outcomes rather than processes (Macbeath and Dempster, 2009). Consequently, it makes the dialogue appear linear where teachers simply listen to the comments that leaders have to offer. Watkins (2005) points out that when the dialogue between leaders and practitioners is merely superficial there is the danger of prohibiting the deep learning that is required to promote a particular kind of thinking and discussion about the relationship between leadership and learning. The takeaway point here is that leaders must move beyond these shallow conversations and turn them into engrossed discussions which are positively focused on the main aims of the school and supported by meaningful data collected within the school context (Macbeath and Dempster, 2009).

With respect to the qualitative data, the findings revealed that there are specific things that need to happen which would enable CPD to be more meaningful. For example, the teachers in Montserrat suggested that there should be allowance for their voices to be heard in the

selection of areas for training. On the other hand, the teachers in Antigua emphasized the need to promote awareness about the importance of CPD amongst teachers while in Anguilla the teachers opined about the importance of consultation between everyone in the school community. These narratives seemed to be stressing the point that structured dialogues are fundamentally the most enabling factor of CPD. This suggests that there is some congruence between the results of the two phases of my study since they both accentuate that a dialogue for learning is a necessary component of LfL as well as an enabling feature of CPD (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009).

The findings in this study also revealed that the participants felt that a dialogue for learning must be grounded in a spirit of honest and trusting relationships. This seems to suggest that while dialogic learning constitutes an approach which is oriented in professional conversations it is often ineffective without the presence of certain values (Swaffield and Dempster, 2009). This reinforces the argument within the literature that a dialogue for learning is an important operational aspect of leadership and leaders should consistently initiate, support and sustain this type of professional conversations within a climate of trust (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009).

#### 5.3.1.4 *Shared Leadership*

Another important operational idea about school leadership which emerged from this study was that the practices which characterises leadership should involve not only the leader but the members of staff as well. The findings showed that there are two notions that were repeatedly used to express how these dimensions function in schools. Accordingly, leadership should be shared and or distributed where delegation and support are seen as related features. Gronn (2002) intensely reasons that the concept of shared leadership demonstrates the focused and pluralistic nature of leadership which is more concerned with influence rather than power. This also bears resemblance to the multiple ways in which leadership was perceived by the participants thus strengthening the point that these operational issues are all interconnected. For example, the designed exchange of the creation and transfer of knowledge between leaders and practitioners is unlikely to be successful without the appropriate forms of dialogue (Gronn, 2003b). This therefore reiterates the argument that although each of the LfL principles can stand on their own as a separate construct, they often overlap to represent a comprehensive description about the leadership practices and or actions that can shape a culture of learning (MacBeath and Demspter, 2009).

The issue of delegating and supporting as outlined by the data referred to it as assigning tasks to teachers in order to create a sense of involvement. Using the term ‘delegating’ represents what (Bennett *et al.*, 2003) calls an imprecise meaning of distributed leadership. The difference between what the respondents reported and the literature is that such conceptualisations fail to account for the multiple usage of distributed leadership (Mayrowetz, 2008). This study however, affirms prior research findings in Western societies that have identified ‘distributed leadership’ as a complementary practice of leadership (Harris, 2011b). In more precise terms, this study has revealed that establishing a network of

human resources and giving responsibilities to teachers in order to build capacities and empower them reflects the key elements of distributed leadership. A leading perspective of almost equal importance is articulated by Harris and Spillane (2008) who found that distributed leadership takes into account two main concepts. They argue that one aspect is rooted in theories linked to task dispersal (Spillane, 2006) while the other as a process where influence is dispersed (Spillane *et al.*, 2001). From a different point of view, Gunter (2012) states that both the practical dimension and the goal-oriented processes of distributed leadership give rise to a functional understanding of the concept. However, the problem with adopting such a stance would give the impression that leadership resides in a single person and it is the responsibility of that individual to openly share or involve others in its dispensation (Gunter *et al.*, 2013).

While it is undeniable that leaders should be the prime source of influence on teachers, the quantitative findings in particular, indicated that there are varying degrees to which this type of distributed practice is consistently prevalent across the contexts explored. A close examination of the results showed that components of distributed leadership appeared more visible in schools where the source of authority focused more on improving learning and less about position or control. Leithwood *et al* (2009a) substantiate this view by arguing that distributed patterns of leadership are best promoted when it is exercised through expert rather than positional power. However, scholars such as (Elmore, 2002; Gronn, 2008, 2011; Harris, 2009; Spillane, 2005) have noted that the theorized linkages between distributed leadership and its intended influences can be severely affected by leaders since the final decisions rest squarely on their formal positions (Murphy *et al.*, 2009). The data in this study showed that leaders share information and listen to other members of staff. This in my view is an important starting point since it becomes problematic when leaders prohibit teachers from taking

opportunities to lead innovation and change in schools (Bush, 2003). However, this does not sufficiently embody the meaning of shared/distributed leadership as described in the literature (Woods, 2004). While this act of listening is linked to the informal aspects of leadership practices it does not necessarily mean that it automatically promotes the teamwork or the joint interdependencies that are required to nurture such leadership practices (Spillane, 2006).

#### **5.3.1.5      *Accountability***

The findings from this study showed that there was very little mention of perceiving leadership in relation to accountability. In fact, only a small number of the participants did make reference to the concept of accountability. What was particularly interesting is that they viewed accountability as a process where a number of actions collectively merged instead of an activity which is the direct responsibility of the leader. According to their reports, it is the business of the leader to guide and support each member of the school community to take responsibility for their actions so as to ensure that whole school operates in a smooth manner and the expectations are achieved. Although this view does not totally reflect what actually takes place in schools, it corresponds with the way in which the concept is framed in the literature (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009a).

Traditionally, accountability is closely associated with school leaders single-handedly carrying out the inspection roles that are mandated by education ministries (Elmore, 2005). Here the two underlining principles which seem to be at work are the notions of enforcing the desired responsibilities as well as the subsequent penalties for noncompliance (MacBeath *et al.*, 2009). There were some indications that the few participants in this case have acknowledged that it was important for leaders to enforce or check up on what teachers do in

their practice. However, there seemed to be a perception that leadership as expressed in terms of accountability should involve a whole-school approach and all the practices are geared towards student learning. Current discourses on accountability support this view where the literature emphasises the need to conceptualise it beyond a mainstream analytical tool for determining success of schools (Nichols and Berliner, 2007; Reeves, 2009). Rather it should be regarded as an binding relationship between practitioners, learners and leaders while at the same time having concrete applicability where reflection becomes the central mechanism to inform strategies to raise standards (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2010; MacBeath *et al.*, 2009).

It is a matter of concern, however, that a larger proportion of the participants did not connect LfL with a shared sense of accountability. While the data has shown that a few participants express leadership in terms of accountability there remains a wide gap between those who conceptualise leadership in this way and those who overlook the concept. This may very well suggest that this principle is less entrenched in the operations of most schools thus, giving it less prominence. As a result, the concept of accountability and its related processes need more attention in schools so as to ensure that the nature of the learning variables are fully understood before creative actions can be exploited to enhance school improvement.

### **5.3.2 The Mantle: Teacher Leadership**

The findings indicated that teacher leadership was considered as an important aspect of school operations but also contrasted against the formal school leadership as a whole. There was some indication that first and foremost, teachers are leaders within the classrooms. This seems to mainly relate to their practice as classroom leaders (plan, support, delegate, manage behaviour and evaluate learning) and what the official leaders do in the school (Spillane, 2006). It seems to suggest that they perceived leadership as two separate functions within the school. First, at the classroom level teachers are viewed as the instructional leader and second, at the school level Head Teachers are considered as the leaders with authority. Dichotomizing leadership in this way seems to imply that what teachers do within the walls of their classrooms is one type of leadership which appear to be detached from the practices of the school leader. If this is the case then it stands to go contrary to the arguments presented above concerning the core principles of leadership and the way in which they are linked with the operational matters.

However, it is still uncertain whether this viewpoint was intended to dichotomize leadership or to raise the point that classroom teachers are in fact important leaders within the school. Notwithstanding this, what appears to be noteworthy is that the central principle of teacher leadership seems to support the notion of individual empowerment coexisting alongside the execution of the formal leadership practices (York-Barr and Duke, 2004). The literature confirms that teachers truly and prominently hold a critical position in the ways school operate and in particular in the core functions which is teaching and learning (Murphy, 2005). On the contrary, this perception as revealed in the findings is different from how it is theorised in the mainstream literature. This perhaps demonstrates that there is a disconnection between theory and practice. For example, when teachers were asked about who they felt should take

a lead role in conducting CPD most of them included teachers as they were of the opinion that they are under-utilized in this manner (Pedder *et al.*, 2010). According to some, the teachers on staff possess a variety of competencies and Heads as well as the Ministry should ensure that teacher leadership is fostered through the process of engagement.

This finding supports the work of York-Barr and Duke (2004) who emphasize strongly the need for more active involvement where teachers not only lead in their classrooms but also exercising professional independence about pedagogical matters as well as engaging in collaboration and decision-making processes. It is therefore vital for both leaders and teachers within the context investigated to recognise that there is a new thrust in expanding the roles of teachers so as to maximise the meaningful contributions they can make in school improvement (Frost, 2014). This however, might not be possible without the debunking of the classroom walls so as to allow the teacher leadership proficiencies to progressively take root within all areas of the school (Lai and Cheung, 2014).

The fact that some participants in this study agreed that aspects of teacher leadership do exist in schools suggests that there is a level of awareness. However, being cognizant of teacher leadership does not disclose what it really means in their context. Murphy (2005) makes the distinction between formal and informal teacher leadership. Formal leadership is generally characterized by roles which are legitimized through assigned duties (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005). For example, the results of this research indicate that in one of the cases (Montserrat) the participants strongly felt that management structures and systems were necessary to minimise confusion. Teachers reported that it was extremely difficult for one person to address all the issues in the school and therefore it necessitates the establishment of organizational arrangements (such as appointments of deputies and senior level teachers) that

could support the Head. These institutional arrangements can be regarded as formalised systems aimed at managing and supervising the key operations of the school (Murphy, 2005).

Shotte (2013) in her study argued that a ‘transformational leadership’ (Binnie *et al.*, 2005) was required in Montserrat after the volcanic eruptions had caused catastrophic disruptions to the education system. According to her, the consequences of the crisis resulted in a ‘social transformation’ (McCarthy, 2000; Alvord *et al.*, 2004) that mandated the government to formulate education policies which brought about some level of normality to schools. The difference between what Shotte (2013) has proposed and the views given by the teachers is that the former looks at leadership in terms of a process while the latter seems to focus on matters related to tasks. Since the data points out that certain structures are necessary at the school level to support leadership, it might also suggest that there are still lingering challenges from the prolonged period of the crisis and as such provide some insight as to why they focus their perceptions of leadership around management structures and systems. This reinforces that point that has been raised previously that the contexts in which leadership thrives seem to shape its associated meanings (Miller, 2013).

In contrast, informal teacher leadership is more community-based where teachers use their expert knowledge and creative ways to share or model best practices (Muijs and Harris 2007). This resembles the concept of ‘a community of practice’ (Younger and George, 2012) which was another important teacher leadership idea that emerged from the findings. According to the data, most of the participants indicated that as colleagues they consistently create, refine and share knowledge through formal and informal dialogue. This seems to suggest that teachers do engage in the scrutiny of their teaching practices. The definition of teacher leadership posed by York-Barr and Duke (2004) provides good support for this view

particularly because it describes it as process in which teachers work as a team to influence each other in fine tuning their practices and by extension improve learning.

### **5.3.3 The Mantle: Continuing Professional Development**

#### ***5.3.3.1 Teachers' Perceptions about Purpose***

The findings from the quantitative phase of the study indicate that there were some controversies regarding their impressions of how CPD is played out in the school context. The issue of CPD being viewed as a set of routine activities which are not grounded in learning was contrasted against the extent it focuses on exploring ways of understanding pupils' learning. On the other hand, the qualitative evidence showed that there were different reasons (across groups as well as contexts) given as to what they think should be the aim of CPD. Some of the themes which emerged include workplace improvement, knowledge extension, keeping abreast with new ideas, gaining additional techniques, continuous learning, sustaining a high quality of teaching and learning and personal and professional development. These narratives clearly demonstrate that there seem to be several reasons for conducting CPD in different contexts. While it was important to unpack the individual themes across the three islands, it was even more important to consider the overarching theme which threads through the islands. Having a sense of the central theme in relation to the purpose of CPD made it possible to corroborate the main findings of this study with other theoretical frameworks in the literature.

So what then was the meaning and purpose of CPD in the context of the Caribbean? The dominant themes which seemed to collectively portrait the purpose of conducting CPD across the islands are improvement of organisational practices and personal development. The

notion of ‘improvement’ is repeatedly echoed by experts in the field who strongly argue that irrespective of how schools are organised, the professional development of teachers is fundamental to its improvement (Carlyon, 2015). This falls in line with the perspective offered by Mitchell (2013) who refers to CPD as a process where teachers engage in a programme to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to improve practice. Both the findings in this study and the wide-ranging definitions found in the literature converge on one critical point about the purpose of CPD which is that it is the foundation to improving and supporting the practices of teachers (Timperley, 2005; Opfer and Pedder, 2010b). Equally important, a number of teachers felt that the purpose of CPD was also important for personal development. Most of them seem to associate the acquisition of knowledge and skills with an improvement in self which eventually leads to professional growth and advancement in their careers (Pedder and MacBeath, 2008).

The underlying assumption is that teachers cannot grow or improve unless they learn over a period of time. Reviews of CPD literature underscore the significance of teachers being lifelong learners so that they can adapt in diverse contexts (Newell *et al.*, 2009). As a result of this, teachers require it at varying phases of their teaching journey so as to sustain the specialized growth that is necessary to improve student learning (Carlyon, 2015). Even though a separate case was made with respect to linking CPD with personal development, the overlapping issue is that it still represents some form of improvement. The significance of this finding contributes to a better understanding of the purpose of CPD in various contexts as well as strengthening previous claims about what the intended outcomes should entail (Opfer and Pedder, 2010b).

### **5.3.3.2**      *Common Practices of CPD*

The question regarding the common elements that exist in CPD (particularly those carried out by the Ministry) practices solicited diverse responses across the three islands. The most fascinating thing was that each island presented a narrative which seems to represent a different area of the CPD process. For example, in Montserrat the broad narrative with respect to the common feature of CPD was that the main practices revolved around repetitive content which were delivered mainly through lectures. In Anguilla a slightly different but more detailed account was given to describe the common practice of CPD. Participants described most of the CPD activities as non-interactive, centralised training delivered by external personnel. These two narratives overlapped to some degree but more significantly, they both give a sense as to how CPD was organised and executed. In contrast, the story which emerged from Antigua focused on the outcome or desired effect of CPD. The findings showed that the lack of enthusiasm to sustain and implement ideas from the training was a prominent feature associated with CPD. The real difference here is that in Anguilla and Montserrat the common practices were more related to the CPD process whereas in Antigua it was directed towards the resultant impact of the end product. Nonetheless, these findings suggest that there were deep concerns about the way in which CPD was conducted as well as the follow-up actions.

The fact that terms such as lectures, repetition and centralised training were used to describe the nature of CPD in the islands do suggest that the Ministries appear to address professional development through these modes of delivery. In fact, the reports from the Ministry Officials indicated that they often use the results from the National Test to inform the content they select for CPD. In this current study, these conceptualisations broadly fit with emerging models of CPD in the literature (Kennedy, 2011). Acknowledging that CPD focused on mainly skills delivered by experts with very little practical application reflects the ‘training’

model which is characterized by doing something to teachers to improve their learning (Kennedy, 2005). This also aligns with ‘deficit’ model which looks at addressing the shortcomings in teachers’ ability although it tends to be unsupportive of the development of a collective knowledge base within the school (Richardson and Placier, 2001). Kennedy (2014) regards these two models as principally ‘transmission methods’ which appear to provide little opportunity for teachers to take control over their learning. Direct training as perceived by the participants seem to suggest a top-down transfer model of CPD where prescribed ideas are communicated to teachers for them to carry out (Edmonds and Lee, 2002). On the contrary, other research highlights the importance of local (school-based) professional learning communities to support teacher knowledge in order to revamp the deficit assumptions and promote the conditions necessary for changes in teaching and learning (Kamler and Comber, 2005).

Planning CPD activities mainly from performances on tests often de-emphasize the importance of the collaborative approach which is required to make CPD more meaningful as well as underscoring that most of teachers’ learning is socially situated in their interactions (Muijs and Harris, 2003). On the grounds of the quantitative findings, it was quite clear that most of the teachers across the islands agreed that the social relationships developed during CPD activities could tease out strategies about teaching and learning before they can be applied in their lessons (Day and Gu, 2007). This is also confirmed in the literature where the argument is made that CPD must be conceptualised in a particular way so that teachers could learn together and work collaboratively to bring about changes in their practices and ultimately in student learning (Opfer and Pedder, 2011; Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009).

### 5.3.3.3 *Challenges of CPD*

The data show that the predominant factors in relation to the challenges of CPD were lack of planning, unavailability of resources, reluctant behaviours, inappropriate scheduling and lack of incentives. It seems however, that these themes could be categorised into two overarching themes namely; school related matters and the perception of teachers. The school-level issues take into account the strategic organisational arrangements that were put in place as well as the financial and human resources allocated to support the activities. On the other hand, teachers' perceptions seem to focus on their professional responsibilities and interest. All of the participants overwhelmingly stated that there was an absence of strategic planning of CPD provisions in order to balance effectively the organisational and individual needs while at the same time, implementing the mandatory national policy priorities. These strategic problems were judged as unplanned, incoherent and irregular where such issues reduce the full impact of CPD (Opfer *et al.*, 2008).

In response to these matters Pedder *et al* (2010) argue that school leaders and administrators should ensure that any training and development meet the needs of both individuals and organisational priorities. However, to weigh the argument, they point out that the resources which are often required to support the organisational planning are not always available since such resources are not infinite. Nonetheless, operating strategically means to be proactive, surveying the environment and trying to anticipate what desired outcomes might be important in the future (Robson *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, leading CPD strategically involves rising above the day-to-day operational issues and looking at the broader picture, being engaged in setting

direction, translating plan into action, aligning the people and the organisation to the strategy and determining effective intervention points (Davies and Davies 2009).

In addition to the issue of strategic planning there was a sense that teachers' reluctance and or motivation posed a challenge for CPD. Some participants expressed the view that there was tangible evidence about some teachers unwilling and uninspired to participate in CPD. It seems therefore that these affective outcomes function as important preconditions for training and development. Harland and Kinder (1997) reinforce this view in their argument by suggesting that motivation and commitment are crucial characteristics in enhancing the passion and energy required for teachers to implement the ideas received during CPD. In another study the argument is made that professional learning tends to be less effective if the learning experiences are perceived to be counterproductive (Day and Gu, 2007). Resolving such tensions is adequately addressed in the works of White (2013) where the suggestion is made that school leaders need to model the value of CPD so as to motivate teachers to accept their responsibility and actively participate in the process. Since it is vital for leaders to act as motivators, it is therefore important to recognise the huge benefits to be derived from the linkages between LfL and CPD (Day and Gu, 2007).

Another challenge perceived by the participants was the issue of effective or adequate time of CPD. Intriguingly it seems that the interviewees expressed the difficulties associated with time in three different ways. First, time was described as a fixed resource where it refers to physically allocating the period and or materials for CPD which in turn would support the other programmes in the school (Bubb and Earley, 2009). Second, time was denoted as a logistical entity where it took into consideration the actual timetabling of CPD in such a way that would minimise the disruptions caused when teachers are attending training sessions.

Third, time with respect to balancing their work at school alongside the time they spent with their families. A number of teachers strongly stated that due to the fact that most school-based CPD are conducted after school it conflicts with the time they felt was necessary to devote to their families. This seems to imply that when teachers participate in training after a long day in the classroom it potentially leads to teacher dissatisfaction or even burn-out as they try to fulfil the competing demands on their time. These findings resonate with a number of reports in the literature. Kwakman (2003) confirms that time is certainly the most commonly recognized challenge to CPD.

In this study, the issue of time with respect to the amount that was allocated for training sessions was consistently reported in the interviews. Some teachers pointed out that the one hour each week which was assigned for CPD was insufficient to allow teachers to grow professionally. Alternatively, some were of the belief that the discussions were often unfocused as teachers frequently engage in conversations about operational and behavioural issues rather than engaging in a dialogue which can benefit them in the teaching and learning process (Pedder *et al.*, 2007). Similarly, the State of the Nation research project in UK which was commissioned in the late 2000s makes reference to these issues associated with the time schools designate for staff development (Pedder *et al.*, 2010). The report findings found that very few schools utilize this time well for professional development purposes (Bubb and Earley, 2009). This seems to suggest that within the contexts of UK and the Caribbean there is a consistent problem regarding the task of setting aside time for staff development and as such is a major challenge faced by schools in their attempt to address CPD. However, as important as these findings are, it must be recognised that the manner in which the time is used is more important than the amount of time devoted to professional development (Bubb *et al.*, 2009).

#### **5.3.3.4 Evaluation Mechanisms**

The results from the interviews indicated that the standard way in which CPD is evaluated was through unstructured and informal feedback. This finding was further validated by the quantitative data which showed that teachers reported that in their schools there was not a clear method of gauging the extent to which students' learning have been improved by CPD. However, the degree to which there was no system in place to evaluate CPD varied across the islands and therefore the context is an important matter in any debate about the evaluation of CPD in schools (Earley, 2010). In this study, the popular mode of evaluating CPD appeared to be brief verbal communication after the training. Subsequent research have supported this claim where it has been argued that most of the evaluation of CPD by schools leaders and policy-makers is often ill-defined, circumstantial and focused on simple measures (Earley and Poritt, 2014). To bring some leverage to the current nature of evaluating CPD in schools, Guskey (2002) strongly argue that while the aims and objectives are critical components of the evaluation process, it is also vital that leaders put in place a mechanism that would collect useful evidence of the impact of CPD. This signifies that attention must be paid to the evaluation of CPD during the planning stages rather than something added at the end of the process (Guskey, 2002).

A number of participants elaborated further on the issue by stressing that there are times when evaluation forms are administered but this often prove problematic since many of the forms are not returned or given back uncompleted. The reliance on the completion of post-evaluation forms or discussing performance during review forums suggest that the impact of CPD is seldom appraised against planned aims or outcomes (Guskey, 2000). Disputably, there seems to some weakness between the way in which CPD is evaluated in the schools and

its suitability to measure the impact of CPD. This problem is highlighted as well by the UK Inspection Agency Ofsted (2006) which confirms in their report that the evaluation of CPD is the weakest aspect of the process observed in schools. Such an issue seems to be common within the Caribbean and UK contexts partly because the literature confirms that evaluating the impact of CPD is found to be the greatest challenge for schools (Rhodes *et al.*, 2004).

It is clear from the above arguments that there is a need for vigorous impact studies in order to understand the intricacies associated with teacher learning and how it is transposed into pupil learning (Opfer and Pedder, 2011). However, what a number of researchers have found is that schools tend to lack the capacity (experience, skills and tools) to assess the impact of CPD (Bubb and Earley, 2007; Ofsted, 2006; Goodall *et al.*, 2005). The nature of this problem seems to be in line with one of the major challenges of CPD faced by schools in the islands investigated. The issue of strategic planning and the inadequacies of resources were reported as factors that impede the success of CPD. This implies that there is the need for the proper implementation and monitoring of CPD interventions so as to establish clear links between its provisioning to improve teacher quality and the attainment of students (Harris, 2007). Moreover, this calls for a closer examination into the role played by school leadership in CPD. Added to this, Day (1999) argues that the central role of any school leader is grounded in taking the responsibility for the promoting the culture of professional learning in schools. Cardno and Allen (2012) endorses this perspective by emphasising that the most effective way to encourage teachers to utilize developmental activities to impact learning is by supporting and monitoring of CPD. The key argument which needs to be reinforced here is that leaders can significantly influence the competencies of teachers and consequently improve the student achievement if they first recognise and then harness the potential of CPD (Cardno, 2005; Timperley *et al.*, 2008).

### **5.3.3.5 CPD and Teacher Accreditation**

The findings revealed that linking CPD with the accreditation of teachers appeared to be very important matter. The liveliness of the responses as well as the fact that each participant had something substantial to say about the issue suggests that this topic was a burning issue in the teaching fraternity across the three islands. The participants, and in particular the teachers, proposed various ways in which the linkages between CPD and teacher accreditation could be developed so that they would have a more meaningful impact. Such acknowledgments include tangible methods of valuing their efforts, credits for higher education, established professional standards and references for future endeavours. For example, some of the participants said that the time spent on pursuing training over a period of time could be translated into remuneration packages for teachers thus, giving their effort a more concrete value. This discovery has a significant impact in relation to the issue of problematizing the study as referenced in the beginning chapter. The fact that the research questions originated from my personal experiences and observations within the school context speaks volume of the appropriateness of the methods used and the richness of the responses generated to gain new insights into this issue. However, despite the numerous accounts that were produced, the overarching theme which seemed to be central was that the linkages could benefit teachers in two important ways, that is to say, function as a reward to motivate teachers and advance their careers in education.

Although it was not explicitly stated, there was an assumption that teachers are somewhat dissatisfied with current status of CPD and a sense of unwillingness was detected in some of their expressions. Previous writers (Kelania and Bowers, 2012) identify motivation as one of

the most significant factors in successful development programmes. The supposition here is that there are certain types of motivation which drives teacher involvement on one hand and others which make teachers reluctant. This current study demonstrates, however, that the forms of accreditations communicated by the participants seem to fall into the category of extrinsic motivation where participating in an event is perceived as a means to an end (Porter *et al.*, 2003). The work of Goetch (2011, p. 89) offers further clarification on this view by pointing out that to be “driven to do something” implies “having a reason” to do it. It seems reasonable therefore to conclude that the linkages between CPD and teacher accreditation is mainly framed in terms of physical and or external rewards which provide the stimulus to energise them to be more willing to participate on CPD.

It is therefore important to consider this when looking at ways of motivating teachers to commit to CPD. Teachers must have a high level of motivation before they could be persuaded to move beyond their comfort zones (Schunk *et al.*, 2008). This was especially the case in the findings where teachers strongly agreed and acknowledged that it is necessary to be engaged in professional development in order to keep abreast with new trends in education. Yet, Heystek (2011) makes the point that development is quite demanding because it requires physical, emotional and cognitive changes in the individuals concerned in order for it to have the desired behavioural outcomes. Appropriately designed professional development has to take account of the personal circumstances, interests, needs, (Bubb *et al.*, 2009) perceptions and uncertainties of the target group involved (Martin and Dowson, 2009).

## **5.4 Human and Social Issues: Personalizing Leadership**

### **5.4.1 The Crust: Moral and Personal Behaviours**

Leadership was also perceived at the personal level. There were fewer individuals who emphasised that the human and social aspects of leadership cannot be ignored. Accordingly, the findings from this study highlighted three distinct ideas that were associated with the human and social issues. Interpersonal relations, moral standards and personality traits were all espoused as the types of personal and professional values that leaders must exhibit and demonstrate in their roles. Smith (2011) blends these values into a single category which is referred to as an “ethic of care” (p. 529). The critical idea is that leadership practices are undoubtedly grounded in professional and personal values and while they vary in different contexts, they are underpinned by a passion for teaching and students’ learning (Earley *et al.*, 2002). The evidence from the interviews showed that in each island the participants expressed the moral issues in slightly different ways which support this viewpoint. These personalised views of leadership signify that leadership goes deeper than the core ideas and operational matters that have been discussed above. In principle, the enactment of leadership seems to take on its own persona and it is essential to mirror it in any conceptualisation of leadership (Smith, 2011).

The findings disclosed that, in particular, the ministry officials considered interpersonal relations as a core element of school function particularly for managing the varied behaviours in the school. The teachers on the other hand, highlighted three distinct examples of moral standards to illustrate of how they perceived the concept to be manifested in schools. First, they claim that leaders should value and appreciate teachers as individuals rather than just thinking about them for the work they carry out. Second, leaders should have the capacity to

establish good social relationships which is essential for teamwork. Third, it is necessary for leaders to reach out and model honest and trustworthy relationships.

Support for these personalised leadership capacities comes from Notman and Henry (2011) who found successful principals had good mastery of interpersonal connectedness with members of the school community. International research findings on key features of school leadership also confirm that human relation skills are some of the areas that require attention especially in the preparation of school leaders (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2012). To gain a better understanding of the relationship between leaders and these moral issues, Sekerka and Bagozzi (2007) use the term ‘moral courage’ to refer to the aptitude of leaders to use inner principles to do what is good for others regardless of threat to self. This entails pro-social behaviours that go beyond the specified role requirements to protect the members of the organization interests. The participants in this study have suggested that leaders need to engage in positive acts that would produce and maintain the well-being and integrity of others, such as helping, sharing, cooperating, and treating everyone with respect (Kidder and Bracy, 2001).

Personalizing leadership also appears to bring into question the concept of ‘self’ (Campbell *et al.*, 1996). While the participants expressed their views on how leaders should act from a moral standpoint, they did not fully clarify under what conditions it was possible for leaders to act in moral ways. This perhaps is where future research might be needed to shed some light into this gap. However, the literature draws on specific concepts which help to illustrate how leaders actually position themselves to become moral leaders. Campbell *et al* (1996) use the term ‘self-awareness’ to refer to the extent to which a leader possesses accurate self-knowledge and demonstrates he or she is cognizant of his or her impact on other people. Moreover, self-

awareness involves leaders using their knowledge about themselves to affect their agency (e.g., thinking, motivation and choice of behaviour), which could enhance their capacity for leading and developing followers (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008).

Another construct within the literature that elaborates on the human relation skills is ‘relational transparency’. This involves leadership behaviours that promote positive relationships through disclosures and sharing of information, including what constitutes the leader’s true thoughts and feelings (Avolio and Luthans, 2003). With respect to relational transparency, the teachers in this study indicated that this type of engagement should be marked by openness, accountability and honesty between leaders and followers (Avolio and Luthans, 2003). Ultimately, it would promote clearer social exchanges where leaders and followers lay out what each expects from the relationship, and the inputs each are willing to provide, thus forming a more coherent working relationship (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008).

## **5.5 Summary of Chapter**

This chapter has presented a discussion and analysis of the findings following an investigation of the perceptions of school leadership and continuing professional development in three Caribbean islands. It begins by highlighting the complexities involved with respect to how leadership and CPD are conceptualised and the difficulties in establishing any straightforward meanings of each concept. The merging of the themes gave a sense that there were three broad ‘constructions’ of leadership which are complementary in nature. In the first and perhaps the main construction, there are three core ideas (see section 5.2) about leadership which lay out the fundamental principles in relation to how they perceive the concept. Second, leadership does not function in a vacuum and as such they emphasised a number of operational matters

which are compared with the cross-section of the Earth (see section 5.3) but are necessary to support the core ideas of leadership. Third, practices are enacted by individuals and this is compared with the Earth's crust. These personal attributes are about re-landscaping certain types of human and social issues (see section 5.4) which are profoundly attached to leadership.

The study showed that leadership is perceived in numerous ways and the emphases given to what features are important seemed to be determined by the context. Although there were differences across the islands, the most common idea about leadership was that its primary focus should be on learning for both teachers and students. Leaders are seen as the main facilitators and influential persons to improve learning but the results show that leadership practices vary in each island. This brings into play the three operational matters which were identified as the key activities that support leadership practices. The five LfL principles manifested themselves in varying degrees within the islands. Overall the evidence indicated that the participants understood the importance of the concepts but the case was made that there are certain contextual variables which impact on how well they are entrenched in school practices.

On the other hand, CPD was viewed as a powerful lens through which leaders can utilise to improve school practices and personal development. The findings in this study highlighted the issues associated with the purpose of CPD, the way in which it is practiced, the challenging and enabling factors, evaluation mechanisms and teacher accreditation. This created different narratives of the current status of affairs in each island. All of the schools provided opportunities for professional development but the evidence showed that greatest challenge for CPD is directly related to weak strategic planning where teachers are unmotivated regarding participation. While this sets the framework, the concept of 'structured dialogue' was deemed as a critical tool for linking all other aspects of CPD. In addition, the study signposts the

importance of the human relation skills that are required for leaders to maintain stable and valuable relationships with teachers, parents and students. One of the core ideas of leadership pointed out that school leaders should acquire professional knowledge to allow them to develop the essential competencies. It therefore means that while the evidence supports the claim that being a school leader is a complex activity it makes a significant difference if the person is well prepared and equipped.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This concluding chapter first presents a restatement of the broad research questions. It then highlights the key findings of the research as well as their relationships with the literature reviewed in order to show how the results add to a better understanding of the phenomenon investigated. After this, it outlines the limitations of the study and the contributions to the field of knowledge. This is followed by a brief reflection of the research journey but in particular, the skills, attitudes and virtues which were demanded of me as an inexperienced researcher. Finally, the findings are translated into some recommendations as well as suggesting areas for further research.

#### **6.1.2 Restatement of the Research Purpose and Questions**

This research was conducted with the specific aim of addressing questions about two main concepts: LfL and CPD in three Caribbean islands. In order to adequately address these key ideas, the following broad research questions were developed:

- 1. How are the concepts of continuing professional development and leadership perceived and practiced in primary schools in the Caribbean?**
- 2. What are the common practices and issues associated with continuing professional development and leadership in such contexts?**
- 3. How are teachers involved in school leadership activities particularly as they relate to learning and continuing professional development?**

4. **In what ways have leadership roles and other contextual factors influenced the approach by which CPD is evaluated?**

## **6.2 Assessment of the Main Findings: addressing the research questions.**

Phase one (quantitative) of the research was designed and executed to provide a snapshot of the how these two concepts were understood and practiced in primary schools. The second phase of the project (qualitative) provided deeper insights into the perceptions and practices of teachers and school administrators. This in turn has generated some meaningful and diverse ways of understanding LfL and CPD especially in the contexts of Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla.

### **6.2.1 Research Question 1: How are the concepts of leadership and professional development perceived and practiced in primary schools in the Caribbean?**

Leadership is perceived in different ways and as a result, the concept takes on a multiple meaning. This finding seems to follow closely in the literature from Sergiovanni (2001) and Yukl (2002) work where they noted that the concept of leadership does not comprise of a solitary view. Consistent with Bolman and Deal (1997) interpretation, leadership is regarded as a plural entity. These perceptions captured the wide spectrum of views across the three islands. The participants' perceptions were based on three key conceptualisations of leadership where there was some level of priority. The first and perhaps, the main perception of leadership is that it comprise of a core set of fundamental ideas. Since that these core ideas emerged from the major themes it seems to suggest that they form the key characteristics of

leadership which clarify the meaning and nature of the concept. The participants in this study certainly felt that by its very nature, leadership is about consensus building among the school community. However, the capacity to mould or get a group of persons to collectively agree on certain matters is highly dependent on the leaders' ability to influence and motivate individuals to participate in the process (Bush and Glover, 2003; Leithwood and Reihl, 2003). In addition to this, the participants expressed strongly that leaders should be well-versed in certain types of professional knowledge to enable their practices to have the desired impact. These discourses echo Belchetz and Leithwood (2007) assertion that a number of leadership practices (for example, establishing group consensus, and influencing and planning organisational functions) symbolise successful leadership practices although they are applied in different ways across social contexts. This fits well with Miller's (2013) argument that any attempt to discount the multidimensional nature of leadership would seriously undermine the ways in which the concept functions across different settings in the Caribbean.

Following this, the participants highlighted some operational ideas which they felt that were not only important but necessary actions for supporting leadership. The five principles of LfL stood out as a set of strategies that leaders could use to maximise learning across school settings and at the same time improve performance. The LfL literature highlight that a focus on learning (Frost, 2006; Taylor, 2000; O'Sullivan, 2003; MacBeath, 2009), an environment for learning (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Goleman *et al.*, 2005), a dialogue for learning (Swaffield and Dempster, 2009; Watkins, 2005; MacBeath *et al.*, 2009), shared/distributed leadership (Gronn, 2002; Harris, 2003; Spillane, 2006) and accountability (Elmore, 2005; Brundett and Rhodes, 2010) are principled actions that leaders could weave into their practice in order to promote and sustain school improvement.

Another example of an operational strategy that could support leadership practice is teacher leadership. Teacher leadership does not only empower teachers to take on special tasks but more importantly, it inspires them to become more actively engaged in the collaborative patterns of activities that are geared towards learning. Renowned researchers in teacher leadership (York-Barr and Duke, 2004) endorse this view that leaders need to recognise the benefits of creating a space for teachers to play a lead role in the efforts toward driving student attainment.

The human and social issues extracted from the data were seen as another component of school leadership. Although these issues emerged from the minor themes the consistency in which they were reported across the three islands suggested that they were not only potentially an intriguing finding but also indicated that they were considered a significant aspect towards constructing a comprehensive meaning of leadership. According to the participants, leaders have certain moral responsibilities with respect to how they lead (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). One participant stated it is extremely difficult for leaders to navigate through the diverse and complex behaviours of teachers, students and parents without shifting their personality to suit the situation. The literature supports the notion of the importance of the personalised leadership capacities (Notman and Henry, 2011) and the human relation skills (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2012) necessary for leaders to forge positive relationships that could nurture a climate of learning.

At the island level there were differences in the way in which leadership was understood. The context in which the school functions and the impact of other factors appeared to have an influence on which aspects of leadership was deemed important particularly for the teachers (Miller, 2013). For instance, the findings showed that in Montserrat there was a stronger

presence of an autocratic style of leadership where position and power remain the area of focus. This form of authority is more in line with what Bush (2008) refers to as a “management overload”. Montserrat has undergone a devastating volcanic crisis which has severely disrupted the education systems. This might partially explain why leadership was perceived as a managerial function where the focus appeared to be on control mechanisms. On the other hand, leadership in Antigua (and specifically from the collective voices of the focus group) was perceived in terms of carry out rules and procedures. The positioning of security guards in primary schools in Antigua was an observable feature. This was not observed in the other two islands and as such it perhaps suggests that there are issues surrounding safety in the primary schools in Antigua. It is also possible that this situation helps to shape the aspect of leadership the participants in Antigua considered as most important. In the case of Anguilla, leadership was perceived in relation to learning. The data illustrate that there was a higher prevalence of good leadership practices in Anguilla as compared with Montserrat and Antigua. Principals in Anguilla possess a Master’s degree in Education and having such specialist training might be a likely explanation for them to demonstrate a keener interest in nurturing a culture of learning in their schools.

On the matter of CPD, all of the participants from the three groups across the three islands and agreed that the main purpose of CPD is to improve organisational practices and enhance personal development (Earley and Porrit, 2014). This reflects the overarching theme emerging from three contexts. In conjunction with the purpose of CPD, the participants overwhelmingly agreed that the Ministry of Education has the direct responsibility to provide access to meaningful training opportunities. However, there were differences between the major, minor and individual themes across the three islands. In some cases, the themes overlap giving a sense of them reflecting similar ideas. For example, the participants in

Montserrat stated that main purpose for CPD was for organisational improvement while those in Antigua noted that its primary purpose was for keeping abreast with new ideas or information about teaching. In Anguilla the participants perceived the major aim of CPD is to provide opportunities for continuous training and learning. While it was possible to sift through these individual differences and find a common ground for the purpose of CPD, it is still important to note the complexities involved in what actually take place in schools. Each context has its own peculiarities and as such plays an import role in shaping the way in which CPD is understood and the purposes it should serve in schools (Guskey, 2002).

### **6.2.2 Research Question 2: What are the common practices and issues associated with leadership and continuing professional development in such contexts?**

The findings from the questionnaire disclosed that an extremely high proportion of the participants agreed that leadership should be an inclusive practice. This means that the teachers and other members of the school community should participate in the decision-making process. However, a closer examination of the findings revealed that there were differences across the three islands with respect to how features of shared or distributed leadership were embedded in schools. In the case of Anguilla, the data showed that the leaders seemed to direct more of their practices towards developing a culture of learning. For instance, the findings indicated that a higher proportion of the teachers in Anguilla said that their leaders promote a spirit of shared leadership by drawing on the experience and expertise of the staff. In addition to this, more than half of the participants agreed that their leaders play a supporting role in relation to involving both the internal and external members of the school community to work together to generate new ideas about learning. Although this practice is more prevalent in one island as compared to the others, they are all promising findings within

the context of the Caribbean. However, it perhaps warrants additional inquiry into the complex process of nurturing habits of learning.

In relation to the common practices of CPD, the key findings from the interviews showed that one predominant theme from each island emerged from the data: repetitive content delivered in lectures (Montserrat), lack of enthusiasm to sustain and implement ideas (Antigua) and non-interactive centralised training delivered by external personnel (Anguilla). These findings are interesting for two reasons. First, it was difficult to extract a central theme that is applied to all islands for this issue. Moreover, it possibly reflects a sense of much dissatisfaction with CPD for various reasons; hence the divergence in opinions. Second, it demonstrates the role played by the island context in shedding light on the dominant practices which exist in each island. Although there are common features found in the education systems in each island, it is the distinctiveness in each context that seems to be the factor which affects the CPD processes hence might be responsible for the discrepancies. Despite these tensions however, a large number of the teachers view CPD as an important mechanism which promote adult learning. It is quite heartening to recognise that the teachers are thinking about their learning instead of focusing on just the teaching aspect of their work.

The key findings to the issue concerning the challenging factors of CPD were linked to strategic planning and teacher motivation. It was quite evident that every single participant commented on the lack of planning particularly as it relates to taking their needs into account, supplementary resources, scheduling of sessions and the delivery of the training. The issue of not adequately addressing their training needs was supported in the quantitative phase of the study where more than half of the teachers agreed that their pedagogical requirements were not taken on board before the planning of CPD. These findings are consistent with

previous research data which acknowledge the significance of teachers participating in CPD that caters for their professional and personal needs (Harris, 2013). Garet *et al* (2001) emphasize that one of the determining characteristics of successful CPD is the proper alignment of the training provisions with the specific pedagogical needs of the teachers. Looking at the modes of expressions from my field notes it appeared that the above challenging factors contributed to the lack of motivation voiced by many of them. However, what is extremely important to note is that these findings were reinforced by the overlapping of the issues across the three islands thus, strengthening the point that they were common issues in each context.

In relation to the enabling factors, the findings showed that for each island there was a distinct theme which best described the subjects which were important for addressing the problems associated with CPD. The participants in Montserrat felt that teachers' voice and involvement are critical elements for improving CPD. In Antigua the emphasis was slightly different where the participants contended that developing teachers' awareness of the importance of CPD is a necessary step towards ensuring that teachers understand the purpose of CPD. Alternatively, the themes that emerged from the interviews in Anguilla were consultation and collaboration. The value placed on discussions and teamwork from the Anguilla context appeared to be the most critical aspects for enabling CPD. The individual theme which I found extremely interesting was 'utilizing research work in CPD'. The idea of incorporating empirical data especially from the local context to inform the decisions taken in CPD is a remarkable account which is quite different from most of the other responses. However, the narrative which best represents the combined theme for the three islands is 'structured dialogues' (Alexander, 2004). There seemed to be the view that in order to move CPD in a positive direction all the stakeholders in education must be involved in specific types of

conversations and or dialogues that takes into account the planning, execution and outcomes of CPD activities.

### **6.2.3 Research Question 3: How are teachers engaged in school leadership practices and continuing professional development?**

The extent to which teachers felt that they are engaged in leadership practices varied across each islands. The quantitative data showed that teachers' engagement of leadership practices were more confined to the classroom rather than in other sectors of the school. While there is some evidence that school leaders involved them in other aspects of school functioning, the leading and learning engagements seemed to be more focused on passive roles such as listening to feedback or comments during staff meetings (Yukl, 2002). However, at the collegial level the findings revealed that they create spaces to refine and share knowledge through formal and informal dialogues. One intriguing piece of evidence is that the teachers commented that the habit of sharing among staff members could promote a 'community of practice'. Although some participants stated that their schools encourage this practice, it was not stated clearly how this was done in the schools.

The findings also showed that teachers in particular expressed strong opinions regarding the question who should lead CPD. They seemed to think that there is an over-reliance by the Ministry to use experts from overseas to lead CPD instead of utilizing the expertise of teachers and other professionals in the local context. Many teachers contend that their skills and competencies are insufficiently tapped into during the planning of CPD. This was also echoed in their views concerning the common practices of CPD where they reported that the training sessions were mainly led by external personnel using a lecture style approach.

Contrary to this, the Ministry Officials indicated that it is sometimes difficult to find the expert knowledge required locally to conduct CPD. My view on this contentious matter is that if most of the CPD sessions are content-based then it stands to reason that the Ministry would search for external agents to deliver the content, hence marginalising the use of teachers or other professionals in the system. The findings demonstrate that the main purpose of CPD is to improve organisational practices where the chief practice of schooling is teaching. Teachers therefore, should be at the heart of exchanging best practices which in turn create the opportunity for them to take lead roles in the delivery of CPD activities. Furthermore, some participants felt that when teachers are used to lead CPD it creates a deeper sense of collegiality since teachers are more likely to be able to identify with their colleagues.

#### **6.2.4 Research Question 4: In what ways have leadership roles and other contextual factors influenced the approach by which CPD is evaluated?**

The theme which emerged from my analysis of how schools evaluate the impact of CPD was ‘an unstructured mechanism’. The informants categorically stated that CPD sessions are evaluated mainly through informal processes. It was clear from both the questionnaire and interview data that there was not a systematic method in place to assess the degree to which students’ learning has been improved by CPD. This finding is broadly in line with the research work of Guskey (2000) who argue that most of the evaluation of CPD in schools comprise mainly of summaries of the training sessions conducted where teachers give verbal feedback about their impressions of the development activities. Guskey (2002) also claims that this type of evaluation fits well with the first level - participant reaction - of CPD impact. In some cases the evaluation takes a more formal structure (through questionnaires or

checklists). Nevertheless, they still remain focused on the organisational and technical aspects of the training rather than looking at the expected changes in teachers and students' learning (Guskey, 2002).

### **6.3 Limitations of the Study**

This study has been concerned with the perceptions of head teachers, ministry officials but in particular teachers since they are more deeply involved with matters pertaining school leadership, learning and CPD. For the purposes of this study, however, I was interested in the perspectives of the persons at each of the three main levels (ministry, school, and classroom) of education. Since that my target population was confined to three small islands in the Caribbean the findings might not be representative of the entire region.

Due to time restraints I excluded the views of parents and students and as such the responses from the interviewed participants could only provide a partial representation of the total perceptions that might exist. There were no participants from private schools and it therefore minimised the transferability of the results in relation to such types of schools. Time and resource constraints influenced the scope of the study. Having to travel from the UK to the Caribbean meant that I had a limited time frame in which to conduct the fieldwork. Due to the reduction in the number of schools caused by the volcanic crisis in Montserrat and the professional relationships I have with some of the teachers who were available, it was an appropriate research decision to extend the study beyond the shores of my island. The very low responses from the teachers who completed the questionnaires to participate in follow-up interviews decreased the potential benefits that could have been derived from a cross examination between data collected from the same participants and across two research

paradigms. This created the greatest challenge in finding participants for the interviews which brought into play access and gatekeeping issues.

In relation to the presentation and discussion of the findings certain decisions were taken into consideration. Fundamentally, I had to decide; 1. Which findings should be included in the report? 2. The depth of comparison between the cases? 3. How to present the findings and discussions in a manner that would make the ideas and arguments clear to readers? To overcome these issues while at the same time ensuring that sufficient data was presented, I relied on the thematic matrices in the form of tables to fully capture the essence of the main findings.

#### **6.4 Contributions to the Field of Knowledge**

My research has made contributions in the following areas: research context, methodology and analysis and theoretically. Cohen *et al* (2007) emphasize the point that a predominantly qualitative approach focuses on achieving a sense of the meaning that others give to their own situations. Reality therefore in the contexts of the three islands is ultimately constructed from the individual interpretations of the participants in this study. With respect to the research context, there have been no similar studies conducted in the islands that were investigated. Most of the research in school leadership within the Caribbean is conducted in the larger islands and the main theoretical perspectives have been developed in the advanced countries (Miller, 2016). These findings point to the importance of the value that different research contexts could add to the task of producing a better understanding of what school leadership means and how the learning of its members are influenced by such roles.

From a theoretical standpoint, the results from this study therefore, add to the growing body of the leadership and CPD literature that attempt to explain how the concepts are understood. This study therefore makes an important contribution to our understanding of school leadership especially with respect to how these participants generated meanings from their working experiences. The findings from the Caribbean context illuminate common discourses as well as identifying similarities and differences within the dominant leadership literature. A conceptual framework of these ideas was presented using a comparison with the Earth's cross-section. This gives a fresh outlook at how the related concepts of leadership can be viewed in an effort to map out the defining features. One noteworthy finding in this study that I also consider as a significant contribution is related to the emphasis placed on building consensus across the entire educational spectrum. In contrast, the notion of consensus in UK and other developed places are impacted by the imposition of individualism especially where the formulation of policy is concerned (Ball, 2008).

On the matter of methodological approach, the design of this study could be deemed as a unique method. This study relied on what I refer to as a *quad-troika* approach where 4 different entities each consisting of 3 units were used to collect and analyse the data. The following summarises these aspects:

- 1) **Three cases:** (Montserrat, Antigua, Anguilla)
- 2) **Three different positions sampled:** (principal, ministry officials and teachers)
- 3) **Triangulation - Three methods of data collection:** (questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion)
- 4) **Three stage thematic analysis:** (major, minor and individual)

I anticipate that this methodology would open the way for other researchers to combine different investigative tools to explore the complexity and diversity of how school leadership and CPD are perceived as well as other research studies. There is some expectation that the results would create a fresh and more complete picture of what actions or meanings constitutes reality with respect to the research questions at hand. These personal constructs gave rise to the exploration of new knowledge (epistemology) which in principle formed part of the process of searching for a better understanding of the concepts investigated.

In relation to the analysis, a three-stage thematic examination was utilized specifically to capture the nuances of the responses across the three cases. Therefore, this study contributed to the increased recognition of the importance of leadership practices and a deeper understanding of CPD issues that could drive school improvement. It also described a different perspective about how the concepts are understood in the Caribbean context thus, creating the scope for meaningful substantiations within the mainstream literature.

## **6.5 Reflection on the Learning Experience**

Research design of any sort has to grapple with the pesky issue of bias or the potential misrepresentation of research outcomes due to unintended influences from the researcher as well as research participants (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). This is a particularly critical issue in qualitative research where interviewers (and moderators) take extraordinary efforts to establish strong relationships with their interviewees (and group participants) in order to delve deeply into the subject matter. The importance of considering the implications from undo prejudices in this qualitative dominant research was reflected throughout the research journey. The process of reflexivity and, specifically, the compilation of a journal were two efforts used

to addresses the biases or preconceptions that I might have unintentionally brought to the research process (Finlay, 1998).

Reflection is another important aspect because it is directed towards reducing the threat to the accuracy of qualitative research outcomes, that is, the social interaction component of the interviewer-interviewee relationship (Lynch, 2000). The act of reflection enabled me to thoughtfully consider the ways the interviewer-interviewee interaction might have been exacerbated by presumptions arising from obvious sources, such as certain demographics (e.g., age, gender, and race), or more subtle cues such as socio-economic status and cultural background (Bourke, 2014). The research journal sensitized me about the prejudices and subjectivities which were part of my identity as an active Head Teacher who has debated many of these issues with colleagues which in turn inspired me to undertake this study. It did not only serve as a key contributor to the final analyses but also enriched the overall study by providing accounts of interviewer bias (Pillow, 2003).

Prior to the commencement of the fieldwork, the big question that was foremost on my mind was whether or not the literature readings, the post graduate research training modules and the supervision from my tutors have fully prepared an inexperienced researcher like myself to carry out the investigation. Reflecting on what transpired during the course of the data collection process I realised the importance of negotiating access, following research protocols and building friendships while interacting with the gatekeepers and participants. The readings from the main theorists helped me to clarify my understanding of the key concepts and theoretical debates used to frame and explain the associated issues. It was also critical for me to make the link between the paradigm shifts in the understanding and pursuit of knowledge.

Being aware of my position as an insider-outsider researcher I had to consider the subjective nature of the research so as to minimise some of preconceived notions that I might have developed from my working experience. The fact that I took the time out to reflect on own my positionality especially during the qualitative phase of this research created a deeper awareness of some the important matters that I had to think about. In the first instance, I did not take it for granted that our positionalities were simply based on the physical characteristics of the research. This meant that I had to enter the field with an open mind as well as providing some clarity to the participants about the aims of the research and the roles that they are expected to play in the process. By making these issues transparent at the start, it provided an atmosphere of greater openness between me and the participants. The journal extract below provides support for the action I took to address the matter.

*“I think that the meeting I held with the teachers to explain my research aims and objectives along with the ethical issues involved enhanced the response rate. It shows how important it is to establish early an open relationship between the researcher and participant during the data collection phase”.*

(Journal Entry 5, 26/05/15)

This research project has been an instrumental and valuable learning journey for a number of reasons. First, I have acquired some theoretical knowledge about school leadership and CPD in addition to enhancing my technical skills particularly as they relate to the fundamental principles and formalised conventions of post-graduate research. Second, the fieldwork exercise has demonstrated that the nature of research process is not straightforward and the unforeseen challenges could make the task rather problematic at times. The crucial point however, was being able to find ways of addressing such difficulties. Another important but sensitive aspect of the research journey was the ethical issues. I found out that the interviewees

sometimes share confidential pieces of information and extreme care must be taken to protect their identities.

The important lesson learned from conducting this work is that research methodology has its own systematic and practical guiding principles and it was vital for me to understand why they exist and how they influence data collection and analysis. My research methods therefore, were framed around the research questions, the careful selection of the data collection tools, and a detailed analysis of the data. This type of attention I believe has contributed to the precision and thoroughness of the research which have laid the grounds for the claims that have been presented. Overall, the knowledge and skills gained from this study have definitely enhanced my proficiencies in research particularly as they relate to completion my doctoral thesis. The journey was indeed inspiring but above all a meaningful academic activity.

## **6.6 Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

One of the aims of this study was to draw recommendations from the findings which could serve as ways to improve and guide leadership practices and continuing professional development in primary schools. In light of the findings reported and the discussions presented, the following recommendations are offered as strategies for policy-makers and practitioners to assist with enhancing the school leadership and by extension the quality of teaching and learning in schools:

1. The study highlights that the central purpose of CPD is to improve organizational practices and personal development. This implies that both school and ministry led professional development activities should deliberately foster a culture of learning that focus on the competencies which would then promote these important ideas.

2. The current form and shape of CPD in the population investigated do not appear to be adequately catering for the needs of teachers and as such calls for some modifications to the existing structure. The modes of delivering CPD should shift away from the customary use of large scale workshops and external experts to a more grounded approach where the knowledge and skills of teachers and other local professionals from the community are utilized to enrich the teaching and learning process. Such changes should entail the restructuring of training sessions according to grades or subject areas which would encourage more in depth interactions of sharing of best practices as well as creating and sustaining higher levels of enthusiasm with respect to the implementation of innovative ideas in their teaching.
3. The lack of strategic planning was considered as the greatest challenging factor of CPD. The Ministry of Education should make CPD activities more purposeful by allowing all concerned parties (teachers, principals and facilitators) to be directly involved in the tactical planning of the training sessions. More specifically, there should be a systematic method (eg. surveys) in place to collect data about the pedagogical needs of the teachers which would ensure their training requirements remain the central feature of CPD.
4. To address the problems faced in CPD there needs to be a greater awareness of the nature of the existing challenges. Education Officials and school leaders must establish a chain of communication which relays information through structured dialogues. These dialogues should have specified input, process and output variables which keep the learning outcomes at the core of all interchanges.
5. The Ministry of Education should take a more systematic course of action regarding the process by which principals are recruited to lead in schools. Apart from the entry

level qualifications, there needs to be a deliberate plan to raise the awareness about the three main ways in which the concepts related to leadership are constructed in the three islands – namely - the core ideas, operational features and human and social issues. It is extremely important for leaders in particular to understand the interrelationships between what leadership means, the frameworks that can support leadership activities and the social characteristics that nurture and influence the behaviours of everyone in school community.

6. There should be a system in place to first identify potential school leaders followed by training and development opportunities in advance of their formal appointments. This would ensure that prospective leaders are exposed to aspects of professional knowledge and leadership practices which are central to leading successful improvements in schools.
7. Theoretical models could effectively serve as points of reference from which leaders could influence change in school practices. This is where the LfL principles, models of CPD and the concept of teacher leadership could play a significant role in enabling leaders to pinpoint exactly where improvements are required and how such alterations should be undertaken. Leaders therefore, must organize their professional development activities in ways that would integrate the five main principles of leadership for learning while at the same time providing spaces for teachers to engage completely in all informal and formal school activities.
8. The most extensive and effective way to change the existing state of affairs of how CPD is evaluated in the islands is to tackle the issue in two stages. First, policy-makers, school leaders and practitioners must take into consideration the reasons for choosing or developing a particular training programme. These preceding conditions could lay

the foundations for motivating teachers to cooperatively take part in CPD. Many teachers reported that CPD accreditation could function as means of inspiring them to participate willingly. As a result, the linkages between the planned training and certification value that could be awarded should be made clear at this phase of the planning. Such formally certified CPD materials are more likely to become accepted and welcomed by teachers.

9. The second part of the evaluation process, and perhaps the most critical aspect, has to do with the impact after the training. As the findings showed, most of the evaluation done is still at the stage of teachers' initial reactions. CPD evaluation should include all aspect of impact that is concerned with; 1) What they have actually learnt?; 2) the procurement of resources and curriculum adjustments to support the training; 3) the type of supervision and lesson plans developed to gauge how the new ideas are utilized; 4) evidence of student learning (Guskey, 2002).

## **6.7 Further Research and Final Thoughts**

This study originated from a concern in relation to teachers' perceptions of continuing professional development activities and school leadership issues. From all accounts, CPD is perhaps the chief mechanism through which leaders could improve learning in schools. The purpose of this research was to explore how both LfL and CPD were understood and practiced in the context of three Caribbean islands. This inquiry used only a sample of teachers from Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla and therefore it does not fully characterize the wider Caribbean. This issue therefore points to prospective areas of further research. Future studies could consider repeating this study in another group of Caribbean islands to examine whether differences in educational contexts influence participants' perceptions of school leadership and CPD which in turn provide new insights into their meanings as compared to the existing literature. Presently, there is need for researchers worldwide to contextualize leadership and CPD in order to tease out what and how shape the core elements particularly in local contexts. As studies such as this continue to produce more varied descriptions and meanings of home-grown leadership practices and CPD, the boundaries of the knowledge field would expand and provide a better understanding of these issues. This could result in opening up new opportunities to find more practical solutions in relation to how leaders facilitate and promote learning in schools.

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## APPENDIX A

### Access Letter



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

School of Education R.1

School of Education R.19  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2TT

The Director  
Ministry of Education

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Requesting Permission to Conduct Research in Primary Schools and  
Ministry of Education**

I am a PhD candidate who is enrolled at the School of Education, University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom. It is my intention to conduct a research project on a problem, issue or concern in the field of education.

I am a Head Teacher in the primary sector in Montserrat. Over the past couple of years I realized that some teachers are not motivated and remained very passive in continuing professional development activities organized both internally and externally. This in the long run affects their learning as well as their abilities to improve student progress. I also feel that perhaps they have lost touch with the dynamic changes in teaching and learning coupled with the emerging theoretical perspectives in school leadership that focuses on teaching and learning. I am convinced that an inquiry of the present situation will in some way flag up critical issues which

could give new meanings into how continuing professional development underpinned by the theoretical frameworks of leadership for learning can be better understood hence, offering practical solutions to drive school improvement.

It is against this background that I am requesting permission to gain access to primary schools and the Ministry to conduct the research. This would be done mainly through the use of interviews and questionnaires. It is anticipated that the support from your department would indeed aid the process in measuring and generating meaningful data about the actual practices and the underlying views of the participants in relation to CPD and leadership within the given contexts. I am looking forward to your assistance as we continue to provide and sustain education development.

Thanks in advance for your participation.

Yours truly,

.....

Gregory Julius  
PhD Student (Educational Leadership)

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Participant Information Sheet**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM**

School of Education R.19  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2TT

Dear Participant,

The broad aim of this study is to investigate the perceptions of teachers, head teachers and ministry officials in relation to leadership continuing professional development as well as how these concepts are practiced in primary schools. The reason for asking you to participate in this research is because your current occupation and experience has the potential to offer meaningful insights concerning your views and knowledge about the actual practices and your personal thoughts in relation to continuing professional development and leadership. The information below is intended to provide you with the necessary details that will help you to complete the process as well as understanding the conditions under which you will participate.

#### **Procedures**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the following tasks and conditions below will guide you accordingly:

1. Take part in one or more of the tasks below. However, you may not necessarily participate in all 3 tasks.
2. Complete or participate in: (1) a questionnaire containing questions aimed at capturing your feelings about specific issues; (2) an interview where you will be asked questions about what you know, your attitude, and or, feelings about CPD and leadership that focuses on teaching and student learning; (3) in a focus group session with approximately 5-6 others.
3. The interview sessions are estimated to last approximately 30 – 45 minutes long and the group session will be about one hour in length.
4. The sessions (interviews and focus group) will be audio taped and transcribed.

5. An envelope will be provided in which you will seal and return the completed questionnaire to your school office.

### **Conditions of Participation**

- 1) **Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:** Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You can withdraw and discontinue participation (particularly if you experience any discomforts) prior to the withdrawal guidelines below without any penalty. Should this becomes necessary you must first inform the researcher of your intention in writing or verbally after which you can sign the copy of the withdrawal form provided.
- 2) **Procedure:** Participation involves completing a questionnaire and participating in an interview in the first instance, as well as taking part in a focus group session. The interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes while the group session will be about one hour in length. Notes will be written during the interview. An audio tape of the interview and subsequent dialogue will be made to supplement the written materials. These will be then transcribed for reporting purposes.
- 3) **Risks and Benefits:** There are no anticipated risks or discomforts. If however, you feel uncomfortable participating in any of the tasks and in particular the interview sessions, you have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview. The only cost to you will be the time required to participate in the interviews or completing the questionnaire. The project is designed to gather information from teachers, head teachers and ministry officials and the results have the potential to provide an opportunity for the participants to have a deeper reflection about the critical issues of their underlying their practice.
- 4) **Confidentiality:** The researcher will use pseudonyms and sealed envelopes to conceal your identity in any of the tasks that you participate in, and your confidentiality as a participant will remain anonymous and protected. Audio-tapes and transcripts will be kept safe under lock and keys in a secure cabinet and will be destroyed within the stipulated period as regulated by the university.
- 5) **Ethics Approval:** This research project with the assigned reference number ERN\_ 14-0529 has been approved by the Ethics Committee.

Thanks in advance for your participation.

Yours truly,

.....

Gregory Julius  
PhD Student (Educational Leadership)

## APPENDIX C

### Consent Form



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

School of Education R.19  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2TT

Dear Colleague,

I am inviting you to participate in a research study that I am conducting as a doctoral student from the School of Education at the University of Birmingham, England. The purpose of this research is to investigate teachers', head teachers' and ministry officials' perspectives on continuing professional development (CPD) and leadership that focuses on teaching and student learning in the context of primary schools in Montserrat, Antigua and Anguilla.

I hope to use the results from the study to highlight your views about the key concepts in question. This may offer useful guidelines for thinking about issues related to continuing professional development in primary schools. This study is funded by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission.

I the undersigned \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in the research outlined above under the following terms and conditions:

- 1) **Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:** I understand that my participation in this research is completely voluntary. I can withdraw and discontinue participation (particularly if you experience any discomforts) prior to the withdrawal guidelines below without any penalty. Should this becomes necessary I must first inform the researcher of my intention in writing or verbally after which I can sign the copy of the withdrawal form provided on page 3 of the consent form.
- 2) **Procedure:** Participation involves completing a questionnaire and participating in an interview in the first instance, as well as taking part in a focus group session. The interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes while the group session will be about one hour in length. Notes will be written during the interview. An audio tape of the

interview and subsequent dialogue will be made to supplement the written materials. These will be then transcribed for reporting purposes.

- 3) **Risks and Benefits:** I understand that there are no anticipated risks or discomforts. If however, I feel uncomfortable participating in any of the tasks and in particular the interview sessions, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview. The only cost to me will be the time required to participate in the interviews or completing the questionnaire. I also understand that the project is designed to gather information from teachers, head teachers and ministry officials and the results have the potential to provide an opportunity for the participants to have a deeper reflection about the critical issues of their underlying their practice.
- 4) **Confidentiality:** I understand that the researcher will use pseudonyms to conceal my identity in any of the tasks that I participate in, and that my confidentiality as a participant will remain anonymous and protected. Audio-tapes and transcripts will be kept safe under lock and keys in a secure cabinet and will be destroyed within the stipulated period as regulated by the university.
- 5) **Consent Statement:** Having read the above, I agree to participate in this study and therefore consent to the procedures described above. Moreover, I agree not to reveal any information discussed in the groups that could be linked to any specific individual. I will also not disclose any identifying information about other members of the group. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I have reached a decision to participate in this research. Finally, I acknowledge that I have been given a copy of this consent form.

---

**(Signature of Participant)**

---

**(Date)**

---

**(Signature of Researcher)**

---

**(Date)**

## APPENDIX D

### Withdrawal Form



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

School of Education R.19  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2TT

I \_\_\_\_\_ have withdrawn my consent to participate in this research because I have lost interest in completing the tasks given and or, I have experience some discomforts during the process. This has affected my ability to continue participating in this project. I am therefore signing this withdrawal form as a clear indication that I have discontinued my involvement at this point.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Participant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Researcher)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## APPENDIX E

### Sample and Instrument Sheet



**UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM**

School of Education R.19

University of Birmingham

Edgbaston

Birmingham B15 2TT

Instrument	SAMPLE			Total	Overall
	Category	Context	Size		
Interviews	Teacher	Montserrat	3	25	<b>34 qualitative measures</b>
		Antigua	16		
		Anguilla	6		
	Head Teacher	Montserrat	1	3	
		Antigua	1		
		Anguilla	1		
	Education Officials	Montserrat	1	3	
		Antigua	1		
		Anguilla	1		
Focus Group 1	Primary Teachers (Gr. K-6)	Montserrat	6	3	
Focus Group 2		Antigua	6		
Focus Group 3		Anguilla	6		
Questionnaires	Teachers	Montserrat	10	100	<b>100 quantitative measures</b>
		Antigua	60		
		Anguilla	30		

## APPENDIX F

### Questionnaire Letter for Teachers



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

School of Education R.19  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2TT

Dear Colleague,

I am a PhD student who is enrolled at the School of Education, University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom. It is a requirement to conduct a research project on a problem, issue or concern in the field of education.

The purpose of my research is to investigate teachers', head teachers' and ministry officials' perspectives on continuing professional development (CPD) and leadership that focuses on teaching and student learning in the context of primary schools. I am therefore at this stage inviting you to participate in this research project by completing the following questionnaire which I anticipate will take you approximately 5 – 10 minutes.

Thanks in advance for your participation.

Yours truly,

.....

Gregory Julius  
PhD Student (Educational Leadership)

## APPENDIX G

### Questionnaire Sheet for Teachers

This questionnaire forms part of the data collection process which will lead towards the completion of my PhD thesis. I am investigating continuing professional development (CPD) and its relationships with the theoretical concept of leadership that focuses on teaching and student learning in primary schools (LfL). Research ethics and protocols will be observed and strict confidentiality will be maintained at all times. The responses to the questionnaire will be held securely and used only for research purposes. Kindly complete the questionnaire by ticking the appropriate boxes or write your answers on the lines provided.

#### SECTION 1: Respondent's Profile

Please tick (✓) or circle the appropriate answer which corresponds to each question given.

1. State your sex:                      Male                      Female
  
2. How long have you been teaching?
  - Less than 1 year (*newly qualified teacher*)
  - 1 - 5 years
  - 6 - 10 years
  - 11 - 19 years
  - 20 years and over
  
3. Which grades have you taught? (*Tick all that apply*).  
Gr. K  Gr.1  Gr.2  Gr.3  Gr.4  Gr.5  Gr.6

4. Name any other special role that you conduct in the school? \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 2: Leadership that focuses on teaching and student learning (LfL) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

5. This part of the questionnaire examines your opinions and or views regarding how leadership and continuing professional development is understood and the extent to which there is an actual practice of leadership that focuses on teaching and student learning in your school. Based on your experience and perception as a teacher, kindly rate each statement in the table by inserting a tick (✓) in the appropriate spaces provided. Use the scale below to confirm how you have graded each statement.

**1 = completely disagree (CDA), 2 = mostly disagree (MD), 3 = somewhat disagree (SD), 4 = Neutral, 5 = somewhat agree (SA), 6 = mostly agree (MA), 7 = completely agree (CA).**

QUESTIONNAIRE SHEET								
No.	How leadership that focuses on teaching and student learning is understood in my school?	Scale 						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		CDA	MD	SD	N	SA	MA	CA
A1.	I feel that everyone (students, teachers, and head teacher) is a learner.							
A2.	My school climate encourages a culture which nurtures the learning of all members of the school community.							
A3	The level of student learning is enhanced by the teaching experiences created in the classroom.							
A4.	There is room for allowing everyone to take risks, cope with failure or respond positively to challenges.							
A5.	When my head engages in continuous dialogue about high expectations from students it will promote learning.							
A6.	The aim of evaluation should be for improving learning instead of managing performances.							
A7.	We do not have sufficient structures in place that invite participation in fostering an atmosphere of a learning organisation.							

A8.	Sharing teaching experiences to support student learning is a focused strategy for driving success.							
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
		<b>CDA</b>	<b>MD</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>CA</b>
<b>How teachers perceive the role of leadership and the ways in which they are practised?</b>								
B1.	I think that my head should involve staff in making decisions.							
B2.	The source of authority for my head seems to reside in the power of his/her position rather than influencing learning.							
B3.	There is a very weak sense of collaborative patterns of activities that are focused on learning.							
B4.	My head teacher nurtures shared leadership in the day-to-day flow of activities of the school by drawing on the experience and expertise of staff.							
B5.	In my school, teachers, students, parents and other support agencies are involved in team work which generates new ideas for improving learning.							
B6.	My head pays more attention to the administrative functions of the school.							
<b>To what extent do teachers feel that they are engaged in leading and learning?</b>								
C1.	In my classroom we listen to each other, share ideas, and consider alternatives before linking them into clear modes of thinking.							
C2.	The head teacher frequently involves me in feedback conversations arising out of a spirit of honesty and trust.							
C3.	Having a voice in my school is useful to break open teachers' collective skills.							
C4.	As colleagues we consistently create, refine and share knowledge through formal and informal dialogue.							
C5.	The head teacher will lose his/her control of authority if he/she allows teachers to lead CPD.							
C6.	During staff meetings my head consistently demonstrates the habit of listening which conveys the respect for teachers' views.							
<b>How do teachers view CPD and its impact on teaching and learning?</b>								

D1.	My impression of CPD at this school is of a set of activities we routinely engage in rather than exploring ways of understanding our practice in relation to pupils' learning.							
D2.	Most of the CPD activities that I have participated in have had a significant impact on my teaching.							
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
		<b>CDA</b>	<b>MD</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>CA</b>
D3.	I regard CPD as a mechanism which adds unity to all activities (informal and formal) that promote adult learning.							
D4.	I do not think that our pedagogical needs are adequately taken on board prior to the planning of CPD.							
D5.	At this school there is not a clear method of gauging the degree to which students' learning have been improved by CPD.							
D6.	I believe that it is through the social relations that emerge from CPD that the ideas of learning can be better understood before it is applied.							

6. If you are willing to participate in a short face-to-face interview about topics raised in this questionnaire, please add your contact details below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX H

## Generic Interview Schedule

### A. (Focus Area) General Demographic Information

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What is your highest level of qualification?
3. Was teaching your first career choice?

### B. (Focus Area) Perceptions about CPD and Leadership

4. What do you think should be the purpose of continuing professional development?
5. What do you consider as the common practices of CPD?
6. What do you view as the challenging factors of CPD?
7. What do you regard as the things which enable CPD to take place?
8. How do you perceive school leadership?

### C. (Focus Area) Leadership components of CPD

9. What do you think is the role of the Ministry in CPD?
10. Who do you think should lead CPD and why?
11. How do you feel about the current leadership arrangements for you to make an input in the planning of CPD? (*Teachers only*)
12. How do your other key responsibilities influence the way in which you lead CPD activities? (*Head Teacher only*)

### D. (Focus Area) Evaluation and Benefits of CPD?

13. What mechanisms or systems are used to evaluate CPD?
14. How does CPD feature in performance reviews of teachers and head teachers? (*Ministry Official only*)
15. How do you think about linking CPD to teacher accreditation?

**PS: only questions 4 and 8 were asked in the Focus Groups**

# APPENDIX I

## STAGES OF MY FIELDWORK JOURNEY

### REVIEWING

- Formulating a clear sense of learning journey by reflecting on how each stage of the process is related to produce a coherent study.
- Reflecting on the knowledge gained and challenges encountered in my fieldwork assignment to give a better understanding of the key issues related to the topic investigated.

### SYNTHESIZING

- Linking field experiences with literature/theory.
- Making connections with my research questions and thinking about how my prior experiences could influence the process.
- Presenting the findings in a way which created a conceptual framework of the data collected.
- Structuring and writing the thesis so as to make a contribution to knowledge.

### CRITIQUING

- What were some of the major challenges and how did I address them?
- How well did my questions work?
- If I could do the project over again, what would I do differently?