Exploring the Conception of Quality Education.

An ethnographic Inquiry in a secondary school.

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This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in the discipline of Higher Education.

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July 2022

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Declaration

I, Manoj Sunassee, declare that

(i) The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

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Abstract

This study explores the conception of quality education in a secondary school in Mauritius. It seeks to know how a secondary school community makes meaning of the notion of Quality Education and how the notion of quality education is enacted and experienced in a secondary school. The theoretical framework for Quality Education (Tikly & Barrett, 2011) was used to provide the necessary analytical tools, based on the two primary educational lenses, the Human Capital and the Humanist theories, to deepen insight and expand the perspective on quality education. In addition, the framework also provides adequate space to study the phenomenon of quality education under the influence of the three environments: home, school and policy.

The research methodology used in the study was an Ethnographic inquiry. It was chosen as it allows the researcher to access the social reality of the people in the school site, PWSS (Creswell, 2012). Also, I chose to enter the research site with an insider researcher's perspective, so that I could bring out more insights into the school's psychological, social, and cultural dimensions of the phenomenon, Quality Education.

Data was produced through interviews, participant observations, the review of documents, qualitative questionnaires, and Focus Group Discussions so as to unravel how the participants make meaning of Quality Education through their school experiences. A purposive sampling technique was used based on Creswell's (2013) and Merriam (2009) arguments. The selected learner participants were from three different categories of learners, Grade 9. Grade 10 and grade 12, In the same way, six teachers, both male and female, were selected based on their teaching experience at PWSS - with at least three years of experience at the school. Also, two parents were chosen based on their availability and the school's rector.

The research came up with the following findings: (i) quality education is a fluid concept that changes according to the agenda of the person using or viewing it (ii) high academic achievement, holistic development, discipline and values, 21st-century skills, cared pedagogy approach, quality teachers were among the outcomes of quality education, (iii) all provisions enacted for quality education forms an integral part of quality education, (iv) Distributed leadership as the most wanted type of leadership in a venture for Quality Education (v) Policies that favour inclusion and equity are referred as Quality policies for Quality Education and (vi) Quality Education is expressed as pride, reputation, and excellence.

The thesis concludes that Quality Education at school would bloom at the intersection of the Human capital approach, Humanist tradition, and Human rights-based approach. Different combinations of the three major educational approaches, in different proportions, would yield different hues and colours of Quality Education as desired by the school community. However, little is known about the external and internal social forces of a school that influence the combination of the three approaches. So, further research is requested.

The thesis ends by discussing the theoretical contributions, implications for theory and policy, limits, and suggestions for further research.

Acknowledgements

I am thankful to the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Mauritius Institute of Education for offering this PhD in Mauritius,

I extend my gratitude to Professor Michael Anthony Samuel and Associate Professor (Dr) Hyleen Mariaye, both Programme Coordinators from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Mauritius Institute of Education.

I extend my utmost gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Labby Ramrathan from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and my co-supervisor, Associate Professor (Dr) Hyleen Mariaye from the Mauritius Institute of Education, for their constant support and fruitful supervision of my thesis.

I thank the directorate of the Secondary Education Department of the Ministry Of Education, and Human Resource, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research for granting me access to conduct the research in a state secondary school

I am thankful to all cohort supervisors of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Mauritius Institute of Education, particularly to professor Nyma Amin.

I extend my gratitude to all my research participants. Without their contributions, this thesis would not have been possible.

I am thankful to Mr Amal Gopaul for the language editing.

I thank my wife Priya, my son Keshav and my daughter Mithila for their support and patience

I am thankful to the Almighty.

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List of Acronyms

EDUQUAL	Educational Quality Report
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
EHRSP	Educational and Human resource Strategic Plan
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
HSC	Higher School Certificate
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOE:	Ministry of Education
MES	Mauritius Examination Syndicate
NEF	National Empowerment Foundation
NESC	National Economic Social Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PALD	Proximal Assessment for Learners Diagnosis
PIRIS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PSEA	Private Secondary Education Authority
PTA	Parents Teachers Association

PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PWSS	Plaines Wilhelm Secondary School
PSC	Public Service Commission
QE	Quality Education
QAF	Quality Assurance Framework
RTE	Right to Education
SAQMEQ	Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SC	School Certificate
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSS	State Secondary School
ST	Supply teacher
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This section introduces the structure of Chapter 1 of the thesis. It starts with a brief account of the background of the thesis − nothing arises from a vacuum. In the background of the thesis, there is an outline of the nature of knowledge regarding the notion of quality education. This is followed by a broad description of the research context which delineates human interactions, norms, legal frameworks, laws, traditions, population characteristics, and cultural aspects in a state secondary school in an urban region in Mauritius. Some outlines are given on certain rubrics that describe and explain the research problem, the problem statement, the study rationale, the significance of the study, the research paradigm, the methodology, and the limitations of the research. Finally, the chapter ends with an overview of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

'Quality' is purportedly a very complex term to define as it conveys different meanings and understandings to different people. Generally, when the word 'quality' is used in an attempt to describe something it very often indicates a degree of excellence in terms of standard, grade, class, classification, calibre, status, condition, character, nature, constitution, form, rank, worth, value, and level, after a comparison attempt (Verma & Verma, 2012). Quality also refers to the level of appreciation of a person for an object or concept or suchlike as a function of his or her own needs and purposes. The term 'quality' becomes even more complex in tending to express both the capacity to adapt to the varied needs of the users and the utility of the features to which it refers (Harvey, 2006). However, the level of complexity is amplified, more so when the term 'quality' is associated with education. Consequently, when the word 'quality' is associated with the word 'education', the words form more than a portmanteau term, the term QE in itself giving rise to a variety of meanings and definitions. In some ways, confusion about QE arises due to the various priorities and values of different stakeholders in the field of education (Eze, 2009). In addition, Chai (2009) stated that the quality of a product or a service is given its value by the users of the product. However, in secondary schools, the users are many; and the main users are students who are not considered mature enough to evaluate the quality of education. Noticeably, there is no line of agreement on the definition of QE among the stakeholders, including the government, the public, educators, school principals, and parents (Barrett et al.,

2006). Failing to reach a consensus on the understanding of QE, many policymakers seize the opportunity to push their agendas and make attempts to influence the opinions of others (Kousainov, 2016). Consequently, the notion of QE finally takes on a contrived meaning that falsely represents an operational definition of QE. Also, it is becoming trendy to quantify QE (Spruit & Adriana, 2015) simply to enable the implementation of certain government policies for certain economic and managerial conveniences. The attempt to promote the notion of QE is not recent, having started much earlier, around the year 1990 in the discourse of the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) in Jomtien. At that time, the focus was placed mainly on expanding access to education in general. Ever since, the notion of QE has been influencing many developing countries (Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Kumaravelu & Suresh, 2017). Again, in 2000, significant changes were forced into the discourse on international education − the Dakar Framework for Action. More emphasis was laid on improving and ensuring excellence in all aspects of QE so that recognizable and measurable learning outcomes could be achieved by all, especially in terms of literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills. Tikly and Barrett (2007) and Tikly (2010) recognized that the values upheld among the various stakeholders, learners, parents, teachers, and the government in the education sector are diverse. The researchers argued that QE could only be achieved when the goals of a given education system are clearly assessed and understood with regard to addressing inequalities. Such inequalities are particularly based on traditional factors of discrimination such as gender, income, and minority status − ethnic, or linguistic. Thus, QE has been conceptualized by taking into account the views of all stakeholders at the local level; and by placing interactions of all actors such as policymakers, home, community, and school at its central core (Benavot, 2012). Indeed, a large amount of research has been conducted, not yet saturated, on the attitudes of parents and children towards QE. Researchers suggest that numerous school activities are still in a dark place, blurring our understanding of the notion of QE (Kapur, 2019). There is ample evidence showing that parents continue to view class size, enjoyment, opportunities for child development, good communication skills, numeracy, and school discipline as determining parameters of QE (Eze, 2009; Kapur, 2019). Quite recently, Sutherland (2010) reported that children's attitudes and views toward learning and their learning environment have gained growing importance in many discourses on quality education. In this way, many models of quality education have been conducted on the basis of school performance, examination results, and other managerial indicators. However, Henderson (2002), and Saeedi et al. (2019) argue

that the conceptualization of quality education often neglects to give due consideration to various important factors such as parental satisfaction and perceptions; and as a consequence, QE is subjected to serious criticism. This is consistent with Burrun (2011) who explains how students in Mauritius, are selected for the state secondary schools based on their academic performance; this exercise is conducted by the governmental agency, MES. It was also argued by Burrun (2011) that this policy is somehow against children coming from families of poor social and economic backgrounds. Burrun (2011) added that the concept of 'education to the children' is being favoured over 'education with the children.' The Mauritian education system still denies access to a large number of students in the secondary education cycle − this may well compromise quality education (Subrun and Subrun, 2015). Furthermore, despite all the facilities and support provided by the government to students and schools, the NESC Report 21(2012) highlights that there is still an alarming level of student absenteeism, indiscipline, and a decrease in academic performance in secondary schools. Thus, the idea of scrutinizing the QE dispensed in our schools does not seem to be outlandish. So far, the models proposed for QE seem to be inadequate and incomplete as they tend to ignore some of the school dynamics in Mauritian secondary schools (Subrun & Subrun, 2015). For this study, the 'rights-based' approach to education, the human capital approach, and the humanist approach have been used as lenses through which to study quality education. In the pursuit of QE, this research seeks to create more knowledge on the consideration given to the learner. In a way, these three approaches focus mainly on human development, economic development, or the 'rights' of the learners. Thus, the research interest to understand how QE is constructed in a secondary school in Mauritius has motivated me to conduct this research.

1.2 Background of Location

1.2.1 The education system in Mauritius

The Ministry of Education & Human Resources (MoE) takes charge of the education system in Mauritius. The MoE oversees the development and administration of all schools funded by the government. It also extends its advice and supervision to private non-funded schools. In fact, the private schools must still meet the criteria set by the MoE before approval is given to operate. Education is free from pre-primary to tertiary levels. However, there are some schools, ranging from pre-primary to tertiary, that are private paying schools. The parents choose which schools to support.

1.2.2 Management structure of the Ministry of Education

According to the School Management Manual (2009), The Ministry of Education operates in a hierarchical way. The organogram is shown in the diagrams below.

Figure 1: The organizational chart at Ministry's Head Office (School Management Manual (2009, p.2)

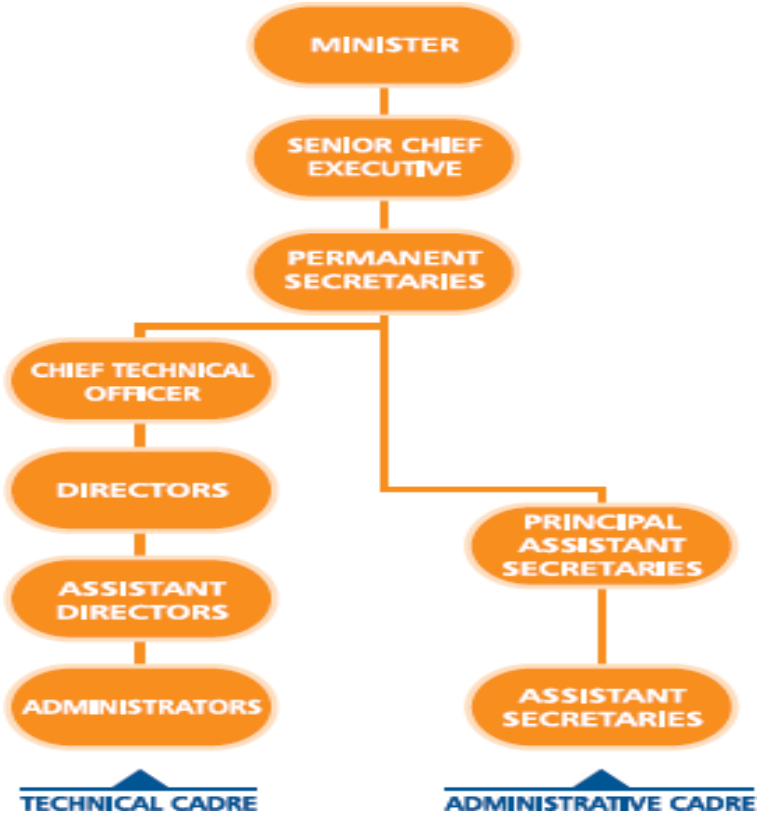

Figure 2: The organizational chart of zones directorates and schools (School Management Manual (2009, p.3)

1.2.3 Secondary schools in Mauritius

A Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) is awarded to students who have successfully passed the CPE examination after six years spent in the primary education cycle. The outcome of the CPE examination is generally used as a criterion for selection to admit students to secondary schools. A child takes seven years or more, depending on ability, to complete the secondary education cycle. There are seven grades in a secondary school ranging from Grade 7 to Grade 11. Thereafter there are two classes – Grade12 and Grade13, commonly known as 'lower-sixth' and 'upper-sixth', respectively. From Grade 7 to Grade 9 there are summative examinations at the end of each year based on the National Curriculum. The rest of the grades study the Cambridge International Examination curriculum. To date, there are 62 state secondary schools of 165 secondary schools that provide secondary education in the academic stream.

1.2.4 State secondary schools in Mauritius

There are 62 state secondary schools distributed over four geographical zones. The admission of students to the state secondary schools (SSS) is overseen by the ministry. Students having at least 4 A+ grades at the CPE are given a seat in a national college; while the rest of the students are admitted to a regional school. The school is managed solely by the government: this includes salaries of staff, buildings and maintenance, all school processes, recruitment of staff, and any other resources deemed needful for running the school. Staff members are recruited by a public institution known as the public service commission (PSC). Rectors of state schools have absolutely no say in the recruitment of their staff and in the enrolment of their students.

1.3 Location of the Study

This ethnographic inquiry took place in a regional state secondary school found in an urban region of Mauritius. Generally, admissions are granted to the regional state secondary school of Mauritius on the following three conditions: (i) proximity − students coming from the locality as defined by the MOE; (ii) academic performance − students who have attained an average performance in the national examination at the end of primary education cycle; and (iii) parental choice. The school holds interest as an ethnographic site; more importantly, because it follows a Quality Assurance Framework; and because it is easier for me to gain access to the school. I have been working as a physics teacher for a long time in an SSS; and therefore, I can easily take the role of an insider researcher. The selected school has approximately 700 learners, all boys, accommodated in 23 classrooms across seven grades, ranging from Grade 7 to Grade 13. The personnel of the school comprises 67 teachers, one rector, a senior educator, and 17 non-teaching staff. The ethnography focused only on three classes; namely, one class of Grade 9 (13 year-old students), one class of Grade 10, and one class of Grade 12 (first year of advanced level), with a specific focus on science, art, and English. Not all students in the class participated in the study; only six to eight students were accepted − and they were volunteers. These classes have been selected because the students were not involved in any international examination such as Cambridge International Examination (CIE); therefore it was easier for me to obtain parents' consent and Ministry's (MOE) approval. Data were collected from teachers, students, the rector, and parents over a period of one month during the second term of the school calendar.

1.4 Problem Statement

According to MOEHR (2008), the vision of the Ministry of Education, Human Resources, and Scientific Research was to transform Mauritius into a brighter nation-state that would be at the forefront of global development and innovation. This was thought to be possible to accomplish by providing QE to all Mauritians and by developing a highly effective human resource body. Thus, a twelve-year strategic plan was formulated, known as the Education & Human Resources Strategy Plan (EHRSP) with the objective of building a nation with a culture of high achievement and excellence. In line with the vision, a series of reforming measures had to be taken across all levels of the education system, including pre-primary, primary, secondary, post-secondary, and the training sector. The main concern of the plan was to ensure that all children, at all levels, had access to QE that fosters creativity and innovation so as ultimately to develop a sustainable socio-economic state. QE would be of different colours and shapes so as to bring the required transformation in all the sectors and subsectors of the education system. Therefore reform and changes would ensure the achievement of the goals in the plan; thus many resources had to be aligned to bring about the required changes. Along the same line of thought, Smith et al. (2011) explained that creativity and innovation were very much dependent on the quality of activities, the quality of the curriculum, the resources aligned with the school and the quality of teachers. This finding is consistent with Kisto (2015) − a secondary school has to raise the capabilities of its students by bringing necessary changes in the school curriculum so as to match the demand of the labour market according to the economic model of the country. However, in the case of Mauritius, there is a significant number of students, who, despite that they could not successfully clear the PSAC examinations, have been allowed to transition to secondary school. This is among the reasons for the increasing dropout rate at the secondary school level (Subrun & Subrun, 2015; MES, 2016). The situation at the secondary education level seems to be problematic. This has sparked my interest in investigating how quality education is serviced within our secondary schools.

Furthermore, one of the various objectives of the EHRSP was to inspire and motivate learners to complete the secondary education cycle and transition to the tertiary education cycle. Since the compulsory age for school in Mauritius is 16 years old, secondary education is viewed as a bifurcate point at which the learners may choose either to continue to further education or leave for the job market. However, the situational analysis of the EHRSP mentioned an issue of high repetition rate in secondary education, more specifically at Grades 10 and 11. My quest for QE was justified: Eze (2009) expressed that QE is, more than ever, concerned with creating more

learning opportunities, making use of new pedagogical approaches, giving more support to learners, encouraging inclusiveness, and developing a more meaningful curriculum. Again, based on the mismatch highlighted, I am eager to conduct this research so as to bring more insight into the quality of education dispensed in secondary schools.

The Mauritian government has made a massive investment to provide QE for all as per the requirements of the EHRSP (Burrun, 2011; Subrun & Subrun, 2015). Secondary school infrastructures, in general, have witnessed significant improvement so as to provide a more caring environment and better facilities in the interests of enhancing teaching and learning. Burrun (2011) argued that there are indicators of development in the areas of both infrastructure and education policies regarding quality education. However, Subrun & Subrun (2015) highlighted a few lacunas in the quality of education provided at the lower secondary education level in Mauritius. This argument arises from many young people still leaving the school system in the middle of their secondary education without being equipped with any necessary skills. It was also stated in the same literature that Quality Education was still confusing for the stakeholders of the secondary education sector. Based on the findings of Burrun (2011) and Subrun & Subrun (2015), secondary education appears to be inconsistent with what is articulated under the purview of quality education.

Starr (2012) reported that there would always be confusion around the notion of QE; and schools should not abandon the attempt to reach an operational definition of QE. In fact, it is difficult to say precisely which factors are affecting QE. While factors such as school buildings, the curriculum, didactics materials, teachers, and textbooks are focused on, there are certainly other factors that we might have ignored but which are compromising QE. Therefore quality education in secondary schools is seemingly subject to some opposing opinions from various stakeholders (Hawes & Stephens, 1990). According to Mohammad and Kaur (2015), many parents have perceived QE as the driving force that raises the academic performance of learners through test scores. However, the perceptions of QE among teachers are quite different and varied (Asrat & Asrat, 2016). The same literature mentioned that, despite the quality of inputs such as infrastructure and textbooks, QE would not be achieved as long as school processes are not properly aligned. By contrast, Kasen (2015) argued that inputs of a certain quality and standard may contribute to achieving quality education. However, the quality education expected by the government of Mauritius is not the same as suggested by Kasen (2015). While Kasen (2015) is referring to QE as the achievement of both academic and non-academic development, the EHRSP is referring to a quality education that would raise the capabilities of

learners to join the labour market. This research will offer more insights into how the parents, teachers, learners, and the school leaders navigate in upholding the various aspects of quality education within the terms of reference of the policy and planning.

Gravitating towards a policy of providing quality education to all, the Pay Research Bureau Report (2008) proposed recommendations for creating a quality assurance and inspection division (QAID) at the MOE. Subrun & Subrun (2015) reported that the QAID was set up in the year 2012 with the main objective to ensure that inputs and processes in secondary education are to the standards laid out by the MOE. However, the outcomes of secondary schools do not match the expectation and efforts of the QAID (Subrun & Subrun, 2015). Furthermore, Ah-Teck & Starr (2015) state that quality education dispensed in Mauritian secondary schools requires more attention and must be studied. These researchers highlighted concerns linking QE with indiscipline and student absenteeism in Mauritian secondary schools. Again, this research promises to unveil the connection, if it exists, between QE and ill-behaviour of students, indiscipline, and student absenteeism.

As Mauritius aims to become a high-income country by 2030, the tertiary education sector is expected to become more resilient; and therefore requires raising enrolment considerably to reach universal tertiary standards. Thus, QE would be attributed to a high completion rate at the secondary education level and a high transition rate to tertiary education (MOEHRSRTE, 2016). However, as argued in Subrun & Subrun (2015), in the attempt to achieve the target of universal tertiary, the criteria for enrolment at lower secondary have been reviewed. The criteria increase the transition to the upper secondary education cycle and as a consequence, there was a fear that QE could be reduced. Again, confusion does not seem to be diminished. While increasing access to school was previously considered favourable to QE, such access now may compromise various school activities, processes, educational outcomes and ultimately quality education, especially in the global trend (Mahapatra et al., 2014). Similarly, a comprehensive demystification of QE in secondary schools in Mauritius is also needed (Ah-Teck & Starr, 2015). The idea of demystification of the notion of QE in the secondary education level further heightens my interest in conducting this research.

Another grey area that appears around the notion of QE in Mauritius is ‘private tuition’. According to Foondun (1992), Mauritius is known to be among the countries on the African continent where private tuition has reached endemic proportions. It is reported in the same literature, that, despite a high percentage of secondary school students having recourse to

private tuition, most students do not really approve of such. The high rate of tuition in primary education shows the importance accorded by parents to secondary education and secondary schools. In fact, the efforts put in by both parents and learners are not for the PSAC examinations, but rather for gaining admission to the most prestigious secondary schools (Paviot, 2015). Contrastingly, both students who have done very well at PSAC and those who have not succeeded in the same PSAC examinations are admitted to the same school. This means that there are students in secondary schools who have not even completed their primary education cycle (Ah-Teck & Atarr, 2015). How can a learner transition to the secondary education level without attaining competencies expected to have been achieved in the primary education cycle? The need to shed some light on this grey area in the education sector, especially in the pursuit of QE has always been felt (Barrett et al., 2006). I am confident that this research will shine a searchlight on the attempt to unveil the mysteries around the notion of quality education in secondary school.

Literature on QE in Mauritius is reasonably scanty; and the few research studies conducted are mostly related to international trends of QE in elementary education; and school effectiveness from a quantitative epistemological stance. As a researcher, I have reacted positively to the argument that quality education in secondary school must be put under a lens and a light in an attempt to answer the questions raised or to dispel the grey areas around it (Barrett et al., 2006). My interest in expanding our knowledge of QE provided in our secondary schools is at its peak. Full of confidence and inspiration, I made up my mind to research QE in a secondary school. The research promises to be critical in revealing how the school community constructs the meaning of QE. I opine that every school is unique and is subject to various external and internal forces. Despite quality education often being judged or expressed by quantitative indicators (Scheerens, Luyten, & Ravens, 2011), this research will expose how a school engages in embracing the paradigm shift in QE – from access to education to the integration of social dimensions in education: this is a general shift from quantity to quality. In other words, the research seeks to explore and expand our understanding of how QE is constructed in a local secondary school in such a highly accountable era.

Quality education is described as an elusive term (Eze, 2009; Barret, 2006); and the shift in the international discourse on Quality Education from increasing access to education to a more inclusive and equity approach has created much confusion for people (Kadir, 2020). In secondary school, learners undergo various stages of human development, making their developmental needs far more demanding (Baciu, 2015). Also, secondary schools are heavily

criticized for lack of accountability (Maxwell & Roofe, 2020) and for their high dropout rates (Subrun & Subrun, 2015). Following the human capital theory, secondary schools are most concerned with preparing learners for the labour market (Coss, 2002; McChesney, 2013). However, there is a mismatch between secondary school outcomes and the employability skills of learners (Dayo, 2015). This research aims to dispel the confusion about how quality education is viewed and facilitated in secondary schools. It would seek to develop an understanding of the meaning of quality education in the secondary school context. More importantly, it will bring more insight into how people prepare for quality education and how it is experienced at school.

Another important point that justifies conducting this study is to bring more insight into how the curriculum is developed and unfolded in classroom practice within the purview of quality education. Literature has shown that any curriculum has many school aspects, such as assessment, the use of ICT, teaching and learning, pedagogy, inter alia. There are numerous ways to unfold the curriculum at school, all of which are guided by the educational approach that the majority of the school community has agreed upon. The criticisms of the curriculum including these school aspects are many, and such criticism has received much attention. It is worth noting that these criticisms arise from differing viewpoints coming from the various approaches to education. From an international perspective, educational policies, such as opening access, and inclusion, are given more consideration within quality education. However, little is known about how quality education is serviced at schools. I find it crucial to reflect on the way policies are implemented in schools; and more importantly, to know whether these implementations are producing the desired effects. Literature has shown the importance played by the classroom setting, PTR, pedagogy and curriculum design in improving students' outcomes. This study will unveil how these school aspects are orchestrated by the school community en route to quality education.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What notions of QE does the school community espouse?
2. How is the notion of QE enacted in the school by the school community?

   (The purpose of this question is to probe the school processes and activities so as to bring more insight into how the school community organises, makes provisions, offers services, and facilitates the enactment of quality education at the school).

3. How does the school community experience QE in the school?

1.6 Rationale for the Study

The notion of QE has witnessed many changes over the last three decades (Barrett et al., 2007). The shift in the international discourses in education from the Jomtien Conference (1990) to the Dakar Conference (2000) shows the growing concern for QE − a general shift from quantity to quality. For Adams (1993), QE has a very specific meaning to a country, a province, a local context, a family, a school, and an individual. Although their conception of QE is not the same, they all strive for it. The notion of QE has already become more and more complex because every individual in the education system has personal priorities and values in life. The bigger the system of education, the greater the number of people involved in it; hence the complexities associated with education as a whole become extremely vertiginous. The education landscape is changing too quickly, and going back to the starting point is impossible. Education is being offered to the masses. The advent of formal education for too many people having differing purposes and agendas, provides further complexity. From a broader perspective, it is difficult to know whom the education system is serving, and to whom it should listen (Kellaghen and Greaney, 2001). Be it at the international, national or local level, QE is losing many of its hues, as too many stakeholders are involved. I believe it is also important to create knowledge from the source of the phenomenon of QE; in other words, where it is being produced, serviced, and consumed. Hence, answers to questions regarding QE could be found by considering the various aspects of a school system such as infrastructure, school buildings, administration, teacher education, educational materials, classrooms, teaching, and learning, and achievements (Goddard & Leask, 1992; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Kapur, 2019). My motivation for conducting this research at the school level is to expand our understanding and perspectives on QE within a particular school community. Such will lead to unveiling the meanings attributed to it, delineating how it is enacted and experienced in the school. The school is known to be a place where people having many differences in ideologies, perspectives, cultures, and values meet; much attention is placed on QE. Based on their priorities and agendas, people tend to evaluate QE, think about it, deliver it, and otherwise use it (Mahapatra, Jena & Agarwal, 2014).

The international discourses on QE have always shown concerns about basic education, literacy and numeracy; more specifically, when it comes to global actions for improving education in developing countries. Since 1990, international agencies for education have been militating

efforts to democratize access to education. This is so as to reach universal primary education in developing countries as promised in the EFA goals, MGDs, and the SDGs. The strong demand for attention as an international concern for QE in elementary education has caused to some degree obliteration of the actions for and in secondary education. People tend to link QE with EFA goals and now SDGs. This research will expand knowledge and perspectives on secondary education. I believe that school and classroom ethnographies will unravel the hidden stories in secondary schools on the involvement of people in and for education.

Henderson (2002) argues that the tools and indicators used to measure QE, such as academic output, surveys of public opinion, school inspection, and views of school personnel including that of teachers, pose many issues to the understanding of QE. The attempt to quantify quality goes far beyond an antithetical literary device; and also fails to address the exclusive notion of QE (Chimombo, 2005; Hanushek & Wößmann, 2010). For example, indicators such as school examination performance are used to express QE. However, little is known about the conventions, norms, assumptions, and biases these are based on. Thus, I am convinced that there is much more to find out about QE and the way it is enacted and celebrated in schools. Nikel & Lowe (2010) emphasize that QE should be continuously observed, analysed, and adjusted in an interactive manner by all stakeholders involved. A school is a place in which all the actors are struggling either to give or obtain the best. Some of the actors are doing so openly, while others are achieving such covertly. In certain ways, all stakeholders are either claiming their rights or are simply fulfilling their obligations to this public good, QE. This research will expose those untold and unique stories of how people endeavour to achieve QE in a secondary school.

Reddy (2007) described ‘quality’ as being either normative or descriptive. In the descriptive sense, quality refers to the defining essence of an entity. In a similar way, Meirovich (2015) advocates that there are basically two frameworks that are most frequently used to understand any system of education: normative, and descriptive. In the normative approach, it is explained theoretically how a system should be managed; whereas, in the descriptive framework, it is explained how the system is managed in practice. In this study, my interest is guided more by the descriptive approach. I intend to create accounts of how QE is provisioned at school. Also, I am interested in seeking aspects of quality that are expressed qualitatively – a descriptive account from members of the school community. In this study, the site of the school is the focus of exploration in terms of what is viewed as QE. Hence, an ethnographic study as a

research design has been selected. Hamersley (1986) argues that the work of schools can be understood and can be used to improve or change a role; above all, to gain insight into what occurs in the classroom where the real business of education is supposed to take place. Interestingly, in this study, the critical choice for a site is a school in its complete setting. In addition, Adams et al. (1997) suggested that, should QE need to be understood, consideration should be given to researching the class activities in both proximal and remote environments of classrooms. Similarly, Delmont (1976) explains that classrooms have to be seen against the background of an ongoing educational system operating at the school at both local and national levels; and against large-scale social and economic processes. Again, I find reasons to study how the notion of quality education is enacted in classrooms of a school against the overall construction of quality education at large.

The school affords an interesting site for research into the education field (Gu & Johansson, 2013). Schools are indeed very complex and dynamic. Here practically all aspects of a child's development take place, such as intellectual, emotional, social, and behavioural development (Crick et al., 2013; Gu & Johansson, 2013). As it has often been a major part of international discourses on education, QE is better understood from the perspective of several stakeholders at the school level (Barrett et al., 2007). School ethnographies can reveal how disparities circulate through school life, affecting students and teachers' experiences; and influencing policy and curriculum in the quest to comprehend the educational system. Ethnographic research on schools and classrooms is scanty, and therefore must be encouraged. Indeed there is a need for transparent consultations among the various stakeholders in interviews for reaching a consensus on what the desired educational outcomes are, and on how best to achieve such. In this study, I intend to take into consideration the diverse interests of all local stakeholders in the school. In particular, I will study QE in the school context. Such may be understood as the consensus that best responds to the diverse interests of the multiple stakeholders concerned; and their perceptions of the relevance of education required to fulfil them. The question of the quality of education can therefore not be reduced to a set of purely technical issues; but must necessarily be seen as a dynamic process of continuous adjustment resulting from negotiations between the various stakeholders involved. This concurs with Meyer (2009: p11): "Quality cannot be proclaimed, simply because it cannot be reduced to several general quantifiable figures and values, nor to a set of processes of 'quality control'". As a result, and beyond the various conceptualizations and multiple analytical approaches, the

starting question in any discussion on quality in education is that of determining the desired outcomes of any educational process. In this study, all the combinations of student, teacher, parent, and school principal expectations and outcomes desired in the school context will be explored in depth. This will relate to the question of the range and nature of stakeholders involved in education, their perceptions of the most important outcomes of the education process at the individual, local and national levels; and the necessary process of negotiation required in order to reach consensus as a social pack. This aligns with the thinking of Tedesco (1998), who argues that education is a public good whose importance is attached to educational development envisioned by all stakeholders; be it envisioned in the individual or in collective efforts made or resources invested in the sector. Asim et al. (2021) further argue that it is only legitimate that sound attempts be sought to determine how well educational provision is producing the range of desired outcomes.

Tikly (2010) found that, within this conceptualization, the issue of the quality (and effectiveness) of education cannot be understood without an overall analysis of the historical, socio-economic, political and cultural contexts within which a given education system is operating. Two elements are important in the framework. The first is the importance of the contextual factors (historical, socio-economic, political, and cultural) that shape education policy. Secondly, the perspectives of local stakeholders, including those of teachers, are considered key in understanding quality in a given context. The model locates good QE at the intersection of the three enabling environments, including the policy, home, and school.

Objectives are:

1. To explore notions of QE in a secondary school
2. To explore how the notion of QE is influenced by the school environment
3. To explore how the school community militates their efforts to provide QE at that school.

1.7 Significance of the Study

There have certainly been many investigations into quality education. However, many such are related to quality assurance issues and are not conducted in Mauritius. As with the saying ‘nature never duplicates man’, similarly, no community can be replicated. Conducting research in any context will always be unique. Also, not many studies have been conducted at the point where education is being delivered and used by the community; which includes teachers,

parents, and learners. Most of the research conducted on QE has been from the perspectives of policymakers and management. However, for the scope of this research, I resolve to study the phenomenon of quality education at a place where interactions of all actors occur − the school. The purpose of this study is to expand our perspectives on quality education; and to provide a rich account of how people of different agendas come to construct their own meaning of the notion of QE on the site at which it is being delivered. This research, I believe, will afford insight into QE dispensed in Mauritius. This is a unique, small, developing island country on the African continent, with a highly cosmopolitan population. Here the education indices are somewhat interesting, in having a reverse gender parity index and high enrolment ratios at all levels of education, while making use of modern infrastructure,

1.8 Declaration of Paradigm and Research Methodology

My quest as a researcher was mostly to explore with a view to developing more insight into how the school community, including teachers, parents, the rector, and students of PWSS understand, enact and experience the notion of QE. After much reflection on my research and the research questions, I believe that an interpretive epistemology will be the most appropriate for this study. The interpretivist paradigm, according to Gichuru (2017), is a perspective that seeks to explore and understand how participants try to make sense of the complexities of the phenomenon, QE, through human and social interactions in a context very familiar to them. A qualitative research by means of an interpretive paradigm will answer my questions about the complex nature of the phenomenon of QE. An ethnographic study, as a methodology, is deemed most appropriate for the research, QE being interwoven into the daily lives and practices of all associated with school education. Ethnographic research is an in-depth research methodology that has allowed me to see what people are doing, as well as to note what they have said about what they were doing (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The ethnographic study allowed me to penetrate the social, cultural, and human aspects of the school (Wallen and Fraenkel, 1991; Van Maanen, 2011). The advantages of using ethnographic inquiry in school are numerous. For one, I felt empowered as a researcher to produce detailed observations and interviews of the people and the school environment. I have taken full advantage of ethnography in school as explained by Betul (2017). I “immersed” myself in the classroom through the use of participant observation. This has allowed me to gain an in-depth knowledge of social action and its nuances in other settings in the school. Furthermore, my

going emic in the field helped me to gain empirical insights into social practices that are normally 'hidden' from the public eye through the use of participant observation. One more benefit that this study has gained from the ethnographic approach is that it has enabled me to uncover and connect seemingly unrelated social phenomena simply by focusing on the production of comprehensive social accounts as a demonstration of fidelity to the ethnographic approach.

For this study, the secondary school has been purposively selected as the research site. The purposive stance was due to the convenience of access. This is a school where I am a physics teacher; and I have been there for a considerable time − seven years. I understand the issue of insider bias associated with the researcher being a member of a research site. The ethnographic nature of this study requires a deep understanding of the traditions and customs of the research site. Being part of the school for a long period, I am aware of the traditions, customs, and way of life of that school. Being an insider researcher, I did not require any time for deep immersion as would have been the case with an outsider researcher. However, the issue of research bias did surface many times during the study. This was addressed by having an appropriate data production and data analysis process. Also, a very good understanding of the theoretical framework helped greatly in addressing issues of researcher bias.

Participants in the study were teachers, rectors, learners, and parents. The selected school has classes of both lower and upper-secondary levels of education. Grade 9 students form part of the lower-secondary education section; and Grades 10 and 12 students form part of the upper-secondary education level. The teachers were purposively selected on the basis that they work with students within the three categories of grades. The criteria for selection of teachers were: those having worked in the school for over five years, working with student participants. In order to avoid any further possible bias, both genders of teachers were selected. For this research, gender was not a line of difference separating teachers. A female teacher is equal to a male teacher with respect to teaching capacity. All teachers in the school were apprised of the purpose and scope of the research. In all, there were six teacher participants; and all of them were volunteers. The teacher participants were given a very brief description of a general notion of QE. In all, 18 learners, 6 from each section, were selected as participants in the study. All precautions were duly taken so that the participants were not adversely affected by this research programme, in terms of learning time. I gained the consent of their parents and that of the MOE to observe these students both in and outside the classrooms. They also listened during a focus group discussion. I have utilized a multi-method qualitative approach for collecting data,

featuring semi-structured interviews, observations, questionnaires, documents, and critical friends. I have produced data for the first research question through (i) semi-structured interviews with teachers, parents, and the rector; (ii) analysis of relevant documents and questionnaires; and (iii) focus group discussions for students of the 18 participants. For the second and third research questions, I used participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and informal conversations.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Research in schools as well as elsewhere is bound to have limitations that come from multiple sources (Creswell, and Creswell, 2018). In this research, for example, participants during the observation might not have presented ideal behaviour. Possibly, during the interviews, they might have expressed what the researcher would like to hear − this applies especially to the learners. Another limitation of ethnographic research is that the findings may not be able to be extended to other settings, all being unique in their own ways. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize the findings of the ethnographic research. However, these limitations can be overcome by following established procedures and research ethics. One more limitation could be attributed to my being a participant observer as a teacher in the school. This limitation is highlighted in Ciesielka et al. (2018), who argued that the possibility for the findings to be distorted by observation-setting interaction effects is highly significant, and should never be ignored. While Pink (2015) pointed out that the problem could be addressed by collecting observations from two different perspectives: teacher and non-participant researcher. Drake and Harvey (2014) argued that the issue could be addressed with retrospective analyses of the dynamics of interactions in their respective settings.

1.10 Overview of the Thesis

This thesis has been organized in a number of chapters and ancillary sections. In this section, I am presenting how the thesis is structured, outlining the areas covered in each chapter and subsequent sections at this early juncture. The sequencing of the chapters will guide the readers to the end of the research.

Chapter One presents the introduction to the study. This chapter has ten sections that I deem necessary for understanding the path to the thesis. These sections and sub-sections include the background of the study, a statement of the problem, the rationale of the study, the research

questions, and the methodology used. These sections introduce the phenomenon and describe the context of the research interests.

Chapter Two is known as the literature review chapter. Chapter Two consists of some of the major research conducted on QE. It attempts to give a clear picture of the phenomenon, QE. In this chapter, a brief history of the evolution of the notion of QE in the international context is outlined. Also, QE is described lengthily from different perspectives and in different contexts. A few discourses and critics on QE are analysed and consequently, gaps in literature have been identified. QE was made explicitly accounted for from the level of policy down to the classroom.

Chapter Three introduces the theoretical framework for understanding the purpose of the research. Chapter Three is, in fact, an examination of QE from the social justice perspective that underpins this study. It is not the first time that the term QE is being used. QE has presumably been theorized several times at least. The theoretical framework is more or less a lens through which to view and guide our understanding of the phenomenon. There is also a detailed discussion about all the key elements and activities that may occur in a secondary school.

Chapter Four is a discussion of the research methodology I adopted in this study. The chapter examines the qualitative research paradigm selected for this study. In the chapter, I discuss qualitative inquiry in terms of the ontological and epistemological positioning of the study. Furthermore, I discuss the sampling strategy of purposive sampling as used in the study; and the implications, before discussing some of the critical issues regarding data collection. In the chapter, I also present the research participants. The fundamental issues regarding data collection which I tackled in the chapter relate to epistemological, ethical, and methodological principles.

Chapter Five

In this chapter, I present the data-collection procedures that I have adopted. I also provide an explanation of all the qualitative data analysis procedures undertaken to produce the findings that would answer the first research question. There is also a brief account of the technique of categorical analysis used to analyse critical data obtained from interviews, observation notes, documents, field notes, questionnaires, and the focus group. I also discuss the researcher's reflexivity in relation to data collection and interpretation. The findings are presented in themes

that either emerged from rigorous data processing procedures or that are established indicators of QE, as suggested from the literature.

Chapter Six

This chapter presents the findings that answer the second critical question: How is the notion of QE enacted in the school? The chapter outlines how the school enacts each of the themes identified as the constituting elements of the notion of QE. The following were found to be the provisions enacted at the school level to supposedly warrant QE at school: quality teaching and learning, relevant and meaningful curriculum, caring pedagogy, quality teaching context, teaching conditions, school infrastructure, school leadership, distributed leadership, shared vision, communication, school policy, inclusion, and performance-management system.

Chapter Seven

This chapter presents brief accounts of how the school community experiences QE in the school. In fact, the analysis of these accounts tends to provide answers to the third critical question: How does the school community experience QE in the school? These accounts were captured through interviews, observations and photographs. They were moments when participants felt happy, proud, satisfied, and sometimes anguished. These descriptive accounts provide insight into the visceral understanding of the notion of QE at the school.

Chapter Eight

This chapter is divided into Sections 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3. The findings are compared with the theoretical framework and the literature. In the discussions, gaps in the literature were identified, and areas of either discord or accord were unveiled to expand our insight into the phenomenon of QE.

In Section 8.1, the discussion is geared mainly towards answering the first research question: What notion of quality education does the school community espouse? and, How should one unveil the theoretical reasoning behind this notion?

In Section 8.2, the discussion revolves around the second research question − to understand why quality education is enacted in the school in that particular way.

In Section 8.3, the discussion is about answering the third research question − how quality education is experienced at school.

Analogically, this is about selecting the products and processing them through a series of manufacturing processes so that the new products are conformed to the laws and expectations.

Chapter Nine

This chapter summarizes the findings and presents a brief discussion of the thesis in the form of the new knowledge on the phenomenon of QE. This chapter also outlines the limitations of the current study; and provides some recommendations for further research. Finally, this chapter ends with a concluding thought.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter gives the reader an in-depth understanding of QE by going through the evolution of the notion of QE over time in a different context and from other scholarly points of view. Chapter Two also scrutinises various studies on QE to trace out the conditions, drivers, and essential elements that lead to or influence its conception. The chapter then concentrates on QE as a construct through different perspectives; also presenting the root causes of the evolution and development of the phenomenon globally, locally, and historically.

Sections and subsections 2.1 to 2.10 deal mainly with the evolution and conceptualization of the notion of quality education in different contexts and through different epochs.

Sections and sub-sections 2.11 to 2.20 provide descriptions of quality education in terms of its attributes.

Section and sub-sections 2.21 to 2.26 illustrate the compounding of possible elements that may constitute the notion of quality education in schools.

The chapter ends with a concluding thought.

2.1 From Quality to Quality Education

The Collins English Dictionary (2016) gives different meanings for the word 'quality' based on the contexts in which it is being used. Quality is essentially used for the adjectival purpose of describing or denoting the attributes of something; and sometimes to express a distinguishing characteristic, property, feature, trait, or nature of something or someone. The word is also used to denote the degree or standard of excellence. Literature has also shown that the word 'quality' has multiple meanings, such as value, defect avoidance, conformance to specifications, excellence, meeting and/or exceeding customers' expectations, fitness for use, etc. (Feigenbaum, 1951; Crosby, 1979; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Juran and Gryma, 1988). In the same way, Cheng (1997) refers to 'quality' as an attribute that demonstrates perfection, transformation, fitness for purpose, and being exceptional. Cheng (1997) further states that 'quality' is both elusive and subjective as a term. Notably, many more controversies arise when the word quality is associated with education. Doherty (2008) argues that 'quality education' describes what an institution does to improve performance and achieve the objectives and expected outcomes. However, Saiti (2012) considers QE a management tool to ensure accountability and effectiveness of educational processes. There

are many descriptions and meanings of the notion of quality education found in various literature. The variation in the meaning of quality education creates more confusion. Also, several factors, policy, home, and school seemed to be intertwined. This study will examine the phenomenon of quality education in a school, thus dispelling any confusion apropos of school factors. The research will shed light on how the school community makes meaning of quality education.

2.2 Quality Education and Quality School

The notion of QE has long since gained much attention in many countries. Guthrie (2011) explained that many attempts were made in the sixties to develop educational theories which would improve the education system in developing countries and elsewhere. Education was seen as the instrument that could change the country's society and national development (Al-Shuaibi, 2014; Papadopoulou et al., 2021). While education was seen to be the engine of social and economic progress, many children in developing countries were not attending school (Bugle & Burke, 2004). At that time, in many parts of the world, specifically in developing countries, QE was viewed as an attempt to democratize schooling by opening up opportunities for all individuals. To gain better insight into the education system, the difference between the terms 'education' and 'schooling' should be well understood. While Education was described as a means of developing an individual's desired traits (Mohanty, 2014), schooling was considered a means of servicing education (Mahapatra, 2014). However, the meaning of the desirable traits was contested; and QE emerged from the attempts to find the best fit-all definition for these desirable traits. Despite all efforts, no operational definition for QE was reached; all attempts made to date have been futile due to the very complex nature of humans being (Pereira & Lopes, 2020). However, Beeby (1966) argued that QE consisted of three levels of quality; and claimed that it could be achieved through quality schooling. The first level of QE was the 'quality classrooms', which was mainly concerned with acquiring quantifiable knowledge, skills, competencies, and some other outcomes difficult to measure, such as attitude, behaviour, patriotism, and respect. The second level of QE was related to the development of the capabilities of the learners who would contribute to boosting the country's economic growth. The third level was associated with the social development of the learners. Also, in the same literature, quality schools were described as having the following attributes: (i) more flexible and less external controls such as examinations and inspections, (ii) teachers who are more friendly and considerate, (iii) syllabuses and textbooks less prescriptive, and fourthly, a less strict discipline. However, it was obvious that QE would occur in a school

where (i) the teachers are well qualified in terms of training and content, (ii) the curriculum is broad and meaningful, promoting a good relationship with the community, and positive behaviour at school, (iii) there is good school infrastructure, and (iv) where individual differences among learners are given due consideration (Stabback et al., 2011; Mahapatra et al., 2014)).

2.3 Quality Education in Different Countries

South Asia: According to UNICEF (2018), in South Asia, the economic situation does not allow all children to be sufficiently well educated to acquire the required outcomes such as basic literacy or numeracy, or to gain essential life skills. Muni (2013) argued that these countries were experiencing conflicts that had roots in colonial times, and even post-independence. Muni (2013) also reported that, apart from facing unresolved boundaries among themselves, there were problems of undefined status of diverse ethnic or religious minorities, and social groups. About 1 out of 3 children in Grade 4 could only read at a basic level. The hindrances to education were from both inside and outside schools. Brinkmann (2018) argued that, in the pursuit of QE in South Asia, upgrading schools' infrastructure, recruiting quality teachers, and developing a suitable curriculum were becoming most urgent if literary and numeracy were to be increased, and dropout rates concomitantly to be decreased.

Africa: African countries, during and after colonization, recorded a high degree of illiterate and uneducated people, because Africans were not attending the education system or school system imposed by the colonizers (Abraham, 2020). At that time, the main concern was to give access to school to all children; and that was considered a movement toward QE (Mosweunyane, 2013). Eventually, school enrolment was improved, mainly across all the sub-regions of Africa. This came after the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals were established in 2000 (Togo, 2011; Yamada, 2019). In South Africa, for instance, the notion of QE cropped up from a situation of economic crisis experienced by the country in the seventies. Sayed (1997) explained that, to some extent, QE was marketized for school efficiency, cost efficiency, and value for money to meet people's demands. However, Sayed (1997) also mentioned that, in reality, there was a tension between quality and equality. Similarly, in many African countries, QE would be the movement to achieve gender equality in education and universal primary education by 2015 (Nomlomo et al., 2012; Koissy-Kpein, 2020). In the march to achieving QE by 2030, as stipulated in SDG 4, many countries in Africa

will require many more qualified or trained teachers (Yamada, 2019) to fulfil their duties efficiently in the classrooms, schools, and in the community in general (Masadeh, 2012; Sanyal, 2013).

United States of America: Ravitch (1990) reported that, early in the seventies, it was noted with great concern that in the United States of America, children from low-income families and minority groups were reflecting abysmal academic performance. At that time, it was thought that neither the school factors, the policymakers nor learners were making much difference in areas of teaching and learning. As a result, authorities came to the decision of conventional wisdom to raise learners' interest in the early eighties, to allow students to study subjects such as science, mathematics, history, literature, foreign language, and the arts at schools. Baciu (2015) explained that education has always been viewed as a means of satisfying the developmental needs of society. Therefore, education has been built and rebuilt over time to ensure human development in communities. Over the last two decades, reforms in the education system in the United States of America, according to Linn (2000), have primarily been centred on making teachers accountable for students' assessment performance. Unfortunately, that could be one among the reasons for students' underperformance in international assessments such as PISA and TIMSS (Conway et al., 2002; Popkewitz, 2020). Since then, QE in the United States of America will now be focusing on efforts to improve the performance of students in international assessments; and to make the school environment safer. The schools in the United States of America will strive to equip learners of the secondary education cycle with the skills and knowledge required to succeed in the global economy, thus fulfilling their civic duties as citizens (Nerison-low, 2002; Dugotas, 2013; Neem, 2017).

2.4 Quality Education in the Humanist Tradition

In the humanist tradition, QE revolves around the quality of human development, including the standard of living and quality of life at all levels of society, both nationally and internationally (Aung, 2020). With the passage of time, all the education systems in the world have witnessed considerable changes; as have their objectives and expectations. However, the main focus of QE has still been on learning, the learning environment, and teachers (Eva and Buranský, 2014). The role of teachers under the humanist tradition, among other factors such as school, environment, and curriculum, is still considered central to enhancing learning. Laurie and Mckeown (2016) surmised that, even in the humanist purview, inputs, processes, environment, and outputs are still serving the purposes of QE in two ways: firstly, when the learners feel secure in their learning environment, and secondly, in schools that contribute to enhancing

learners' experiences. Also, in schools, learning is still equated to the development of basic skills such as reading, writing, communicating, computing, thinking, making decisions, and problem-solving in all individuals. However, Aung (2020) argues that the humanist tradition seeks to promote the idea that all human beings are born equal, are predisposed to good and bad qualities, and are, above all, unique. Therefore within the tradition, teaching and learning focus more on the child; and the idea that all children are naturally good. The bedrock of the tradition rests on four pillars, namely (i) 'free will' meaning that students should have the free choice to think and do what they feel good about, (ii) 'emotions impact on learning' advocating that the best can be extracted from a child only if they are in a positive emotional state, (iii) 'intrinsic motivation' which means that all human beings do have the internal desire to achieve the best, (iv) 'innate good', meaning that all human beings are good at the core (Crain, 2015; Duchesne et al., 2013; Veugelers, 2011). Along this line of thought, the behaviour of children is considered the result of interactions with and constraints imposed by their environment. Therefore, schools are thought to be responsible for providing the right learning environment for fostering positive social behaviours of the students (Khatib et al., 2013). Nonetheless, it is believed that inequalities in the past arose when learners were exposed to conditions and realities that were different and inappropriate (Nath et al., 2017). Also, the humanist tradition, in the pursuit of QE, always put learners at the centre of 'meaning-making' because they are believed to be fundamentally good, and can attain their best in a good learning environment that can meet their social, emotional, and cognitive needs (Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017). Hence, schools should align necessary resources to render the environment more appropriate for bringing about holistic development of learners. In the same vein, Kumar (2017) argues that education, in the humanist approach, should not be restricted only to the learner's cognitive development, but should rather promote the overall well-being of the child. According to Aung (2020), QE within the humanist tradition also depends on how teachers teach in classrooms, and how they unfold the school curriculum in the learning environment. In a certain way, the learners' interests are placed at the core of all teaching and learning processes so as to be more responsive to learners' needs (Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017). Furthermore, within the humanist tradition, teachers are called on to change their role from instructor to facilitator. A teacher, as a facilitator, is supposed to assist and empower students to grasp and achieve their targets. In any case, teachers are not expected to spoon-feed or do the tasks for learners; and neither should teachers behave like kings trying to control their students' activities. In other words, teaching and learning are viewed as social interactions in which learners are enthusiastically involved

in active participation through teamwork and discussions. Also, teachers should be close to their students to know their qualities and problems (Duchesne & McMaugh, 2016; Crain, 2015; Khatib, 2013). According to Magill and Rodriguez (2015), the curriculum is central to education as it has great influence on the learners. Based on the philosophy that underpins the humanist approach to education, Chen and Schmidtke (2017) suggested that the purpose of the curriculum is to offer each student satisfying experiences that culminate in personal freedom and growth. Hence, individualism, self-improvement, and self-determination are among the values of humanism that have to be integrated into the school curriculum to help learners. In fact, much emphasis is laid on the importance of self-actualization so that learners discover their own identities. However, when it comes to assessment in the teaching and learning process, Pellegrino (2014) argued that all types of assessment, including assessments 'for', 'as', and 'of' learning, are the key aspects of the school curriculum in the humanist tradition. Pellegrino (2014) therefore suggested that assessments be conducted for giving feedback and information on individual progress so that learners are apprised of how they can improve own performance. However, the benefits of collective and peer-assessment should not be excluded (Buck et al., 2015). In a certain way, the humanist approach is very similar to the constructivist approach to education: in both cases, opportunities are given to construct meaningful learning; and both reject the idea of imposing rigid, prescribed, standardized and controlled curricula (LeFrancois, 2011). It is worth noting that a school is a space in which culture is not singular. There is a paucity of literature regarding unfolding the curriculum in classrooms with a focus on the Humanist Tradition. This study will shed light on how the curriculum is deployed and unfolded in the school for achieving quality education within the humanist tradition.

2.5 Quality Education in the Human Rights Approach

Education is in many countries considered a human right. This global initiative has increased access to education, most notably in the primary education cycle. Also, the right to education affords the hope to fulfil other rights (UNESCO, 2004). The philosophical underpinning of the human rights approach to teaching promotes peace, human security, and environmental sustainability (Piron and O'Neill, 2005). Nonetheless, according to Subrahmanian (2002) and Unterhalter (2007), QE is equated to rights to education, rights in education, and rights through education. These rights include the protection of learners and children in general, from violence and abuse, providing health care to reduce illness and child mortality, increasing life expectancy, and also assisting the development of learning outcomes that promote good health, creativity, use of local languages in schools, pupils' interaction, and acquisition of knowledge

and skills (Mackenzie, 2018; Hahn &Truman, 2015). The 'rights-based' approach also advocates that teaching and learning practices will be improved when schools are more democratic and have a learner-centred structure. The impact of the RTE approach has undeniably gone far beyond access to education: it has influenced many school and teaching practices. For instance, learners' participation in class activities is enhanced; and the longstanding tradition of corporal punishment is reduced (HakiElimu, 2007; Lundy et al., 2017). Nevertheless, recognizing and praising students' performance has become integral to good teaching practice (Barrett, 2007; Mtika and Gates, 2010; Vavrus, 2009). Furthermore, the 'rights-based approach' initiative has helped bring about many incredible transformations in schools. For example, as a consequence, activity-based learning has successfully replaced the longstanding student grade system in India (Blum, 2009; Little, 2006; Sriprakash, 2010). The 'rights-based' approach has also given birth to a QE framework that firstly honours girls' right to primary education, ensuring that school environments are healthy, safe, protective, and gender-sensitive; and developing content that includes relevant curricula (UNICEF, 2009). The framework was implemented with the support of UNICEF to transform schools into child-friendly places. Support was not limited to the 'rights-based' approach but factors such as health, well-being; safety and security, raising teacher morale and motivation, and mobilizing community support were also addressed (Lundy et al., 2017). While QE was interpreted in terms of inclusion and democratic participation of learners in school activities, Barman & Mandal (2015) argued that secondary school teachers, at least in India, still believed that the 'rights-based' approach was curtailing their freedom to manage their classes as they would have wished. Gauri & Gloppen (2012) explained that, in the march towards QE, the 'rights-based' approach suggested that governments and political leaders make necessary arrangements to facilitate the participation of stakeholders, including parents, NGOs, employers, political leaders, and others in having a role in determining the structure, content, and process of education. Many indicators of the 'rights-based approach' have been developed to understand QE under the purview of the 'rights-based' approach. However, based on the arguments of Sriprakash (2010), these indicators go far beyond the measurement of access to education. These indicators also help to evaluate the extent to which the attributes of a 'rights-based approach' to education such as respect, safety, health, and gender parity, are fulfilled.

Furthermore, Juneja (2013) reported that these indicators had shed light on discrimination, inequalities, and participation of vulnerable groups in the school context. Finally, Singh (2019) outlined that a framework based on 4As, namely, availability, accessibility, acceptability, and

adaptability, had been developed to deal with those venerable minority groups. In a way, accountability issues about achieving educational outcomes could be resolved to some extent (REI, 2009), however, not much is known as this area is under-researched. In sum, such education models within a rights-based approach would have issues of accountability while equating Quality Education with curriculum implementation and infrstructure. School life in a culture driven by multiethnicity is inder-reserached. However, the interplay of policy, intention, and practice in such multiethnic school context would be central to this study. Knowledge on how the rights of the learners are protected in such school context could be gained and also on how school infrastructure are adapted to the learners' needs to achieve quality education.

2.6 Quality Education in the Behaviourist Tradition

According to Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki (2018), the behaviourism tradition advocates that learning is practically based on a set of behaviours acquired through conditioning; which means that teaching and learning are generally related to interactions between learners and their surroundings via a proper stimulus. Baulo & Nabua (2019) emphasised that learning under the behaviourist perspective does not depend on any innate psychology of the learner but is shaped by a stimulus. Therefore learners tend to make connections between experience and behaviour. Contrary to the humanist approach, learners do not have free will; and all traits and personalities found in them are not due to any predisposition but are instead caused by the stimulus (Goodwin, 2008). According to this educational perspective, learning will occur only should the learners feel satisfied after the effects of an experience. Also, when repetition of the incident yields similarly satisfying outcomes, memorization will indeed occur. Within the behaviourist approach, learners are trained to complete any task using the stimulus-response strategy, provided that the learners are physically fit for the duty. Blackman (1995) argues that behaviourism greatly influenced educational reforms in the first half of the twentieth century. Based on behaviourist principles, human behaviours are shaped, controlled, and predicted using reward and punishment. In this approach, learners do not have the opportunities to make meaning of the learning; therefore, they are not intrinsically motivated. However, learning outcomes are driven by the agenda of the education system. This means that the learners are educated to achieve a purpose that can be distinct from what the learners have expected. Ng'andu et al. (2013) verified that QE is interpreted as achieving the desired outcomes regardless of the standard of educational processes. QE has been equated mainly to the quality of results; and not much importance has been given to learners' and teachers' satisfaction.

However, based on the aforementioned literature, teaching and learning could be compromised significantly; learners might be left with no choice other than to have recourse to rote learning and memorization. Despite the resistance of many educationists, elements of the behaviourist agenda are still observed in teacher education programmes and in many classroom practices (Huitt, 2006; Vurbic, 2014). Also, Hassan (2011) asserted that the behaviourist approach is still crucial to making the classroom environment more conducive to learning. This study would illuminate the classroom setting and the actions taken by the school community regarding the behaviourist approach to dispensing quality education.

2.7 Quality Education in the Human Capital Approach

Unger (2011) defined the human capital approach to education as the knowledge and skills that individuals acquire after schooling; or from any other types of learning experiences that would enable them to produce economic value. Chattopadhyay (2012) argued that, in a way, human beings were viewed as instruments of economic productivity and competition and not much more. According to Spring (2000), schools are based on the human capital model, which views students as financial resources that may be exploited for the welfare of the nation. From the year 1970 to date, discourses on human capital have been subjected to considerable change. Initially, in the early 1970s, the focus was on the planning of human resources. Today it has shifted to the analysis of investment choices at different levels of education for better rates of return. It is quite clear that, in the literature, Spring (2000), referred to education as a commodity which is nothing less or more than an economic good. In the same vein, Weiss (2004) asserted that a quality school has a good return on a country's economy. Doepke et al. (2019) maintained that parents choose the best school for their children and expect a good return on their investment in terms of school experience, knowledge, and skills acquired. Consequently, there is strong competition between private and public schools in the market; and parents have to navigate the education market to obtain a seat for their children or wards. Doepke and Zilibotti (2017) highlighted that schools used sophisticated strategies to influence parental choice. In a way, policies and strategies have been formulated, and massive investments made to provide free QE with the expectation of a good return on investment. However, Foucault (2018) insisted that the role of schools had been primarily influenced by the new developments occurring in the neoliberal market. Foucault (2018) further stated that schools were viewed as new industries affecting the growth rate of human capital. Furthermore, the researcher elaborated that neoliberalism has been creating free markets and stimulating social progress that has led to privatization, deregulation, and disinvestment in public services.

Andorno (2014) reported that human beings are considered a productive workforce and consumers; their utility takes precedence over their moral dignity. Del Boca et al. (2014) stressed that parents were increasing their investment in education that would trigger the cognitive as well as the socio-economic development of their children. These researchers asserted that the human capital theory considers education a reasonable means of investment because the rate of return is high. At the same time, the practice of this theory helps alleviate poverty and promotes social welfare, including women's interests. The human capital approach to education is drawing new trends in political commitment to ensure free primary and lower secondary education (Jones, 2007; Brinch & Galloway, 2012). In sum, the human capital approach has influenced policymakers to focus more on education quality in terms of accessibility and return on investment. However, Vegas and Petrow (2008) argued that widening access to education by providing free education has neither reduced income inequality nor addressed underdevelopment and poverty. This was attributed to the poor quality of education. More importantly, it was deduced that the human capital approach to education gives birth to three types of inequalities, namely (i) gender inequality, (ii) urban/rural inequality, and (iii) inequality by region (OECD, 2010; Morrisson and Murtin, 2013; Meschi and Scervini, 2014; Fereira and Gignoux, 2014).

Thus, all efforts to address these inequalities and to improve school effectiveness are considered a move towards QE (Heneveld and Craig, 1996; Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991). In the human capital tradition, school effectiveness is linked with inputs from teachers and financial and material resources required by educational processes to produce desired outcomes (Heneveld and Craig, 1996). However, if the conditions are not sufficient, as in the case of the third world population, or amongst the nomadic people where poverty is prevalent, there would most certainly be a high demand for child labour (Farrell, 2002). It is argued that learners from poor family backgrounds would probably underperform (Hill, 2014). Matimbe (2014) highlighted that many students did not do well in standard examinations because there was a crucial lack of instructional materials such as textbooks.

Moreover, having recourse to one type of standardized assessment of cognitive learning as a measure of quality within the human capital approach is also problematic (Barrett, 2009). In a way, measurable cognitive outcomes are no longer the favoured indicators of QE. As asserted by Najumba (2013), improving school effectiveness would require a considerable budget. This research would pay attention to the funding of projects and the commitment of stakeholders to achieve quality education. Therefore, it is crucial to know more about the shearing that may

occur to the notion of Quality Education in a school where approaches to education are sometimes in conflict..

2.8 Quality Education from a Social Justice Perspective

Rizvi (1998) argued that social justice is difficult to define as it has always been embedded within discourses arising from situations of conflicts of varied natures. Hytten (2011) stated that, despite there being diverse opinions on social justice, fairness remains the sine qua non of a socially just society in which equal participation, equal distribution, and equal treatment are encouraged, irrespective of potential differences that may exist among the people. However, Dubet (2004), Rawls (2003), and Connell (2012) contended that social justice, including equity and integration in schools, did not exist as such; the thought that there was no consensus on capitalism and accountability issues was quite disturbing. Similarly, Tikly (2009) agreed that the social justice approach to education provides another interesting perspective for understanding QE. According to Shields & Kameswara (2020), this social justice approach to QE has emerged from the dynamics while attempting to settle the philosophical underpinnings of human capital and human rights approaches to education. From this perspective, the very meaning of QE is mooted; and has provoked public debates at all levels – at the local, national, and global levels. From a social justice perspective, QE is directly associated with enhancing the key capabilities of individuals, communities, and society in general. Therefore QE, from this perspective, is very much inspired by the work of Nancy Fraser on the changing nature of social justice in the global era; and that of Amartya Sen's capability approach. Fraser (2008) defines social justice as ‘parity of participation’, which means that, in an attempt to do justice to every individual, there should be a kind of social structure that allows all individuals to participate, at par, with their peers, in the social life. Relating the statement to the education sector, all education systems should provide opportunities for learners, regardless of their differences, to participate as peers in all educational activities or processes with an equal chance of achieving their respective objectives of equal value. Any attempt to overcome such injustice that impedes their progress or deprives them of such opportunities, equates to QE. The injustice often forms institutionalized obstacles, which are nothing more than economic structures that deny learners access to resources they need to interact with others as peers. It is also argued that, besides institutional arrangements, discourses and cultural beliefs bar learners from equal participation. Along the same line of thought, Ouma (2013) explains that parents and societies hold such viewpoints that deny girls access to upper secondary education. As a result, several movements are trying to bring girls’ involvement in schools to attain parity participation. To

encourage girls' participation in education, parents should first provide their daughters with the necessary facilities to continue their education. The government should develop appropriate policies and laws to discourage child marriage; and should provide schools with proper infrastructure such as separate toilets. Unterhalter (2007) also highlights that many informal associations and NGOs outline injustices undermined by people, even from institutional structures and processes, including schools. Similarly, Fraser (2008) stated that institutional barriers thwart social justice, which is of three types: 'redistribution', 'recognition', and 'participation'. Briefly speaking, (i) redistribution is related to restricted access to resources and the potential outcomes that may emerge therefrom; (ii) recognition implies the non-recognition of marginalized groups as the lawful composition of the society. For instance, in the context of Africa, such refers to women, rural dwellers, people with HIV/AIDS, orphans, vulnerable children, refugees, and minority groups of culture, language, religion, race, and sex; (iii) participation is here defined as the rights of people and groups to participate in decision-making activities; and to have their voices heard in discussions about social justice. It is important to add that participation in misrepresentation is often permitted by some political rules and processes within many countries and states, as argued in Sampaio & Leite (2018). More importantly, participation is considered a prerequisite for addressing the other two types of redistribution and recognition issues. On the other hand, Sen (2009) viewed social justice as a means of tapping into the capabilities of people who claim to be victims of injustices to contribute to the wealth production of the society they serve, and eventually to national wealth. Here, Sen's concept of capabilities encompasses the range of cognitive and affective outcomes that may contribute to a person's well-being. In so doing, learners will become economically productive, healthy, secure, and active citizens. Also, capabilities imply giving the citizens sufficient freedom and opportunities to produce outcomes from resources they can access. However, Autor (2014) contended that the return would still be insufficient even after developing these capabilities to create justice wished for in society. The gap of inequalities would still exist. Eventually, concepts of 'redistribution and participation' advocated by Fraser (2008) are found to echo Sen's (2009) concept of 'capabilities'. Similarly, Walker (2006) argued that eight capabilities for girls in South African secondary schools are knowledge, autonomy, respect and recognition, social relations, aspirations, voice, bodily integrity and health, emotional integrity, and emotions. Based on the concept of social justice, and by conflating the concept of social barriers of Fraser (2007), and the concept of capabilities of Sen (2009), Tikly (2009) suggested that QE could be interpreted by three interrelated dimensions:

(i) inclusion, (ii) relevance of the curriculum and (iii) decisions. The first dimension, inclusion, refers to the accessibility of the learners to facilities placed at their disposal. By means of these facilities learners can further enhance the development of their potential and provisions of social processes and structures to reduce barriers that may impede such developments. Similarly, Robeyns (2018) maintained that these arrangements in the school would bring justice to some extent, at least making a positive difference to society. The second dimension refers to the relevance of the curriculum, how meaningful the education outcomes are to all the learners and their communities, and how consistent they are with national development priorities in a changing global context. It has become increasingly challenging to implement the curriculum at school; and much more daunting to develop it in an era of accountability. All forces and tensions arise from cultural differences and political affiliations (Ball & Junemann 2012; Lingard et al.,2014). The third dimension refers to how decisions about education are taken; and involves all stakeholders at all levels: local, national, and global. Nevertheless, it is argued by Pantic (2015) that social forces could influence the transformation of schools and place excess pressure on teachers to bring about the changes they desire. However, not much is known about the tensions that exist in a multicultural and multi-ethnic school. The research should demonstrate how the interplay of these social justice tensions will influence quality education at the school.

2.9 Quality Education: from Basic Education to Universal Primary Education

In the 1980s, the world faced many daunting problems such as rapid population growth, economic stagnation and decline, debt burden, occupation, war, environmental degradation, and increased violent crimes. Education was thought to be the solution that would address all these critical issues (Shaw, 2011; Alexander, 2010). It was also noted that the education system in many countries at that time was at its lowest development point. To address the education issue, in 1990, a World Conference on Education for All (EFA) was called to sit in Jomtien, Thailand. Here leaders of many countries participated, with a vision to provide primary education to all people globally. Lorfing & Govinda (1994, 2022) averred that the conference had requested commitments from leaders to redistribute all the educational facilities of their countries in such a way as to give equal opportunities, and to facilitate access to everyone without discrimination. Also, the conference showed significant concern about the education system's quality and efficiency in meeting people's basic needs.

Their intention, commitment, and determination to achieve the EFA goals were spelt out through these ten articles listed in the table below.

Article 1	All children, youths, and adults should be given educational opportunities to meet their basic learning needs
Article 2	Expanding the vision so as to improve current practices
Article 3	Universalizing access and promoting equity
Article 4	Focusing on learning to ensure that all learners acquire full knowledge, reasoning ability, appropriate skills, and values
Article 5	Broadening the means and scope of primary education
Article 6	Enhancing the learning conditions by ensuring proper nutrition, health care, and emotional support so that achieving primary education becomes a reality
Article 7	Strengthening partnerships nationally, regionally, and locally with educational authorities to realize the objective of providing primary education for all
Article 8	Formulating policies that support the provision of primary education for all
Article 9	Mobilizing both human and financial resources to support primary education provision
Article 10	Redressing existing economic disparities through the call for international solidarity

Table 1 Articles: EFA Goals 1990 World Conference on Education

(Source; UNESCO. World Conference on Education for All, Meeting Basic Learning Needs, Jomtien,1990)

The meaning of QE was extended to fulfilling the objectives listed under the EFA goals. This meaning has continuously experienced changes in the international context due to various global movements and agendas. However, Hawes (1990) argued that, apart from achieving the EFA goals, QE should also encompass addressing both human and environmental needs, and pursuing excellence and human betterment. Efficiency should not be viewed as a ratio of outputs to inputs. Still, it should refer to the educational system's capacity to translate, with

minimum wastage, all inputs as much as possible into desired outcomes; such as giving access to primary education to all children; and students' attainment in relevant knowledge and skills and accepted forms of behaviour. QE should also include relevance and pursuit of excellence. Through its curriculum and all its educational experiences, an education system should benefit the students, society, the country, and humanity at large. QE should strive to give opportunities together with adequate support to develop creativity by tapping into the individual's potential. A QE system should foster collaboration and cooperation among the learners and all members of society. Schools were supposed to address the students' idiosyncrasies so that they could live in a harmonious society (Hawe, 1990; Madani, 2019). QE at that time was mainly focused on improving 'access to education' and 'gender parity'. Lewin & Sabates (2009) stated that the second concern was a great challenge. Many educational models in developing countries favoured, to a great extent, boys 'education. Thus QE was expressed by the amount by which this trend was reversed. In 1990, gender parity and gross enrolment ratio (GER) were the determinants of QE. Also, QE was expressed by the extent to which the education system was loaded with values espoused by the community (Lewin, 2009, 2015).

Unfortunately, after a decade, in 2000, in Dakar, the world was apprised that many countries were still quite far from achieving those EFA goals. Even the QE movement during that decade was mainly about giving access to education; and addressing gender disparities had fallen miserably short. This failure was attributed to a lack of political will, insufficient financial resources, and, most importantly, a lack of attention to the quality of learning (Lewin, 2005, 2012, 2015). The six EFA goals were intentionally crafted to significantly influence the quality of education. The relevance of curriculum, equity of access, and learning outcomes were not different from the conditions necessary to increase literacy/numeracy and literacy/numeracy rates. Ito (2013) reported that many developing countries met challenges in achieving that dimension of QE, high literacy, and numeracy rates. However, due to various reasons, the goals could not be achieved. Lewin (2012,2015) asserted that achievement of the EFA goals was hindered by the following factors: insufficient financial and human resources, lack of quality teachers and facilitators, lack of commitment at policy level, lack of responsibility at application level, regional disparity, weak institutional capacity in literacy programmes, difficulty in conducting monitoring and evaluation, insecurity, weak coordination and partnership mechanisms, gender disparity, poor infrastructure, and low attendance/retention rates.

Also, Lewin (2015) noted that, among many factors such as infrastructure and curriculum, the EFA had been compromised in favouring primary education over the secondary and tertiary sectors. Such had caused a severe lack of qualified teachers in both primary and secondary education cycles. Similarly, Marshall and Jackman (2013) also reported that the EFA goals had not been achieved; and UPE was considerably slowed down because teachers were not well trained and plentiful. In addition, McArthur (2014) explained that, due to the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty in some developing countries, and other poverty-related issues such as hunger, disease, inadequate shelter, social exclusion, gender inequality, education, and the environment, world leaders were compelled to commit to alleviating the plight of those living in such conditions. All the good intentions of reducing poverty were translated into an inspiring framework of eight goals termed the Millennium Development Goals, which are tabulated below:

Goal 1	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
Goal 2	Achieve universal primary education
Goal 3	Promote gender equality and empower women
Goal 4	Reduce child mortality
Goal 5	Improve maternal health
Goal 6	Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
Goal 7	Ensure environmental sustainability
Goal 8	Develop a global partnership

Table 2 Millennium Development Goals

Source: United Nations (2015) Taking Stock of the Global Partnership for Development, *MDG Gap Task Force Report 2015*

Among the eight MDGs, Goal 2, achieving universal primary education, was believed to be the enabler of all the processes for achieving those priorities. Progress towards this goal was measured by GER, NER, completion rate, and adult literacy rate. Therefore the achievement of these goals would reflect the quality of education. Madani (2019) articulated that these indicators could no longer be served to indicate QE. This research would elaborate the set of indicators used at the school to show the teaching and the curriculum needed for quality education. It is worth noting that, to achieve the targeted goals, leaders would have to demonstrate an understanding of the diverse improvement needs. The research would

illuminate the development of other human aspects as illustrated in the EFA goals. Moreover, Asrat & Asrat (2016) expressed that most teachers tend to believe that QE is the total sum of quality inputs, processes, and outputs.

2.10 Quality Education: Inclusive and Equitable

UNESCO (2015) declared publicly that the goals targeted as mentioned in the MDGs, more specifically the MDG2 and 3 for the scope of this study, had not been achieved, the focus being too narrow. The focus was on giving access to all, and on their completing the primary education cycle. In hindsight, the MDG 2 should have been extended to youths in general and worldwide, not only in areas of conflict and war. The United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in New York officially adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG). UNESCO (2015) stated 17 goals, including a new global education goal (SDG 4). SDG 4 is to ensure inclusive and equitable QE and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. SDG 4 has seven targets and three means of implementation. The sustainable development goal (SDG) 4 is about ensuring inclusive QE for all; and promoting learning for life.

Education is considered the critical enabler of all 17 SDGs; and is confidently expected to play a central role in eradicating poverty (Gabay, 2015; Palmer, 2015). Psacharopoulos & Patrinos (2018) contended that the global agendas emphasized too much access and attainment; while many other important aspects of education such as the relevance of content, critical thinking, health care, and social and emotional development had been overshadowed. In a way, achieving QE as perceived when drafting the SDGs seemed to be challenged by the following: 1) poor achievement of students, and 2) lack of adequate learning experiences that would also lead to the development of non-cognitive, affective, social, and emotional skills, and creativity (Boeren, 2017). Therefore, the enhancement of QE had to be geared towards enhancing the principle of QE conceptualized by that global agenda. The principles are: 1) availability of educational institutions and programmes, 2) accessibility by all with full inclusion of the most marginalized populations, 3) acceptability of form and substance to ensure effective teaching and learning of relevant content, and 4) adaptability concerning changing needs of learners and society (Fischman et al., 2019). Despite some sort of agreement about the principles of QE, its implementation must be tailored according to the context. The success of an educational system is mainly attributed to the degree to which the learning outcomes serve the purpose of the learners, the family, the society, and the country in general. Ofei-Manu and Didham (2014) asserted that the premise of QE should include consideration of the following: the physical and mental ability of the learner, the living conditions of the learner, the learning environment and

educational setting, the competence of the teachers, the nature of interactions of learners with various social actors, the content of the learning materials, methods of assessment and evaluation, a medium of instruction, educational policies, various educational pathways and values; and learners' cultural aspects which would ensure a sustainable future for all. However, based on the premise that sustainability is a multidimensional concept that rises above its meaning of continuation and preservation to embrace quality (Adams, 2006; James, Magee, Scerri, & Steger, 2015; Kates, 2010; Al Amin & Greenwood, 2019), educational facilities had to be extended to all children, adolescents and youth, in general, irrespective of the cultural, gender, physical and mental differences. However, learners should have the minimum potential to succeed. The Global Monitoring Report (2016) pointed out that in practically all developing countries, from the ministry level down to the school level, there is constant pressure to improve outcomes, or to create indicators to show progress toward achieving these goals. Dodds et al. (2016) and King (2017) believed that QE would be conducted if any current policies and practices were revisited. Provisions and efforts had to be made to reach those seven targets identified under SDG 4.

However, achievement gaps would thwart its quality (Mundy, Green, Lingard & Verger, 2016; McGrath and Gu, 2015). GEMR (20016). Targets 4.1, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4a, 4b, and 4c are directly connected with secondary education and its quality. Tikly (2017) contended that any progress towards achieving universal secondary education would be determining factors of QE. Such would include access and completion, relevance, ensuring relevant and practical learning, classroom-related inputs and processes and use and availability of textbooks, gender parity, addressing inequalities between disadvantaged groups and standard stream, inequality issues against physical or emotional disability, teacher education and teacher motivation.

The seven targets and the three means of implementation are summarized in the table below.

Targets		Description
4.1	Primary and Secondary Education	Universal access to and completion of primary and secondary education
4.2	Early Childhood	Ensuring solid foundations for all children through early childhood care and education.
4.3	Technical, Vocational, Tertiary, and Adult Education	1. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) at institutions, workplaces, or both. 2. Tertiary education ranges from short courses to bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programmes.
4.4	Skills for Work	1. Basic cognitive skills include literacy and numeracy 2. Non-cognitive skills such as creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration
4.5	Equity	1. Gender parity 2. Inequality between the advantaged and the disadvantaged 3. Disability
4.6	Literacy and Numeracy	Participation in adult literacy programmes 1. Adult literacy rate 2. Numeracy and literacy proficiency
4.7	Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship	Curricula and textbooks, Teacher education, Outside classroom activities Outcomes
Means of Implementation		
4a	Educational Facilities and Learning Environments	School Infrastructure, information, and technology in schools, violence, and attacks in school
4b	Scholarships	Outbound mobility ratio
4c	Teachers	1. An adequate supply of qualified teachers, 2. Teacher motivation and support

Table 3 SDG4 Targets and Means of Implementation Source: UNESCO (2016). Unpacking SDG 4. Education 2030 Commitments, Briefing Note 2.

2.11 Quality Education as Reputation

Viewed from the economist perspective, Kathy (2004) insisted that any commodity in a market would gain much benefit were it to have a persistent reputation of quality. This suggests that, when quantity is synergized with quality, profitability will increase. Similarly, schools have

recently attracted much interest from students and parents due to their reputation in the market. All organizations need a reputation to survive in a competitive market, which refers to its quality. Reputation cannot be created overnight; instead, it takes a long time to affect members, stakeholders, and the public, as it must work on their cognitive aspects and emotions (Demir, 2010). Schools should strive to have a good reputation in the local market to influence the 'geography of school choice'. Moreover, schools would have to recreate their image projected in the public gaze in terms of steady student enrolment and high student achievements (Gulson and Symes, 2007; Taylor, 2007; Lund, 2015). QE as 'reputation' has, in a way, forced schools to showcase their academic success, and participation in sociocultural activities (Bunar, 2012; Bunar & Ambrose, 2016; Sagir, 2014).

2.12 Quality Education as Value-added

Kenton (2019) states that value-added is a concept that refers to adding a particular feature to a product or a service to increase its perceived value before it is offered to customers. Very often, such brings a difference to other competitive products. These add-ons constitute an improvement in the quality of the product or service. Employees of an organization can add value to services by improving their skills and competencies. Similarly, according to Harvey & Newton (2004), quality as valued-added refers to improving school processes and student attainment outcomes. Besides this, value added to school processes may include the organizational change embraced by the school enrolment to graduation of students in general, or to a specific group of students. Currently, value-added modelling is being used in many educational systems. Value-added modelling refers to student attainments such as scores in examinations, skills, knowledge, abilities, and attributes students gained due to their school experiences. Koedel, Mihaly & Rockoff (2015) concurred that quality as value-added is a tool which allows a school to demonstrate their best practices; and would ultimately urge teachers to enrol in professional development courses to enhance their capabilities, thus becoming more productive and supportive. Schools must invest in creating more conducive learning environments that will eventually bring about the holistic development of their learners. The above-mentioned authors further posited that value added to educational institutions such as schools would better serve its purpose by convincing parents that the school is the most reasonable choice for their children. In the same vein, Sass, Semykina & Harris (2014) suggested that value-added is a new dimension of QE reflecting school performance, which encompasses the contributions of school administration and teachers in terms of the efforts to

bring about change. Moreover, Chetty, Friedman, and Rockoff (2014b) surmised that the concept of value-added would inform policy decisions for a fair distribution of resources. Otherwise, this could lead to a misallocation of resources, creating perverse incentives.

2.13 Quality Education as Selectivity

Donnor (2013) pointed out that QE is not easy to access, as with any quality product. In the same sense, QE is not easy to provide as it requires massive investment and open-mindedness about the equality of all human beings. In this context, QE is a quality feature in exclusiveness and selectivity. Following this line of thought, Grover (2016) argued that, were QE to be selective or exclusive, it would be out of the reach of many people. Thus, QE being particular and complete, QE would lead to many schools becoming niche schools, due to its high restriction on accessibility. It was also argued in the same literature that the baseline of such a phenomenon as a quality niche school would be selectivity, student attainment, race, and family income. Ho (2018) argued that the presence of elite schools or selective schools would influence many high-profile parents coming from good economic backgrounds to gauge school quality by the socio-economic background of teachers and students. It was also argued that the elite schools had their methods of enrolment; and the fees charged are exorbitantly high. Thus, in a way, the selective school was the cause of social and academic stratification, according to Ho (2018), in many metropolitan cities. The idea of whether elite schools perform better when bringing students of the same profile together is still being questioned. However, based on Posselt & Grodskys (2017) arguments, students of such privileged backgrounds congregating in those elite schools would undoubtedly enjoy an education of selective quality. Consequently, selective schools would also contribute to widening the inequality gap, if not in the school, then in the country or city. Abdulkadiroglu (2014) commented that the best infrastructure and dispositions were implemented in selective schools to experience more enriching school activities. These elite schools also have the best quality teacher workforce. Their curriculum differs from other schools, giving a competitive advantage to their learners known as ‘quality as selectivity’. Tham (2021) contended that, even though entry to selective or elite schools is open to anyone, there is a cut-off in the admissions test, depending on where they live. Nevertheless, QE is available to those who can afford the price.

2.14 Quality Education as Exceptionality

Every day in life, people tend to compare objects based on their features such as weight, colour, and appearance. An entity is considered exceptional when it is different and has outstanding characteristics that other objects of the same category do not have (Harvey and Green, 1993;

Mosha, 2000). Thinley (2021) explained that QE as exceptionality would require schools or education systems to be exemplary and excellent. These schools would then be referred to as having a mark of exceptionality because all their school processes are implemented to encourage students to maximize their potential. Albeit their compliance with all accreditation criteria laid down by their respective authorities, schools displaying exceptional qualities would have to exceed expectations related to the educational standards. Furthermore, Simons & Masschelein (2009) suggested that schools claiming to have the quality of exceptionality had to provide the most effective and adaptive learning experiences that best suit students' abilities and characteristics. The above-mentioned authors maintained that such schools had to agree that every student is unique; therefore they would sponsor research to inform practice to address individual differences in terms of potential and needs. Also, these schools would gain the label exemplary by demonstrating highly innovative school leadership, implementing best practices related to their students' academic quality and holistic development (Leithwood, 2010; Schrum 2013).

2.15 Quality Education as Consistency

Consistency is key to customer satisfaction from the quality assurance perspective (De Bievre, 2013). An act of law regulates the education system; therefore all education providers, including schools, should abide by the law. Thus, consistency would be defined as the conformity of the school's outcomes with specifications laid down in the agreement (ACECQA, 2016). In schools advocating such a quality feature, students experience equal treatment and are given equal opportunities to participate in all school activities regardless of any personal differences (Thangeda et al., 2016). Furthermore, these authors argued that QE as consistency would also be indicated by the efforts to maintain standards of processes and outcomes or the attempt to improve them. With such consistency, enrolment would be raised, and all stakeholders would be satisfied. Moorman & Grover (2009) commented that, within the principle of QE as consistency, the school leader should show the ability to maintain harmony among staff and students so that school operations would function adequately, thus achieving the common goal. These authors also remarked that all stakeholders look in the same direction when approaching the purpose; and the same support should be extended to all members. This implies that all teachers enjoy the same facilities and that no such discrepancies exist among them. Similarly, disparities among students should be almost non-existent. However, Thinley (2021) contended that a school leader should strive to maintain success in student attainment; and encourage teachers and students to be fully dedicated to their respective

tasks and activities. In other words, all stakeholders should be committed to a common goal without distraction. For this to be achieved, Zhang et al. (2014) maintained that the school's leader should be able to sustain efforts over a long time until the goal is achieved. As such, consistency is about building small empowering habits centred on the institution's highest priorities and goals (Adams, 1997; Sicinski 2010; ACECQA, 2016).

2.16 Quality Education as Fitness for Purpose

Education quality as fitness for purpose tells more about the suitability of conditions and resources aligned to achieve the education system's predetermined goals in preparation of students for their specific roles. The concept relates directly to the extent that resources, processes, or services are used to achieve the set goals of higher education (Harvey and Green, 1993; Manyanga, 2007). From this perspective, quality is expressed by achieving organizational goals through utilizing resources (Parri, 2006). Nevertheless, fitness for purpose as an approach to quality should equate to fulfilling the customers' needs and requirements to their satisfaction. In education, fitness for purpose was constructed on the ability of the school to effectively deliver the curriculum proposed, thus bringing about necessary development in the students in terms of knowledge, skills, and competencies for facing the realities of life (Harvey and Green, 1993). While Middowson et al. (2014) viewed education and school as the grist to the economic factory, Vlãsceanu (2007) argued that fitness for purpose was an emphasis, by meeting generally accepted standards such as those prescribed by the authority concerned, while focusing on preset goals. It was also highlighted in the same literature by Vlãsceanu (2007), that fitness of purpose encompasses accomplishing other features of quality such as: (i) value for money; which means effective utilization of inputs through efficient processes and mechanisms to achieve the desired outcomes, or (ii) a value-added approach; which is all about bringing changes to the educational processes, such as teaching and learning for better results. In a nutshell, Al-Shuaibi (2014) argued that one of the purposes of the school was to equip students with specific skills, knowledge, and attitudes that enable them to work aright for a living or in pursuing their education. Therefore all school processes, including teaching and learning, should be geared towards achieving that purpose. Along the same line of thought, Thangeda (2016) proposed that quality is a functional notion; therefore the output produced should greatly help the user to achieve expectations. Otherwise, the product would not serve its purpose; and might cause serious customer deception. This statement concurs well with that of Parri (2006) and Hakielimu (2007). These authors pointed out that quality is all about the ability of the outputs to best function in the intended tasks or beyond. Nevertheless,

Manyanga (2007) believed that the term 'purpose' in the concept appears somewhat fuzzy. Parents and learners rarely inform the school about their expectations; hence such a situation may increase the complexities of school processes. In accordance with this, Lingard et al. (2017) insisted that leaders − rectors in the case of secondary school − should always be in a pre-emptive mode for anticipating changes that may arise. Needless to say that students and parents are more interested in the educational outcomes than in the school processes, including teaching and learning; and that was how they viewed quality. However, in an era of accountability, government schools have started working the same way as private schools. The importance of fitness for purpose and fitness of purpose is given much more attention (Lingard et al., 2017). These researchers also mentioned that fitness for purpose, despite an elusive approach to quality, would largely depend on customer satisfaction. Earlier in the 1990s, in the approach to quality as fitness for purpose, much importance was given to the utilization of resources rather than customer satisfaction (Adams, 1997). From this relativity, the expectations and needs of students, staff, and parents in education should be clearly understood so that all school processes are aligned and geared towards achieving the set target (Lingard et al., 2017). The aforementioned literature tends to present logical scenarios of customer satisfaction that may be based on the availability of resources, the utilisation of resources, or a blend of the two. Differing models of education or schools may adopt different combinations. However, this study would delve more deeply into school settings to enhance understanding of quality education in terms of fitness for purpose.

2.17 Quality Education as Excellence

Excellence is an approach to quality based on high standards; in so doing, the product gains a competitive advantage. QE also extends the same principles to schools. Schools expect excellent results despite the minor defective school processes, including lack of qualified teachers (Thinley, 2021). From this perspective, it is argued that quality as excellence tends to be associated with a feature in the product that conveys uniqueness, something individual or ideal to the user, rather than judged from a set of criteria (Mosha, 2000; Weir, 2009). According to Sreenivas et al. (2014), a head of school has to ensure that all the school processes are continuously checked; and that they conform to the norms and standards agreed upon. Otherwise, any deviation will severely impact quality. Thangeda et al. (2021) reported that, with dwindling resources, excellence would be challenging to achieve. They suggested that, apart from working for excellent academic attainment, the head of school has to share their vision with all members of the staff and students. The principal must align all necessary

resources, make provisions such as integrating ICT into school mechanisms, and proffer CPD to the team. Also, Sreenivaset al. (2014) further stressed that, in the venture of excellence, 'good enough' is not enough. Excellence in education is a dimension of QE that contributes to developing the learners' skills for both the immediate and future needs of society. However, based on the arguments of Van der Rest (2012), a school working for excellence should recognize, encourage and help learners to achieve maximum development of their talents. Parri (2006) added that excellence is looked up to as perfection or close to a model, which means the desired outcome is flawless, because it has no defects and all the features are as promised. In schools, students, parents, and other interest groups should experience satisfaction not only with the results, but also with school processes and school life. A practical solution could be inviting stakeholders to contribute individually, according to their ability and interest, to benefit the whole school. Nonetheless, success relies entirely on the persuasiveness of the school leader (Bartle, 2007; Herpelinck, 2012). According to Parmenter (2010), a school leader should establish a set of key performance indicators (KPI) that enhance school processes and outcomes. If not KPIs, this study will unveil other factors that the school community has used to express excellence.

2.19 Quality Education as Quality School Processes

2.19.1 Assessment

In the school context, Brown (1990) defined an assessment as a collection of measurements used to decide how effective the learning process is in which an individual is engaged, to understand a concept or to complete a task. This is a way of collecting and analysing data on the progress made by the individual towards their educational objectives. Feedback is then given on the strengths and weaknesses of the learner being assessed. Brown (1990) asserted that teachers generally conducted classroom assessments to unveil how successful the learner concerned viewed their learning process; and to inform the learner about what the teacher would expect from them. Assessments in the same literature are considered an integral part of the teaching and learning process that would ultimately improve the future performance of the learner. Darling & Hammond (2006) emphasised that classroom assessments could guide learners on both how to learn and what to learn. Also, they mentioned that assessments are used to inform curriculum designers and teachers of any shortcomings in the curriculum and teaching, respectively. However, Areekkuzhiyil (2021) asserted that assessment is a complex and contestable process due to its inferential nature. The researcher even contended that no teacher can assess a learner with certainty. Jimma (2011) commented that the assessment often

becomes a problem when it is not well tuned to reflect the real learning difficulties experienced by the learner. Not all teachers are given proper training in the cognitive domain model to prepare quality assessments. The cognitive domain model would inform the teacher of which questions to ask about the learner's performance, which inferences to make about the performance, and which remedial actions to take (Ball et al., 2008). Also, as Yambi (2018) stated, various forms of assessment are represented in dichotomous poles (McAlpine, 2002), including formative and summative, formal and informal, continuous and final, and convergent and divergent. For the scope of this study, much concern is shown about how assessment impacts QE, explicitly teaching and learning. Baranovskaya & Shaforostova (2017) believed that all these assessments are essential in achieving learning outcomes; and teachers can choose a combination of such in their teaching process. However, these above-mentioned researchers also maintained the importance of evaluation in teaching and learning. While assessments are referred to as processes showing the approaches to learning, evaluation is used to determine the achievement of the learning outcomes (Yambi, 2018).

The formulation of educational policies is much more inclined towards improving how the transferability of the curriculum is tested. However, the effectiveness of these exercises, assessments and evaluations depends largely on those who design and undertake these exercises to possess the appropriate skills (OECD, 2009). In the movement towards QE, assessment and evaluation methods and processes are gaining more attention. Over the last two decades, developed and developing countries have proposed initiatives to improve assessment and evaluation at all levels, from students to the school system. Eze (2009) supported that quality assessment is a crucial determinant of QE.

Nevertheless, the atmosphere prevailing in secondary schools is overly examination-centric; and has placed the purpose of education at stake. QE is being contrived, and learners constantly endure psychological trauma. Dayo (2015) admitted that in many developing countries, many students have graduated; but still do not possess the 21st-century skills and competencies that employers often need. Therefore, the diagnostic assessment (DA) approach should be used to improve teaching and learning processes, thus ensuring QE. Dayo (2015) also suggested that diagnostic assessment (DA) would facilitate teachers' better identifying student learning difficulties; and provide necessary remediation classes before learners undergo summative examination. Gardener (2012) stressed that notwithstanding how learning might be conceptualized, assessments would serve to enhance learning. However, a quality assessment would have a multiplying effect. Aligning with this, Evans (2013) explained that quality

assessment is determined by its design; which is, in turn, constituted by validity, reliability, fairness, relevance, and motivation. In the same literature, Evans (2013) also mentioned that quality assessment would be ensured provided the evaluation had a high degree of truth, and was based on the principle of domain coverage. Also, the quality assessment would positively impact learning were the learners given sufficient feedback to reflect on their performance and to do so with their peers. Learners should be given clear instructions on the assessment process. The assessors, ideally the teachers, should be able to carefully employ appropriate techniques to decide how learners deal with complex learning outcomes. Assessments should not in any way be conducted to the detriment of the less able students (Podgornik & Vogrinc, 2017).

2.19.3 Impact of assessment on learning outcomes.

It has been a common practice in schools that assessments are designed and conducted to understand how learning is conducted; and whether it is geared towards the attainment of knowledge and skills as per the objectives set down in the curriculum. Multiple assessments are made at different stages in the education process; however, if the goals of the assessments are not aligned with that of the curriculum, then the assessments will become futile (Gardener, 2012; OECD, 2009). Although the assessment environments may differ from one school to another, the impact of assessment remains positive on learning outcomes. It is also argued that conducting volumes of assessments would be highly beneficial to attaining quality learning outcomes. Eventually, assessments could positively influence teaching and learning; as these are considered a trustworthy means of motivating students to learn, reporting learning progress, and informing teachers of remedial actions (Jimma, 2011; Areekkuzhiyil, 2021). Also, Herman et al. (2010) supported a positive relationship between students' attainment and benchmark assessments. Therefore, they would encourage teachers to conduct a series of evaluations formatted as the final summative assessment during the year if improvement in students' attainment was required. Assessments are related to improving students' performance (Yambi, 2018), however, assessments can hinder learning (Ghaicha, 2016). If would be more insightful if this apparent contadiction is further researched. This study would attempt to unveil the modes of assessment used in practice to improve learning; also to illuminate how the various modes of assessment are employed to inform teachers and learners about remedial actions to be taken.

2.20 Curriculum and Quality Education

Generally, four dominant models shape the curriculum structure worldwide (Westbrook et al., 2013). They are objectives-driven, competencies-based, process-driven, and content-driven. In the objective-driven curriculum, a list of skills has been identified that must be developed

by the learner for their future workplace. In process-driven curricula, the learners are more empowered to manage their learning experiences; while the content-based curriculum is primarily prescriptive in nature, the competencies-based curriculum is mainly descriptive (Ellis, 2004). The prescribed curriculum is more about planning what ought to be taught, whereas the illustrative curriculum refers to what is experienced by the learners. Brown (2006) argued that QE is determined by how the curriculum is designed, planned, and experienced.

According to Brown (2006), a curriculum for achieving QE would provide educational experiences in formal settings such as schools. It would ultimately lead to the accomplishment of long-term academic goals, including the following: critical-thinking skills, problem-solving strategies, and practical decision-making skills, creative-thinking processes, practical oral and written communication skills, essential reading, mathematics, and writing abilities, knowledge of when and how to use research to solve problems, practical interpersonal skills, technology skills, knowledge of good health and hygiene habits, acceptance and understanding of diverse cultures and ethnicities, knowledge of how to manage money effectively, willingness, strategies, and ability to continue learning. Similarly, Tanner (2007) suggested that the curriculum had to involve all the educational processes that are placed at the disposal of the learners based on their ability to reconstruct or experience knowledge. However, Schmoker (2007) reflected that a curriculum for achieving QE should aim at developing learners' ability to read, write and think effectively. Schweisfurth (2011) contended that in developing countries, the curricula presented to teachers, in the form of syllabi, are more geared towards the content-based. Unfortunately, these prescribed curricula, such as syllabi, rarely lead to developing critical thinking. The complexities around curriculum and QE become more and more difficult to discern due to the learners' and government's clash of perspectives. Bernstein (2000) averred that teachers often found themselves as transmitters of objective knowledge in such cases. Teachers often had to mediate between what was intended to be taught in the curriculum and what they wanted to teach. Cross (2002) insisted that a curriculum for achieving QE should be more inclined towards inducing new skills that would better prepare learners for the job market and technological change. However, Guthrie (2010) and Schweinfurt (2011) argued that any curricula could not be considered for QE should the language of instruction not be appropriate for the learners; and the learning environment is not conducive if the required resources are not aligned, thus inducing critical thinking. Schweisfurth (2013) posited that, if a curriculum is not of good quality, it is more challenging to implement a learner-centred approach.

Pritchett and Beatty (2015) reported that some curricula are overambitious; because too many objectives are set to be achieved. These authors highlighted a strong correlation between an overambitious curriculum and poor learning outcomes. The researchers added that the curriculum design often does not match with learners' ability, which results in the discouragement of learners and loss of interest in the subject. An overambitious curriculum may have disastrous consequences, for instance, dropouts. Similarly, another issue about curriculum in developing countries was that only a specific category of learners was favoured. Glewwe et al. (2009) reported that in many developing countries, such as Kenya, the curriculum was designed to select specific types of academically capable learners, and those who were proficient in English. Another key aspect of a curriculum that could make it apt for QE would be the integration of ICT. Selinger and Kennewell (2010) commented that a curriculum for serving QE would cater to producing appropriate learning experiences related to ICT. Also, such a curriculum that incorporates the use of ICT in both teaching and learning would have a catalyst effect in promoting interactive teaching and learning; and finally, might empower students to think critically. However, the same authors, Selinger and Kennewell argued in the same literature that providing computers, printers, and projectors without proper human expertise would not necessarily produce the desired change. Thus, adequate capability-building courses should be given to teachers, so that they can use ICT to support teaching and learning (Levin, 2008; Sravanakumar, 2018). Curriculum is so vast and complex as an area for reseach, it would not never be sufficient to know how it is designed, prepared, and unfolded in various context with ever changing physical, technological and technological conditions for ever growing needs of the society. This study would explore how the school community aligned resources,including technology and human, to facilitate unfolding of the curriculum for Quality Education

2.21 Planned and Lived Curriculum

Aoki (2004a) averred that schools are viewed based on how the curriculum is prepared, planned, and implemented. This author identified three types of schools. In the first type, students are considered the consumers of knowledge. In such schools, more importance is given to the development of expertise − all stakeholders of the school combine to produce students who are rational thinkers. Learners spend much of their time memorizing facts. Examinations are conducted to test the acquisition of knowledge. Teachers at these schools are given due respect as they possess understanding. In some ways, the learner's brain is considered a separate part of the body. Therefore, too much importance is attributed to thinking. Oyere

(2018) explained that, in such a school, the curriculum is described as a 'thinking curriculum'. Such a school becomes a place where the acquisition of knowledge is made instrumentally. Britzman (2015) referred to teaching approaches as 'dogmatic pedagogy', in which the teachers impose the curriculum on the learners. Such a curriculum becomes lifeless; as learners do not have the opportunities to examine, interact, and criticize the knowledge being dispensed to them. Maxell & Roof (2020) argued that a prescribed curriculum, referred to as a curriculum 'plan', would never bring harmony between the teacher and the learners. These authors asserted that, despite the learning outcomes that might be achieved, the human value would be missing.

The second perspective of the school, as stipulated by Aoki (2004), described the school as a place at which skills development is given due importance. The market demands drive the curriculum in such a school; and therefore place much stress on nurturing practical or manipulative skills. Therefore the other body parts are as essential as the brain. The curriculum gives opportunities to learners to develop their manipulative skills by doing. Unlike the first type, in which knowledge is considered a commodity, the second type emphasizes the learners themselves. Learners are now transformed into products as per the requirement of the market. The curriculum of this type of school considers teachers and students as 'others'. It is viewed as being resources at hand; and associated with words such as instruction, assessment, and implementation.

Aoki (2004) refers to these schools' curricula as a 'plan' and argues that such a curriculum is more technical and psychological, and therefore considers learning secondary. Its purpose is to change the behaviour of learners. Aoki (2003) explained that the transformation of a person is an ongoing process and is impossible to reach a definite end. Aoki (2003) further outlined that the ongoing transformation always creates newness in the life of the learners. This means that a 'plan' curriculum does not match the needs of learners in a state of continuous change; instead, a 'lived' curriculum is more appropriate, the difference already ontologically ingrained in its unfolding. Therefore, such a curriculum would not fit the requirements of QE, as the needs of the learners as human beings had not been satisfied (Magrini, 2015).

The third type of school, as stipulated by Aoki (2004), is a school at which the curriculum aims at developing social traits in learners that must be placed in society. The curriculum emphasizes more 'being' and 'becoming'. In a way, teacher and student are simultaneously considered individuals and social beings. The curriculum brings interaction between the teacher's being and the student's being. Contrary to the first two types of school, at which the body and the

mind are treated as separate and distinct, the third perspective brings unity to the two; and does not only consider learners as members of one social ground, but also considers learners and teachers as beings of wholeness. This type of curriculum, curriculum as 'lived', would to a better degree suit the requirements of QE, in that the human aspects of both teacher and learners were given due consideration (Maxell & Roofe, 2020; Kettler, 2020; Kadir, 2022).

Furthermore, Oyere (2018) reflected that Aoki was never against the curriculum as planned; but was more critical about how the curriculum was unfolded and implemented. A school is a place that is pregnant with possibilities; students and teachers should use schools to explore, discover, and develop. Aoki (2004) insisted that curriculum developers should consider that there is already a connection and a built relationship between teachers and students. Teachers know their students reasonably well, including the level of their interests and ability in the subject being taught. Moreover, the experience acquired by teachers over the years after repeatedly teaching the same subject cannot be overlooked. Therefore teachers should be entrusted with the autonomy to unfold the curriculum in the way they want for the benefit of both the learners and teachers. Aoki (2004) commented that in many schools, teachers have to navigate unceasingly in the space between the planned curriculum and lived curriculum, compelling them to be constantly under tension. This study will shed light on how the school curriculum is repeatedly attuned and re-attuned until a well-elaborated interpretative heuristic process is reached. Kettler (2020) argued that curriculum developers should provide opportunities for teachers to fill the gap that was naturally created between the planned curriculum, and the lived curriculum. It is critical to know how the school allows teachers and students to converse, negotiate, discuss, and confer dialogically, to accept an international curriculum within the community of learners; and more importantly, to unfold it in classrooms.

2.23 Leadership for Quality Education

Tedla et al. (2021) posited that school leadership styles of school leaders have an influence on the academic success of pupils; and have also demonstrated that there is a substantial connection between student accomplishment and school leadership. The most cited types of school leadership are distributed leadership and instructional leadership.

2.22.1 Distributed leadership

Many factors contribute to the success of a school; however, had each of these factors acted separately, the effect would have been significantly less. For the school to achieve substantial results, the leader must build synergy among all the essential actors, including parents and

teachers (Day et al., 2016). Thus, according to (Louis et al., 2010; Moral et al., 2018), students' attainment alone does make a school successful. The holistic development of the learners contributes a great deal; and these two key elements largely depend on the leadership of the principal, the leader of the school. In the same vein, Moos et al. (2011) argued that a school at which the teachers are well trained, both in terms of pedagogy and subject content, can be fully attributed to the role of unit leaders who can responsibly enact influence achievement and implementation whenever required. Day & Sammons (2016) added that heads of schools should be able to develop the leadership quality of their teachers by distributing to them progressively certain responsibilities with a set degree of accountability. These authors suggested delegation as a strategy for achieving this objective; they see a school as a social context in which the inter-relationship among teachers could be part of the leadership activity, as also argued by Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001). Also, Day & Sammons (2016) highlighted the importance of involving teachers in the decision-making processes, arguing that distributed leadership would mean more collegiality at school; and therefore would contribute to school improvement and positive changes (Rosenholtz, 1989; Nias, Southworth, & Yeomans, 1989; Day & Sammons, 2016). It was also proposed that schools would be more likely to achieve excellent performance should their leaders and teachers closely align their values, beliefs, norms, and behaviours. By contrast, Harris (2014) countered that very often, distributed leadership is heavily criticized for making use of dressed-up delegation. This comment was addressed by Hartley (2010), who revealed that, under a distributed leadership style, many school leaders would pretend to focus on the development of the people, while actually being more interested in improving school effectiveness. Similarly, Lumby (2013) asserted that, within the concept of distributed leadership, teachers would have to produce much additional work only for a few extra advantages or rewards.

2.22.2 Instructional leadership

According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), instructional leadership was cited as a type of educational leadership in which the head of schools would focus mainly on the instructional programme, teaching and learning, and the school climate. Hallinger and Walker (2014) contended that in many discourses on school leadership, scholars seem to agree that instructional leadership is very effective in enhancing the teaching and learning environment. Manaseh (2016) expressed that a head of school who does not have a good understanding of instructional leadership would not be able to carry out effectively such functions as curriculum coordination, classroom observation, managing the educational programme, coverage of the syllabi, and leading

changes in instructions. Sheppard (1996), cited in Ng (2019), reflected that instructional leadership could extend beyond managing the instructional programme, and touch on areas concerning school climate and learners' social development. While it is acknowledged that instructional leaders could improve learning outcomes and student attainment, the impact often needs other interventions (Goldring & Greenfield, 2002; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Southworth, 2002). While Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane (2013) confirmed that a solid instructional leadership style of a head of school could ensure success in school, Heck & Hallinger (2010) posited that instructional leaders did show some weaknesses. These researchers noted that, due to the hierarchical nature of the instructional leadership model, the school principal might create discomfort for teachers when adopting a supervisory role. Furthermore, Hassan, Ahmad and Boon (2018) contended that the return on investment in instructional leadership is insufficient to justify the efforts made. These authors also believed that many teachers preferred not to go to the staffroom because collaboration among staff was nearly non-existent under instructional leadership. Also proposed was that instructional leaders tended to focus more on work and tasks rather than on people; and this caused much frustration for teachers. Following the literature on school leadership, it is crucial to know the leadership style adopted by the head of the school in the pursuit of quality education.

2.23 Parental Involvement

Clinton & Hattie (2013) referred to "parental involvement" as a scenario in which parents are actively involved in their children's education.

Parents come to school either independently, or are invited by the teachers to improve their children's learning experiences. Saxena (2014) remarked that the involvement of stakeholders in some school processes is central to enhancing QE. However, Saxena (2014) added that a good platform should be set up at school to facilitate the involvement of parents to improve the school experiences of learners. Similarly, Kendall (2006) argued that parents could be involved in certain decision-making processes earmarked in the SDP. According to Kendall (2006), these interactions would strongly affect reform proposals, strategies, or procedures that could lead to QE. Furthermore, parental involvement could be effective in improving students' achievement; such been proposed by several recent reviews and meta-analyses of the international literature (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Cox, 2005; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Hattie, 2009; Jeynes, 2007; Pomerantz, Moormann, & Litwack, 2007; Ntkane, 2018). However, Hornby & Witte (2013) stressed that schools should not be selective regarding parental involvement, because no single group should be perceived as elite. It was also

discussed in the same literature that adequate flexibility should be given to parents in designing any project. This would accommodate changing needs, differing perspectives, and varied expectations of parents. According to Llamas and Tuazon (2016), parental involvement can prevent undesirable outcomes, and assure sustainability and success. Likewise, Kwatubana & Makhalemele (2015) underlined a strong relationship between parental involvement and improving learners' commitment to school tasks. Also, Lemmer (2007) reported that learners' motivation would be boosted by parental involvement; and issues of school attendance and truanting would be quickly curtailed. Gichohi (2015) offered that quality gaps in the form of inequalities, disparities, and irrelevance of curriculum were noted in numerous education systems, because less consideration was given to parental involvement. However, Chen (2008) and Hornby and Whitte (2013) highlighted that parental involvement becomes less important in secondary schools than in primary schools; especially regarding homework supervision. The above authors also emphasised that many secondary schools did not have a good strategic plan to encourage the involvement of ethnically diverse parents. This study sought to unravel the involvement of parents is facilitated in the school for achieving Quality Education.

2.24 Quality Education and Quality School Environment

The school environment is undeniably a dominant factor contributing to QE (Woolner et al., 2013). Uline et al. (2007) stated that QE would be achieved in a school environment that attracts learners and that is also customized to their learning needs. According to Stadler-Altmann (2015), a school environment should include policies that support mental and physical health, school infrastructure, adequate hygiene, and sanitation facilities. Altmann (2015) further reminded that learners do not only go to school to develop their cognitive capacity but instinctively to seek opportunities from the environment to enhance their school life experiences. This researcher then suggested that schools should strive to help learners to achieve this objective but in a more systematic way. Therefore, schools require a conducive environment with suitable facilities to accomplish the goals stated earlier; and to promote the learners' academic, social, and emotional development. In addition, Loukas (2004) asserted that the school climate would depend on various factors such as government policies, school policies, students' discipline, infrastructure, instructions, curriculum, assessment, and extracurricular activities. Furthermore, Sayed and Ahmed (2011) revealed that QE is very much linked to the interaction between the learners and the learning space, such as the school and classroom setting, including the learning experiences and the resources placed at the learners'

disposition. While a positive school environment motivates students to have better educational aspirations, and helps to improve their attendance and retention; on the other hand, a school environment that is not conducive to teaching and learning will not lead to the proper development of students (Sacher, 2006; Weinstein et al., 2011). Furthermore, Bahtilla & Hui (2021) declared that in an environment that is not conducive and not equipped with necessary facilities, teachers' absenteeism would remain high, staff not being motivated. Also, these authors decried that teachers often have recourse to unnecessary punitive measures against students in such a poor school environment. However, Olujuwon, Philip & Abidemi (2021) countered that a conducive environment would make teaching and learning more accessible, help achieve the target set, and reduce dropouts. Ushie et al. (2015) stated that a conducive environment is a precondition for learning; and can be created when caring interpersonal relationships among students, teachers, school leaders, parents, and community members are fostered. A conducive school environment that would enhance students' happiness, school life experiences, motivation, and collaboration of teachers, should include the following (Bahtilla & Hui, 2021; Stadler-Altmann, 2015; Olujuwon, Philip, & Abidemi, 2021):

2.25.1 Safe and structured environment

A good school environment equals a safe and structured environment in which discipline and security remain central. Fantuzzo (1995) contended that an environment with a poor security system will embed the elements of fear and worry in people using the facilities. Students attending schools in such an environment devoid of a sound security system will not be able to concentrate on their role as learners. Siris (2004) reported that many schools whose security aspect within their environment is low experience a significant rise in the level of indiscipline. Students tend to develop negative attitudes towards learning, for instance shirking classes, truancy, carrying weapons, etc. A school climate in which students feel insecure about their well-being will not be able to foster learning; and is more likely to affect their performance, both academic and non-academic. Furthermore, this environment encourages conflicts and negative attitudes among students, such as bullying, smoking, self-harming, and isolation.

2.25.2 School architecture

According to Gislason (2011), school buildings and design play an essential role in the success of a school, including heating and cooling systems, ventilation, colour schemes, acoustics and noise, furniture, and equipment. It was also mentioned by Stadler-Altmann (2015) that school architecture would have a significant influence on the school culture. Uline et al. (2007) agreed

that not much is known about the effects of infrastructure on teaching and learning. However, Duarte et al. (2011) showed that schools devoid of essential utilities such as electricity, potable water, proper sanitary drainage, and sufficient dustbins to dispose of waste are more prone to indiscipline and limited learning possibilities. These authors also cited the improving of school infrastructure as a necessity rather than a luxury. Also, poor physical conditions at school and the absence of proper sanitary facilities such as toilets and drinking water might be the causes of student and teacher absenteeism (Kielb et al., 2015;). Moreover, Montessori (2013) insisted that badly maintained school buildings that looked gloomy and dirty, with broken glass panes and falling plaster gave the impression that the school was poorly managed, and had little value in the public gaze. This dreary scenario worsens when the neighbouring schools look much better; consequently, this may cause frustrations among members of the school community.

2.25.3 Classroom architecture

Fraser (1986) explained that the classroom learning environment is central to QE as it provides a platform for both the social and physical development of the learners. However, Puteh et al. (2015) and Martin (2002) contested that classroom designs proffer a degree of control to the teachers over learners' activities. As deemed fit, teachers were used to changing the setting of their classrooms by rearranging the desks and chairs to enhance their teaching and the learning of their pupils. Also, Puteh et al. (2015) revealed that, despite teachers being aware, pedagogy is very much linked to classroom settings. Yet, little is known about how to enhance classrooms for teaching purposes. According to Malik & Rizvi (2018), there is a close relationship between the conditions of the classroom and the learners' psychology. The researchers believed that a tidy and spacious classroom can motivate learners to learn; and may lead to the development of a positive attitude toward the school.

2.25.4 Class size (PTR)

Mulauzi (2020) showed that the quality of school outcomes is closely linked to the pupil-teacher ratio in a classroom. This author asserted that in a classroom situation in which the PTR is high, it is most likely that the quality of interaction between teachers and learners will be inferior. The learners will most probably not have the opportunity of having their learning difficulties addressed by their teachers; which might adversely affect the learners' performance. Instead, the learner-centred approach that was supposedly designed to promote individual attention, would give way to whole-class instruction, which might limit students' learning experiences. Also, the situation might lead to poor performance in tests and the workplace because of the lack of hands-on practice. Koc and Celik (2015) asserted that

classrooms with a high PTR might lead to chaotic classroom indiscipline. Consequently, these learners might not be able to develop the appropriate social competencies, creativity, and adequate language skills. In short, the literature confirmed that learners studying in overcrowded classrooms are more likely to have a low level of engagement with their teachers and classmates. In contrast, students who study in classrooms with a low PTR are more likely to perform better academically and to develop strong critical thinking skills (Mulauzi, 2020).

2.25.5 Rules and regulations

According to Fekadu (2019), a school is called a good school when the school rules and regulations are well defined, and ensure fair treatment of all the students without discrimination of any nature such as race, colour, culture, religion, ethnicity, etc. The rules and regulations of a school should be written with a clear intention of both protecting the students and at the same time informing them of their responsibilities. Schaps (2005) reported that schools establish codes of conduct espoused by the school community; and argued that these codes should not be an emanation from the school administration alone. Along the same lines, Ndeto (2013) argued that in many schools, students were never called to participate in formulating the school's rules and regulations. However, students' collaboration was sought for implementing such. The same literature revealed that learners tend to show positive attitudes towards the school's rules and regulations. Students viewed the rules and regulations as school processes put in place to enhance discipline at school; and to instil in the learners the values of their society (Fekadu, 2019). Literature showed that the school ethos represents the culture, attitudes of staff and learners, and core values accepted and promoted in the school. Schools adopt differing school ethoses (Warin, 2017). Any insightful knowledge of how the school promotes and constructs the school ethos becomes crucial to this study. School ethos directly relates to the quality education espoused by the school community.

2.26 Concluding Thought

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature on the notion of quality education in schools. I have also examined the evolution of the idea of quality education in various contexts, including international, social, cultural, and economic; and also how the physical conditions of schools and school processes have impacted on the quality of education. The literature gives an in-depth description of how QE has been shaped by various approaches to education. The two major traditions that have most influenced the education system are the human capital approach

and the humanist approach. This means that the education system is expected to cater for equipping learners with capabilities such that they become productive, and at the same time develop aspects of the self – growing physically, healthily, emotionally, intellectually, and socially; and living in harmony with other beings in a society.

CHAPTER 3: Conceptual Framework

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a broad explanation of how the notion of quality education is constructed from a social justice perspective in the context of low-income countries. The chapter presents the theoretical framework in general and its purpose in research.

Chapter Three then presents Tikly and Barrett's (2011) framework that has been used in the study to bring more insight into how the notion of quality education is constructed within the constructionist approach embedded in social justice. In one way, the framework would allow for the grasping of the nature and dynamics of the various provisions put in place in an education system, while illuminating research questions for the study.

The chapter also features the three main components of the framework: policy environment, school environment, and home environment that enable the notion of quality education.

There is a brief description of the context, in low-income countries in the global south; and all the inputs and processes of three environments that support the notion of quality education.

The chapter then offers a concluding thought.

3.1 Conceptual Frameworks in General

A conceptual framework is a lens through which the reader can view the phenomenon as reflected by the researcher. Such a framework empowers the reader philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically to approach the thesis as per the wish of the researcher. The conceptual framework is the bedrock on which all knowledge is required for understanding the construct of the phenomenon. The framework reveals the philosophical underpinnings of the whole research. It is, in fact, the lynchpin which secures ideas about the research; and is very much guided by the following: the problem, the rationale for the study, the purpose, the significance, and the research questions. Furthermore, similar to a theoretical framework, a conceptual framework is a choice that mirrors the beliefs and inner thoughts of the researcher about the phenomenon. The framework does not only guide the reader but also the researcher. It prevents the researcher from drowning in the large amount of data produced, allowing instead, for making sense of the data (Lysaght, 2011). However, selecting a conceptual framework for research is not an easy task as it requires a deep understanding of

the problem, purpose, significance, and research questions. Without a framework, the reader will be at a loss; and the research itself will not be able to stand − rather, it will fall flat. Thus, a good conceptual framework will emerge only if the core constructs such as the problem, purpose, significance, and focus of the research are well knitted together. All the aspects of the research should be connected to the conceptual framework (Grant, 2014). In the same vein, Mertens (1998) acknowledged that the conceptual framework "has implications for every decision made in the research process". It is also argued that the framework is used to set necessary criteria for either applying or developing theories in the research, otherwise understanding of the phenomenon will be blurred (Lovitts, 2005). Similarly, Sarter (2005) deduced that the researcher would not be able to present concluding thoughts without a theoretical framework. In this research, the researcher has gone through an extensive study of the evolution of the phenomenon of quality education and its meaning in various contexts including academic research, key texts, documents from the World Bank, UNESCO, OECD, international conferences on education, quality, and quality education in coming to grips with the phenomenon. As a result, the framework proposed by Tikly (2011) was chosen as it fits well in the context to better understand the phenomenon of quality education.

3.2 The Framework for understanding Quality Education

This framework was first developed in the year 2007 as described in Tikly (2007); and was revisited several times until it was refined in Tikly & Barrett (2011). The framework provides various analytical tools to deepen insight and expand the perspective on quality education. The framework has been chosen for this research because it gives due recognition to the contribution of various stakeholders in education; and takes into account their different values and interest in education. The framework seems to work well for a broad education system; however, little is known of it in a school context. Also, the choice was based on the framework; as it has given due consideration to the longtime evolution of the phenomenon of quality education in various historical, socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts. The framework is believed to provide tools that would help assess and understand the role of the education system in dealing with the tensions caused by traditional factors of discrimination such as gender, income, and minority status, which include ethnic and linguistic differences. There are two important aspects of this framework. The first aspect is the importance of the contextual factors (historical, socioeconomic, political, and cultural) that shape education policy. The second aspect is the perspectives of local stakeholders, including those of teachers, parents and

students considered central to understanding quality in a given context. Furthermore, much emphasis is laid on the perception of the local stakeholders in an attempt to improve the quality of education. The framework eventually argues that good quality education is located at the intersection of three enabling environments − policy, home and community, and school. This framework stemmed from a combination of two major lines of thought in education, namely, the humanist tradition and the human capital tradition.

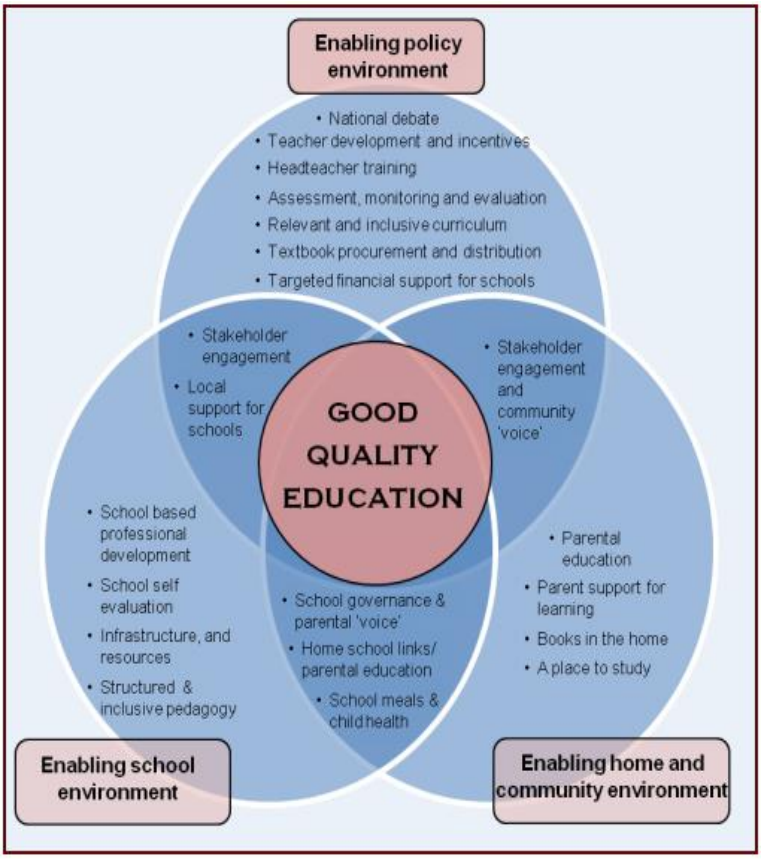

Figure 3 'A framework for understanding education quality. In *Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2005 – Summary: The Quality Imperative* (p. 7) © UNESCO 2004.

As explained earlier in the literature review, in the human capital approach to education, learners are viewed as future contributors to the economic development of the family and the country. In such an approach to education, QE refers mainly to the development of cognitive

aspects of the learners. The educational outcomes such as economic growth, distribution of incomes, and financial returns on investment, are the most important factors. Contrastingly, within the human rights approach to education, broader outcomes such as life skills, attitude, human values, and knowledge of health issues are given much importance. The framework for quality education was developed from the perspective of social justice as a mixture of Sen's capability approach (Sen, 1999, 2009) and three dimensions of social justice (Fraser's, 1996, 2008). While Sen's capability approach advocates that every person is different and has different abilities to develop socially, Fraser (1996) extended the concept of social justice by three dimensions that include recognition, redistribution, and parity of participation. Briefly, the first dimension, redistribution, is linked to the way that educational resources are made accessible to learners. According to Fraser (1996), QE is possible if equal access to resources is given to all learners so that they can develop their capabilities of becoming healthy, economically productive, and socially active citizens. The second dimension of social justice speaks about recognition. The framework acknowledges that, among the learners, there are marginal groups including girls, children from disadvantaged regions, orphans, other vulnerable children, immigrants, refugees, and groups of other cultures, linguistics, and ethnicity. Based on the second dimension, schools should make provisions to accommodate learners displaying those differences. Quality education would be providing opportunities for them to develop their capabilities in such a way that at the same time would help preserve their identities or the social traits they value. Finally, the third dimension is also known as participatory justice. The framework contends that schools or any system of education at any level should be encouraged to allow the voices of these marginal groups or any learner or stakeholder to be heard. People from such categories of social injustice should be given opportunities to participate in national debates on social justice; and also to participate in the decision-making process. It is also highlighted in Fraser (2008) that participatory justice which is also referred to as parity of participation, is an enabling prerequisite of the other two dimensions, namely, recognition and redistribution. Nonetheless, a social justice approach does not only require all learners to have access to the same kind of quality inputs. It draws attention to the need to monitor the extent to which desired outcomes are realized; and to make effective and efficient use of scarce resources to maximize outcomes for all learners. The framework also argues about the relevance of the curriculum as a baseline of quality education. This implies that learning outcomes must contribute to sustainable livelihoods; and well-being for all learners must be valued by their communities, and consistent with national development

priorities in a changing global context. Another important aspect of the framework is that education is considered democratic in the sense that learning outcomes are determined through public debates and ensured through processes of accountability.

3.3 The Context

Nothing happens in a vacuum. In this framework, the operational context of a school is given due attention as it shows the dynamics of the internal and external conditions a school is confronted with. It is argued that a more profound insight into the school context would better inform policymakers to take cognizance of varying national development needs, issues of differences among learners, and the challenges of different disadvantaged groups of learners including minority groups. However, it is easier to be informed of the school situations because it is formal, controlled, and sponsored. The information received would be just a bubble as such in countries where the majority of the learners are on the street (Hamadeh & Marquis, 2018). Moreover, quality education arises from interactions of the three different environments, namely, the policy, the school, and the home/community environments. As per the construct of the framework, it is most probable to experience quality education at the intersection of the three enabling environments. A mixture of the three in the right proportion of inputs, together with a well-geared process will yield the desired outcomes (Tikly & Barrett, 2011).

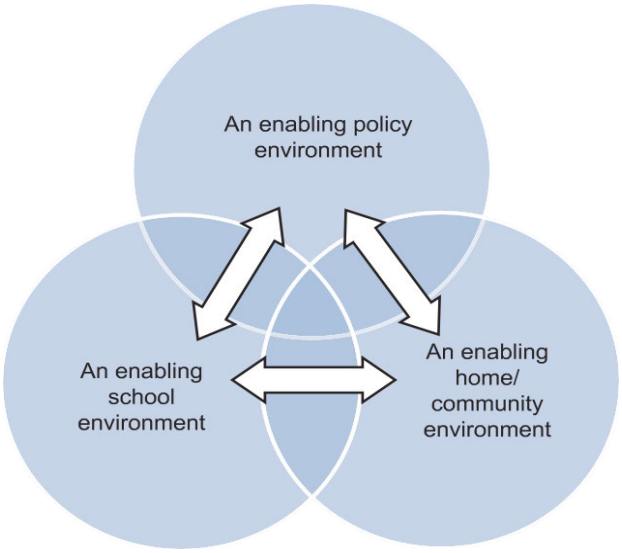

Figure 4 A simple context-led model for conceptualizing the quality of education.

Source: EdQual Research Programme Consortium, funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), (Hanushek and Woßmann, 2007)

It is also interesting that quality education cannot be interpreted solely in terms of outcomes; rather, it would include policy inputs as well as school processes or legislation on education. Compared with other frameworks, in this one, the inputs and processes involved in a system for QE are more contextualized in the enabling environments. However, if there is no synergy and coherence between them, this may lead to an implementation gap. For example, any absence of dialogue between policies and schools, between policies and homes and between homes and schools, might entail a series of gaps that would impact on quality education. However, the parents, in such a situation, are so much busier working to earn a living than concentrating on education. The issue is not about '*not willing to'*, but is more about '*cannot*' (Howland et al., 2006)

3.4 Quality Inputs

Any resources that must be provided to a school or any unit of the educational system, such as qualified teachers, a school building, a classroom, equipment, school furniture, and textbooks to achieve the desired outputs, are referred to as educational inputs. By quality inputs, it is implied that the inputs are in the right proportion and are presented at the right time so as to positively improve the school's effectiveness, including the desired outcomes and school processes involved. For example, teachers are considered as educational inputs; however, trained and motivated teachers would be considered quality inputs. This framework shows provisions for three types of quality inputs, namely, school inputs, home inputs, and policy inputs.

3.4.1 Policy inputs

3.4.1.1National debates

The framework articulates the opportunities given to parents and teachers as well as to marginalized groups of learners to participate in national debates on education quality; and reckons the importance of conflating the views and opinions of all stakeholders. No one should be favoured or rejected on the basis of their differences; hence all voices should be heard. The framework evaluates the quality of education on the basis of dialogues, consultations, and debates of all stakeholders including government, interest groups, teachers, and teacher unions, non-governmental organizations, parents, and students themselves (Tikly, 2003, 2010). It is also highlighted that such an exchange of dialogues between policy and other enabling environments would inform policymakers to reach the crux of the problem of

inclusion, equity, relevance, and accessibility. Yet, engaging the perspectives and experiences of educational professionals in decision-making is particularly important in closing the implementation gap, because of their role as change agents in schools (Eduqual, 2008). Quite often, in many contexts, the voices of indigenous, religious and cultural minority groups are stifled, and never reach the policymakers. This also applies to girls and disadvantaged learners; therefore in giving them the opportunity to express their opinion about their situation concerning education in terms of participation, the relevance of curriculum, and accessibility, is considered central to quality education. In a nutshell, due consideration of these points would contribute to quality education (Tikly 2010; Tikly and Barrett 2011). Despite the people showing a willingness to engage in debates, the possibility of the cultural dimension to delete the requests of the weak and the minority, is not to be overlooked (Dusi et al., 2014).

3.4.1.2 Relevant and inclusive curriculum

Paramanik (2018) enlightened that inclusive education means that all children of appropriate age should be given access to schools irrespective of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic differences, or other conditions. This includes gifted, backward, and mentally retarded children; and those with any disabilities. Inclusive education is based on fundamental human rights (UNESCO, 2005). Inclusive education means modifying and attuning all aspects of the education such as the content, the pedagogy, the language of instruction, school structure and strategies to the interests and needs of the children and the community at large (UNESCO, 2005). Only then will children develop an eagerness for school. Schools, through inclusive education, can be instrumental in addressing issues of inequity and inequality. Schools should offer a platform on which children can socialize with people outside their families. In this way, children with diverse abilities and backgrounds can play, socialize, and learn together (Alqurani & Gut, 2012). It is also argued that pedagogy is part and parcel of inclusive education. Interestingly, a structured pedagogy approach has proved to be successful in many cases of inclusive education. Pedagogy promotes a child-centred approach in which the lessons are carefully planned well in advance; it ensures linkage with prior knowledge, sets out clear learning outcomes, and makes use of formative assessments (Unterlater, 2019). Under this tradition, teachers are encouraged to employ a series of strategies such as group work, hands-on activities, and inquiry learning that suit the learners' needs and the subject. Another issue that is persistently associated with an inclusive curriculum is the language of instruction. It is a fact that children are not all at ease with the same language; and this clashes when the vernacular language of children of a minority group differs from the

language of instruction (Schweinfurt, 2011). Undoubtedly, such a situation adds more to the disadvantage of those children in question (Smith and Barrett, 2010). These issues of the language barrier and cultural identity are not given their due consideration in the human capital framework; however, they gain more importance in the human rights approach; and are embodied in this framework for quality education (Tikly and Barrett, 2011).

3.4.1.3 Textbook procurement and distribution

Textbooks are considered one of the most useful educational inputs and are often prerequisite factors for improving students' outcomes. Textbooks play a dominant role in subject teaching and learning; and are also considered a stock of content knowledge that teachers refer to when planning lessons (Hadar, 2017). In certain cases, such as in remote areas where there is no internet connection and resource persons within reach, textbooks and teachers would be the only means of accessing knowledge (Barrett et al., 2007). In such situations, quality learning and teaching would depend much on access to textbooks (Yu, 2007). Since textbooks serve as guidance to teachers about what to teach and how to teach, in disadvantaged contexts, schools or governments must facilitate the procurement of textbooks on time, these books being critical for supporting the teaching and learning process. The framework argues that policymakers should encourage the writing of textbooks locally, better to meet the needs of the learners in terms of availability, cognitive level and language (UNESCO, 2008). It is also argued that teachers should be encouraged to participate in writing textbooks collectively with their peers. In this way, teachers could help to identify issues related to most effective use; and could also suggest strategies for improvement. However, Schweinfurt (2011) expressed that not only could teachers make a difference, the language of instruction is even more critical. It is argued in the same literature that talking positively about the culture of the minority group in textbooks may create discomfort to the majority. Moreover, the attention of policymakers or government agencies is drawn to ensure quality textbooks over the cost of time and money. It is also suggested that it is more beneficial to learners when teachers write textbooks as teachers then understand the context better. Although not all teachers can be involved in the writing of textbooks, arrangements should be made so that many teachers' opinions, suggestions, recommendations and feedback can easily reach the writers. Similarly, the framework recommends that teachers be given the opportunity of participating in the process of book prescription (Ladnier-Hicks, 2010; Jitendra, 2010).

3.4.1.4 Targeted financial support for school

Every school is unique and has its own specificities. Along this line of thought, schools have diverse needs and require different resources based on the background of students, their location, their priorities and their conditions. Thus, the financial support they require to achieve their aims and objectives will not be the same in every case. In this regard, the framework contends that government agencies should provide targeted financial support to address issues of inequality, equity, and accessibility that are stifling quality education. For schools to be availed of such facilities, they should be able to prepare comprehensive school plans based on their comprehensive needs assessments. In accordance with that philosophy, this framework argues that government agencies and NGOs should formulate modalities for granting such facilities to schools in need. The targeted budgeting has to be embedded in the budgetary policy showing how utilization of funds should be prioritized. For example, schools should be empowered to identify urgent projects that would boost the development of the learners, and also to prepare a budget for realising those projects identified (Sicinki, 2010). The donors or sponsors or government agencies should provide extra funds so that basic facilities may be availed to disadvantaged learners or to make provisions for special gender-responsive budgeting (Tikly, 2011; OECD, 2017).

3.4.2 School input

The framework also considers school inputs such as infrastructure, teacher qualifications, class sizes, pupil-teacher ratio (PTR), classroom structures, science laboratories, library, books in the library, teacher development programmes, subjects offered, resources, including furniture and ICT, as quality inputs. The framework also includes human inputs from both teachers and non-teaching staff. When all the school inputs are refined to fit the purpose of achieving desired outcomes as preconized in the social justice perspectives, they are referred to as quality school inputs. It is argued that all inputs do affect educational outcomes, such as academic performance (Ngware, 2011; Ayodeji, 2012)

3.4.2.1 School-based professional development

The framework stipulates that schools should provide facilities to raise the capabilities of teachers to complete specific teaching tasks by organizing seminars and workshops at the school. During such professional development activities, teachers should be given adequate support to develop required skills so that they can complete tasks related to teaching that will eventually improve pupils' learning (Avalos 2011). These workshops and seminars would allow teachers to reflect on their own teaching and on that of their colleagues. Also, these

capability-building exercises could trigger collaboration and cooperation among teachers. According to Postholm (2008), reflecting on one's own teaching practice is the key to teachers' learning and development. Schools, as learning organizations, should encourage teachers to align their thinking to the school vision. Outside their teaching, teachers would be called to work collectively for planning, implementing, and assessing their teaching methods. The framework further argues that schools that have more experienced and qualified teachers are more likely to produce better outcomes. This argument concurs with Hammerness et al. (2005), Hagen & Nyen (2009), and Van der Bergh & Roos (2014), regarding the provision for raising the capabilities of teachers. These researchers all insisted that professional development working for capacity building would enhance the positive culture and climate of the school. Teachers would be transformed into teacher leaders. In this role, teachers would be more enthused to teach and learn (Postholm, 2018). The framework further stipulates that, added to the facilities of capability building, the teaching conditions in which teachers are called to work should be constantly surveyed to inform policymakers to trigger improvement of the same, teachers having key provisions for quality education. These facilities include time-offs and leaves to be granted for attending those courses or seminars organized in venues outside school.

3.4.2.2 School self-evaluation (SSE)

The framework demonstrates positive concerns about the school carrying out self-evaluation. School self evaluation is generally considered a school internal review exercise in which all school processes and activities are put under rigorous analysis by means of a collaborative and reflective attitude (MacBeath, 2010). The exercise of school self-evaluation is linked to school efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the desired outcomes over a specific period. Such a process would allow both teachers and administrative staff of a school to closely examine their activities, thus improving the outcomes of learners (Ofsted, 2013). In a context of accountability and good governance, schools are urged to show the quality of their work as transparently as possible; and to demonstrate effective use of resources for achieving the desired outcomes (Uhereková, 2003). Also, school self-evaluation serves as a good indicator of where the school stands at the moment it is being assessed and evaluated; and also of what it intends to achieve. School self-evaluation also informs all stakeholders, including teachers and rectors, of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Barnová, 2011). In addition, the framework articulates that school self-evaluation will provide excellent opportunities to the school community to rethink their roles and duties, thereafter bringing about necessary changes to boost students' performances. After a thorough analysis of the

feedback obtained from the school self-evaluation exercise, stakeholders will be more alert and will concentrate more on the areas of development. It is indeed an opportunity for the school community to work collaboratively to achieve the school vision. It is argued that SSE would not only improve the quality of outcomes but would also enhance the school climate. Research concurs that school self-evaluation would urge school leaders to initiate the appropriate organizational change needed to produce the proper outcomes. Teachers would naturally start showing interest in professional development. A new school culture would ensue, and students may start coming to school earlier. According to the framework, quality education will take effect only when all the processes and activities of a school are under constant check, and are subject to be in line with its vision.

3.4.3 Infrastructure and resources

According to the framework, school infrastructure is an important element in the dispensing of quality education. School infrastructure includes space for learning, such as buildings, classrooms, toilets, laboratories, offices, and other physical amenities. Infrastructure also encompasses other facilities, for instance, sanitary conditions, water for hygiene, electricity, fans, internet connection, etc. (Gibson, 2012). The framework argues that school infrastructure which is devoid of proper sanitation, such as separate toilets, is a pervasive factor causing high dropouts of girls. It is also argued in the same framework that only a good school infrastructure with proper sanitation could increase the enrolment of girls in secondary schools. Investing in infrastructure and resources can impact the achievement of disadvantaged learners (Smith and Barrett, 2010). Arguably, from a social justice perspective, not all school activities are related to educational outcomes of quality. However, much consideration should be given to school culture, school climate, and school community satisfaction (Day &Sammons, 2016). Schools should continue to attend to activities that promote equity, despite those activities having little effect on improving outcomes. Learners will eventually develop a liking for school if they are satisfied with the learning environment (Sutherland, 2010; Hopland and Nyhus, 2015). There is an increasing recognition that school infrastructure is becoming more complex. For example, in some countries, such as in the case of Mauritius, schools have to produce sanitary clearance certificates on the quality of water and air to the authorities concerned; otherwise, schools will not be authorized to operate. School infrastructure also encompasses other measurable factors such as light, temperature, and speed of internet connectivity. It is becoming imperative for

schools to provide heaters, air conditioners, fans, and broadband internet connectivity, depending on the needs of the school (Kim and De Dear, 2012).

3.4.4 Pedagogy

The framework for quality education shows great concern about pedagogy, and argues that teaching approaches and didactics are essential prerequisites of quality education. Pedagogy refers to the science of upbringing and training; whereas modern pedagogy means the science of upbringing and education. Didactics is a branch of pedagogy that refers to the theories of learning; and under modern pedagogy, didactics refers to learning outcomes, "the process and result of mastering the system of scientific knowledge and cognitive skills" (Mynbayeva, 2018). Teaching approaches may vary from a teacher-centred approach to a child-centred approach. This framework does not support the teacher-centred approach in which students are given a set of instructions and are supposed to follow passively the concept being taught. Within the teacher-centred approach, learners' roles are limited; and the learning processes are often monotonous and restrained rote memorization (Barrett and Tikly, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2013). While the teacher-centred approach has stemmed from a cognitivist perspective, the learner-centred approach is rooted in the constructivist perspective (Plessis and Muzaffar, 2010). Also, within the learner-centred approach, learners are engaged in an active role in the learning process while the teacher takes the role of a facilitator to encourage the participation of learners. However, the framework tends to favour a more elaborated learner-centred approach termed the learning-centred approach. Within this approach teachers would also consider the context, class size, the background of students, teaching and learning materials available, and the physical environment. Many researchers concur that a learning-centred approach is much more appropriate for quality education (Vavrus and Bartlett, 2013). Despite there being evidence that learner-centred pedagogy or a learner-centred approach would enhance educational outcomes (Hattie 2009; Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005), it is also argued that its implementation in many developing countries and refugee contexts constitutes a great challenge (Schweisfurth, 2013). Nonetheless, the framework seeks an effective pedagogy that takes into consideration issues of equity and background of learners; and that leads to the achievement of educational outcomes integrating social and emotional development, and acquisition of technical skills into academic performance.

3.5 Home inputs

Romm et al. (2020) suggested that children are vulnerable and need special care and protection given by their parents (or responsible adults) to ensure the proper social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of a child. It is argued in the same literature that it is not easy for parents to assume their parental role in a proactive way to facilitate all educational processes in terms of readiness for school. At different stages of development, the child has different needs. However, not all parents have facilities equal to attend to those needs. This framework argues that quality education would be achieved when parents, government agencies and schools work together for the benefit of a child. Whatever resources the parents put into the education processes to achieve desired educational outcomes are referred to as home inputs (Tikly & Barrett, 2011). The framework identifies home inputs in terms of the facilities the family or parents extend to their children so that learners can go to school with the least stress. This could be in the form of a lunch pack, proper uniform, and school materials such as bags, books, copybooks and pens. Cardoso et al. (2019) insisted that many families, especially in developing countries, in places of war, conflict, occupation, and if refugees, would not be able to extend these facilities to their children for such diverse reasons. Furthermore, Pandey and Thapa (2017) highlighted that children whose parents are educated would gain support from their parents to complete their homework even by the slightest means such as praising and rewarding them, thus developing a positive attitude towards school. Children with such boosted confidence do not absent themselves from school unnecessarily; and are more likely to grow up successful citizens. It is also argued in the same literature that, compared to families of uneducated parents and to families who do not support their children by providing a place to study, children of educated parents and those coming from families who provide the right home inputs are more likely to do better. Tikly and Barrett (2011) reported that children's performance at school would improve when the language parents use to communicate to their children at home matched the language of instruction at school. When parents communicate in the same language as used in schools for instructions, those children have an edge over those who do not. The framework argues that parental education, parent support for learning, books in the home, a place to study, and language at home should be embedded as home inputs in the provision of quality education.

3.6 Policy and school

The framework stipulates that dialogues between policy and school are among the key factors influencing quality education. It is argued in the framework that all schools should operate principally under the guidance and authority of the government through enacted policies, constitutional laws and education acts. The framework acknowledges that public-funded schools have to seek approval from the MoE or its structured agencies before implementing any new school policy or modification of the existing school infrastructure. It is also indicated in the framework that quality education rests on good cooperation between schools and policymakers. Furthermore, issues such as overcrowded classrooms, improvement of infrastructure and teachers' working conditions could easily be addressed through cooperation between school and policy. Lee (2010) argued that quality education would be possible should the communication channel between school and policy be activated and strengthened. School data should be made available to policymakers so that they could initiate actions to improve the conditions of work of teachers; and also to allow a school to adapt its curriculum according to the needs of its learners. For example, the authority could intervene in multiple ways, such as providing ad hoc funds for professional activities for teachers, improving the working conditions of teachers by providing more chairs, building separate toilets, and installing air conditioners in the staffroom. Policymakers should also recognize the importance of working with schools. Such would help greatly in curbing many scourges such as illicit drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes, which are affecting students. Another area in which cooperation between schools and policy would facilitate QE is in the promotion of the good health of students. Needless to say, the health conditions of students constitute one of the baselines of quality education (Solomon, 2018).

3.7 Policy and home

Tikly and Barrett (2011) stated that learners should come to school with proper food and proper school materials through the 'properness' Murcott (1986) spoke of across people and cultures. However, not all parents can afford to provide similarly, especially those who are disadvantaged. The children of indigent families may not be able to attend school because of financial limitations. Thus, according to Sen (1996, 2008), these children are deprived of their right to education; and are at the same time deprived of opportunities for developing their capabilities. They are therefore compelled to remain in the vicious circle of poverty; foregoing their possibilities of becoming economically independent and socially equal.

Mihai (2015) contended that it is the prime duty of the state to assure social inclusion by developing appropriate economic and social policies. It is also argued in the same literature that encouraging a regular dialogue between home and policies should be encouraged to identify the needs, opportunities, and resources for indigent children to have access to education. However, the framework for QE suggests that all learners be given the opportunity to participate on a par with others in any school, economic, social, and cultural activities in life. It is further argued in the framework that education is the only recourse for supporting social upward mobility; and it is the only factor that can break that vicious circle. Heading towards this, home and policy should be made accountable for boosting quality education for the disadvantaged groups. Tikly (2011) averred that, as in the human capital theory, accountability is related to parental choice within a market-led system. Similarly, from a social justice perspective, accountability is linked to increased parental and community voice. Muller (2008) stated that government agencies should identify families who need financial assistance to cope with both economic and social urgencies; and also to formulate policies that would urge NGOs to extend support to those families. Examples of good interactions between home and policy are initiatives such as '*Uwezo'* in Tanzania, and '*Pratham'* in India. Within these two initiatives, high-quality and low-cost interventions are provided to prevent, if not to address, the widening of gaps in the education system due to economic and social discrepancies (Tikly and Barrett, 2011).

3.8 School and home

Smith (2010) pointed out that the analysis report of the 'EdQual' based on the data of 'SACMEQ' shows that good interactions between home and school play a key role in determining quality education. It is revealed in the same literature that, while the home has a significant influence on the education of a child, the school has equal importance in the attitude and behaviour of the child at home. Agabrian (2007) argued that the relationship between parents and school could boost the positive attitude of students towards school. The same literature showed that, in many cases where disadvantaged students are involved, the relationships between parents and school did not work well at the start; however, slowly, the situation had improved through multiple interactions. With time, children themselves start appreciating the participation of their parents in school activities; and they begin naturally to develop a positive attitude towards school until a good relationship between home and school becomes a causal condition for improving QE. It is also argued that when parents develop a

strong and respectful relationship with their children's teachers and school, they will be better informed and they could thereby extend necessary help so that their children gain the most from their education. A good relationship between home and school, including parental involvement at school, would ensure many academic and social benefits for a child; such as regular school attendance, positive school results, a positive attitude towards school, positive social and relationship skills, and a sense of well-being and school completion. Also, schools should encourage parents to participate in school social events such as music day, prize-giving ceremonies, school fairs, and discipline committees. Also, as stated in Ntekane (2018), students' performance might be hampered by a lack of parental participation in school. It is also argued that schools would not be able to deal with many inequalities and inequities of larger dynamics, such as religious difficulties; however, mediation might be achieved when there is a healthy interaction between the family and the school (Ngcobo and Tikly, 2010; Bosu et al., 2011). Also, Rawsthorne (2011) confirmed that parental participation in school life is a major step towards social inclusion; and offers opportunities to parents to have a voice in the decision-making process such as on school fees, discipline policies, etc., connecting with others in their local community, and volunteering. However, the existence of such platforms for parental interactions does not fully guarantee participation. It simply gives the parents the possibility for participation. The onus remains on the ability of the parents to make their voices heard.

3.9 For the Scope of this Research

The framework for understanding QE tends to be more general compared with that stipulated by this research. While the framework speaks about QE at the national level of the country, or from an international perspective, this research tends to talk about quality education at the level of the school. Furthermore, the framework discusses the provisions for quality education both inside and outside the school. This research speaks about provisions inside the school only. For example, according to the framework, the home conditions of the learner, municipality libraries, private or public music institutions, etc., could be accounted for in QE. According to the framework, the provisions for quality education could be found outside the school as long as the desired outcomes are achieved. However, this research has been conducted in the context of a middle-income country, unlike the framework which was developed in the context of low-income economies. Also, this study sought to understand how the school community makes meaning of QE in a mainstream secondary school. Furthermore, the framework often links quality education with school improvement and school effectiveness. In educational research,

the two terms are widely used interchangeably (Burusic et al., 2016). According to Bert et al. (2022), school effectiveness and school improvement come from two different origins. While school effectiveness is linked with everything that works well in school; and also with the desired outcomes, school improvement is mostly related to policy and practice; and is about the required change to achieve the goals set. School improvement concerns are more about inputs, outputs, and school processes; whereas school effectiveness is mostly about school activities, pedagogy, and school management − everything that can improve outcomes.

3.10 Concluding Thought

The framework outlines how quality education should be interpreted in an educational system, such as a school, from a social justice perspective, embedded in a combination of human capital theory and the human rights approach to education. The framework also supplies a lens through which to examine how arrangements are made at the level of policy, home, and school for providing quality education to disadvantaged learners. While Nikel and Lowe (2010) argue that the processes put in place are strong determinants of quality education, Tikly (2011) indicated that, regardless of the arrangements made in school to improve school life, parents still view a market-driven system of education as quality education. Also, the framework does not scrutinize these three levels in isolation, but rather looks at the levels where they interact. The framework in itself is not closed; rather, it is open and flexible. The framework provides sufficient room to study the phenomenon of quality education under the influence of the three environments, namely, home, school, and policy. The framework portrays how the three environments interplay to facilitate textbook distribution and teacher education at school as recommended by Sayed and Ahmed (2011). The framework has been constructed to understand how quality education works in the context of inequalities and inequity, such as gender disparity, physical disabilities, and minority groups, in the context of refugees (Unterhalter and Brighouse, 2007). However, this research focuses on how the school community views quality education in a mainstream secondary school that receives learners instinctively, regardless of their differences. The framework can be adapted to expand perspectives on and understanding of the phenomenon. It offers the possibility to view the suitability of processes of transforming the quality inputs referred to as policy inputs, school inputs, and home inputs to education so as to produce the desired outcomes (Tikly and Barrett, 2011).

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the procedures and methods that I have employed to carry out the study. This section describes the research paradigm, the choice of methodology, a description of the site, sampling procedure, data-collection instruments, reliability and validity of instruments, data-collection procedures, ethical consideration, and methods of data analysis.

I have chosen an ethnography as a methodological approach for this research to unravel the behaviours, and to observe how the school community conducts matters in relation to QE. I have applied a few theoretical constructs to disentangle the experiences of learners and teachers at school in relation to QE.

I was very much aware of the implications of school ethnography as outlined in Ogbu (1981) that school is a complex space of imperative culture. Therefore I stood guided by Willis (2000) who explained that ethnography is the grounding for exploration of the interplay of imaginative meanings within a social construct. The study has uncovered the day-to-day activities of the school and has positioned itself in the physical, social, and pedagogical context of the school space.

In this chapter, I also explained how the research was conducted and how the thesis will be presented.

4.2 Methodological Approach of the Current Study

4.2.1 Research Paradigm

My quest as a researcher was mostly to understand and describe how the school community understands and experiences the notion of QE at school. With this focus, I believed that the interpretivist epistemology would be most appropriate for the study. The interpretivist paradigm, according to Henning (2004), is a perspective that seeks to explore and understand how participants view a phenomenon in their world. Within the interpretivist paradigm, the phenomenon to be researched is believed to exist as a human construct in a social context; and would be almost impossible to measure using quantitative tools. Thus, reality had to be accessed through other social constructs such as language, shared meanings, and interactions (Boland, 2004; Remenyi & Pather, 2004; Gichuru, 2017). I believe that qualitative research within an interpretivist paradigm will allow me to enter the social reality to find answers to my questions about the complex nature of the phenomenon of QE. According to Khan (2021), an

ethnographic study would be most suitable for my study as the phenomenon was thought to be deeply interwoven into the daily lives and practices of all those concerned with the secondary school, PWSS.

4.2.2 Choice of the methodology

Ethnography as a research methodology allowed me to access the social reality of the people, as suggested by Creswell (2012) in the school PWSS, so that I could develop an understanding of what and how people were conducting matters, and also to know what they had to say about what they were doing. The methodology has given me unique insights into the psychological, social, and cultural dimensions of the school. Wallen & Fraenkel (1991), as well as Creswell (2012), argued that an ethnographic inquiry could be flawlessly used as a research methodology to provide rich descriptive accounts of people's views and actions in a culture-sharing group that over time has developed specific beliefs, languages, and patterns of behaviour. The ethnographic research approach has allowed me, as the researcher, to develop a deep understanding of social acts and their complexities in the research environment through participant observation. This technique of participant observation for producing data allowed me, as a researcher, to have access to hitherto 'unobserved' aspects of social life (Till & Watson, 2010) at PWSS. Another benefit of ethnographic research is its ability to uncover and connect seemingly unrelated social phenomena that appeared while creating comprehensive social narratives.

4.2.3 Ethnography as a methodological approach in school

Reeves (2013) defined ethnography as a research approach by which to study cultural groups and the social interactions of members of a group, including teams, organizations, communities, and societies. Ethnography is a word that is derived from two Greek words, 'ethnos' which means people, and 'graphei' which means to write. Hughes (1992) and Gray (2015) explained that ethnography is conducted with the key aim of providing a thick, vivid, and rich description so as to provide better insight into people's world views, actions, and the place they live naturally together. As stated in Hamersley (1985), the role of ethnographers is to penetrate the people's world to see and feel how each group views the world; so that the ethnographer can understand and describe their culture, their perspectives, and their practices to the outside world. Ethnography is still considered a young methodological practice that currently is used in various academic disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and education. Yet, it has remained a challenge not to reduce its complexity and to limit its multitude of conceptualizations. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) asserted that in

ethnographical inquiries, the researcher may participate both overtly and covertly in the social realities to watch, listen, and interact with the people.

4.2.4 Challenges of ethnography

In an attempt to make the familiar strange, researchers have to change the way of looking at familiar things. Things that are familiar in the beginning will become unknown. Thus a new perspective will be created to bring light to the unknown (Khan, 2021). This researcher also noted the risk of rediscovering what has already been discovered. In the same literature, it was argued that some ethnographies are limited, and considered poor and inadequate in the sense that the researcher has chosen to develop the meaning of what the people were doing or what they thought people were doing on the site. However, good ethnographies are produced when the researcher analyses all the details of the site and even probes so as to discover reasons for people behaving or acting in a certain way. To know what questions to ask so as to discover the realities of the world, Bernard (2006) advised ethnographers to make use of insider and participant observers. As an insider researcher, I was aware that it would be more difficult to make the familiar strange; and in the field, matters are far more complicated. Making the familiar strange was a real challenge. To address this difficulty, I kept jotting down in my field notes all details of all activities taking place on the site. Also, I took many photos which I showed and discussed at length with my critical friend. Throughout the research I never ceased thinking about the purpose of my research. I have always kept myself in a very inquiring and reflexive mood by being suspicious about all observations.

Hammersley (2006) argued that ethnography is a very complex and risky approach as it may result in either disappointment, excitement, anger, and often in provocation. Therefore, ethnographers have to be careful while in the field and while describing social activities that have been observed, to be true to their own integrity, by not violating others' privacy. However, as an ethnographer, I have remained very focused and committed to my purpose. Sometimes, I have had to move out of the site, as suggested by Jones and Smith (2017) to take small breaks. I felt it important to keep my distance from certain activities. I used to supervise sport with a group of students. Very often, they wanted me to negotiate with other teachers and the rector to be availed of extra time, to the detriment of other classes. I had to keep in mind my purpose as a researcher.

Flamholtz (1993) argued that writing ethnographies would be somewhat challenging, as it required a deep study of the culture in question; and should never be conducted in isolation.

Hopwood (1987) explained that not much has been done to help ethnographers understand the processes involved in accounting for organizations and social groups. The literature recognizes the complexity of ethical considerations required for writing about social, cultural, and contextually-based research. Hopwood (1987) also warned that ethnographies could become tangled should proper guidance not be followed. To avoid being in disarray in the field, I have always remained guided by the advice of other ethnographers and my critical friend, as recommended by Sharma and Sarkar (2019). For example, during the research period, I came to know that a group of students used to shirk classes and smoke under an old bridge at the school. Becoming too involved with the students may prove a problem. Sometimes it hurts and leaves me very puzzled. In the name of ethics, I have made an observation schedule − what to observe, where to observe, and when to observe for each day.

Beach (2017) stated that researchers should be critical in acknowledging all the controversies surrounding the methodology while writing ethnographical accounts, especially when embracing ethnography at school. The researcher added that ethnography is an interdisciplinary tool traditionally associated with the field of anthropology; and is often used to study cultural differences in various communities. As an ethnographer, I was interested more in how research subjects make sense of their world. I was aware that the site is full of surprises. I chose to be prudent when talking to informants and making jokes so as not to be involved in sensitive issues that may relate to cultural differences. Keeping a playful stance in the field can be risky and tricky. Very often, the boundaries of friendship are crossed through jokes (Owton & Allen-Collinson, 2014).

4.2.5 Writing ethnography

Wolcott (1975) reminded that ethnographic research methodology is mostly about writing descriptive accounts of what is lived and understood in a culture that may not necessarily be static. Denzin (1971) was convinced that the social behaviour of people should be viewed both within and outside of the site, and both interactions and settings should be considered. However, Van Maanen (1982) and Rashid et al. (2015) elaborated that the aim of ethnography as a research approach is to discover and write sensibly about the social attributes acquired by members after being for a long time in an intimate relationship in the social unit. Thus it would take time for the researcher to discover these attributes.

According to Faulkner (1982), qualitative research is all about finding a way of describing something, including a definition, meaning, analogy, or metaphor. Ethnography is used for the

same purposes. However, ethnography will provide a means of exposing and investigating the beliefs and interactions involved in a cultural group; and will allow accounting practice that is sensitive and tolerant. Unlike quantitative approaches which focus more on the meaning assumed and assigned to a quantity, "how much?"; qualitative approaches to research show more concern about the questions "what?" and "why?"

4.3 Description of the Settings

4.3.1 The site

In this study, a state secondary school has been purposively selected as the research site. The convenience of accessing the site accounts for the purposive stance. It is a boys' school where I am currently a physics teacher. I have been a staff member for a considerable length of time, almost seven years. As a researcher, I do understand the issue of insider bias associated with the researcher being a member of a research site. However, this fact also plays in my favour, as ethnography requires a deep understanding of the traditions and customs of the research site. Being part of the school for so long, I am very much aware of the traditions, customs, and way of life of that school. Hence, deep immersion within the ethnographic site will not be necessary for this study. However, the issue of research bias will be addressed through the data production and data analysis process which will be taken care of by the instruments used to produce data; and also per the analytical framework that will be developed to assist in the analysis of the data.

4.3.2 Profile of participants.

The participants in the study are teachers, the rector, some learners, and two parents. The selected school has both lower secondary and upper secondary education sections; and welcomes students from Grade 7 to Grade 13. In this study, 3 groups of students of different sections, namely, Grade 9 (Red), Grade 10 (Science and Tech) and Grade 12 (Mixed) were selected. In total, there are 22 students, 1 Rector, 6 teachers, and 2 parents.

4.3.2(i) Teachers

Teachers of PWSS are recruited by the Public Service Commission (PSC) based on their qualifications and experience. All teachers have at least a degree or a joint degree from a recognized institution and in the field in which they are required to teach. Teachers who hold a joint degree in the relevant subjects are sometimes called on to teach either of the two subjects in which they are qualified as and when required. As per their scheme of service, they are supposed to perform duties as specified in SMM (2009). Amongst others, these are (i) ensuring the overall development of students – intellectual, emotional, and moral, (ii) maintaining

discipline inside and outside the classroom, and (iii) participating in workshops and seminars to improve the teaching/learning process and to keep abreast with new trends and developments in education as and when required. In this research, the criteria for selection of teachers are those who have been employed in the school for more than five years. In order to facilitate observation as per the ethics of research, all teachers selected were working in the targeted classes; and they had shown interest in the research and were ready to extend their insightful collaboration to the research. All names of the participants are pseudonyms.

Mrs Nazreen is a female teacher who teaches business studies, and entrepreneurship education and has worked with all three classes. She is responsible for activity periods in Grade10 Science. She has worked in the school for more than five years and she is secretary of the Parent Teachers Association (PTA). She lives near the school and gets along very well with the students.

Mr Neezam is a male teacher teaching art in the school for over seven years. He is involved in many extra-curricular activities in the school. He always looks for projects to embellish the schoolyard. He is the treasurer of the PTA, and is very dynamic.

Mr Jayen is a biology teacher who has worked in the school for over four years. He comes from a girls' school and does not like the idea of working in a boys' school. He spends all his free periods in the biology laboratory.

Mr Francois is a teacher with over 25 years of experience and has been teaching at PWSS for over eight years. He forms part of the school management team (SMT), and is always ready to give his valuable advice to the school staff whenever there is an important decision to take. He walks around the schoolyard during recess time to ensure discipline.

Mr Cheng is a teacher with six years of experience who has been teaching design and technology for three years at PWSS.

Mr Sanjay teaches both physics and design and technology. He has taught in the school for over five years.

4.3. 2(ii) Rector

A rector in a secondary school in Mauritius is equal in rank to an educational administrator (education) and has been selected from among deputy rectors who have had at least three years' service in a substantive capacity in the grade; who possess a postgraduate certificate or diploma in education from a recognized institution; or have completed a one year full-time (or

equivalent part-time) course leading to a postgraduate certificate or diploma in a subject relevant to education at a recognized institution. A rector is supposed to perform duties as stipulated in SMM (2009) which are related to the management of all school activities, monitoring of student performance, management of resources, and management of staff. In addition, a rector's role and responsibility is to implement educational policies in state secondary schools.

4.3.2(iii) Learners

The learners are enrolled in this school after they have successfully passed a summative examination which is held at the end of the primary education cycle known as the Certificate Primary of Education. There is a merit list produced by the Mauritius Examination Syndicate (MES) and based on three main criteria, namely, (i) the academic performance of the children, (ii) the choice of parents, and (iii) proximity of their house to the chosen school.

Category 1: Students Form3/Grade 9 are 13 to 14 years old and are completing their third year of secondary education. In this research, the participants of this category are students from one particular class, Grade 9 Red. They all come from nearby towns or villages which are not more than 20 km away. They come from different ethnic groups: Muslims and Hindus (Indian origin); and Creole (African origin). They are Arshad, Madaven, Harish, Hritik, Rayan, Bertrand, Michael, and Fayaz.

Arshad comes from the Muslim community. He comes to school by bus and arrives at school on time. His mother works in a nearby educational institution. He does not absent himself often and does not arrive late to class. Arshad enjoys science subjects and mathematics.

Madaven is from the Tamil community. He usually cycles to school, and rarely comes on foot; most of the time he arrives after the bell. His mother is a housewife and his father works as a clerk in a school in the nearby town. Madaven is a good athlete who excels in basketball. He is currently the captain of the school junior basketball team.

Harish is from the Hindu community. He walks to school as he lives only a few metres away and is usually on time. His mother is a pharmacist and his father is a secondary school teacher. Last year he took part in a national science competition and was awarded second prize. Harish is regarded as one of the best in his batch and is considered a good student.

Hritik is from the Hindu community. He comes to school by bus and reaches the premises on time. His mother is a bank branch manager, and his father is a computer engineer. He is

interested in the field of computer studies, and he aspires to be like his father. He plays in the school junior football team.

Rayan comes from the Tamil community. He usually comes to school by bus and sometimes by car, and is usually on time. His mother works as a physician and his father is an accountant. He spends his free time in the school library. He is good at mathematics and his mathematics teacher encourages him to participate in regional and national mathematics competitions.

Bertrand is from the Christian community. He usually walks to school and arrives at school after the bell goes, despite living only a few metres away. His mother works as a primary school teacher and his father is a musician. He does well in art, science, and music. He is also a member of the school basketball team. He has helped in painting a mural at school. His art teacher praises his performance in class.

Michael forms part of the Christian community. He usually comes to school by car and normally reaches school on time. He lives with his mother who works as a psychiatrist. He does well in accounts, English, and sociology. Teachers praise his contribution in classes and he is regarded as a model for his peers.

Fayaz is from the Muslim community. He comes to school by bus and usually reaches school just in time. His father works in the field of construction and his mother is a clerical worker. He has a relatively high rate of absence compared to his fellow classmates and is one of the students with a high rate of skipping classes.

Learners of Category 2: Grade 10 Science and Technology

Kalyan is from the Hindu community. He comes to school by bus and is usually on time. He lives with his lone parent, his father, who is a clerical worker at a nearby hospital. He studies science subjects and he is appreciated by his teachers for his contribution and his hardworking attitude in class. Kalyan is also an athlete; and he is the winner of the 200m and 400m races of the previous competition. He has a low rate of absence and barely skips classes.

Irfan comes from the Muslim community. He comes to school by car and is usually on time. His mother works as a chemist in a nearby school and his father is a nurse. Irfan was reported several times for having bullied younger children; and even his teachers have reported him for his disrespectful behaviour in class and his lack of concentration on his studies. Irfan studies mathematics, design and technology, and computer as primary subjects. He has a high rate of absence and is almost never in class. Irfan is also an art student − this is the only class that he

has an interest in. Despite his art teacher's numerous efforts to decrease his absence and rate of skipping class, Irfan prefers spending time with other students playing sport, games, or cards.

Yusef comes from the Muslim community. He comes to school on foot and reaches the premises just when the bell goes. His mother is a pre-primary school teacher and his father is a farmer. He studies English, French literature, and computer studies as his main subjects Yusef obtained good academic results.

Kaushik is from the Hindu community. He comes to school by car and reaches the premises before the bell goes. His mother is a housewife, and his father is a lecturer at the local university. He enjoys science.

Akshay comes from the Hindu community. He comes to school by bus and reaches the premises on time. His mother works as a nurse and his father is a dentist. Akshay likes playing football but he does not possess the attributes needed to form part of the school team.

Ivan comes from the Christian community. He comes to school by bus and is usually on time. His mother is a housewife and his father is a carpenter. He studies art, physics, and computer studies as his main subjects. He is one of the most gifted painters the school has ever had. He has represented the school both nationally and internationally.

Vinnce is Christian and he comes to school on foot. He always reaches the school about half an hour after the bell. His mother works in a nearby supermarket. His father passed away three years back. He is a repeater.

Learners of Category 3: Grade 12 Mixed

Ashley is a Hindu and lives in the same town as the school. He comes to school by car. His father, who is a lawyer, drives him to school every day. He rarely arrives at school late. He plays football very well and he forms part of the school football team.

Jevin is a Christian and lives near the school. He comes to school on foot. His father is a labourer and his mother is a housewife. He manages to come to school on time. He has won a few trophies in some interschool competitions. He takes French, art, and business studies. He has painted a few murals for the school. He is also the vice head boy.

Nadiim is of the Muslim faith. He lives in a nearby town. He is a repeater He takes French, design and tech, and mathematics. He comes to school every day by bus. He is late quite often.

Fadiil is of the Muslim faith. He is one of the prefects of the school. He is 19 years old. He has only one year left to complete his HSC. He lives in the nearby town and comes to school by bus. He is rarely late. His father is an accountant in a private company and his mother is a primary school teacher.

Shaniil is a Hindu. He also lives near the school. He comes to school on foot. Quite often, he arrives at school late. His father is a clerk in a nearby bank and his mother works in the nearby car insurance company. He is a regular student in terms of attendance.

Jean is of the Catholic faith. He is of African origin. He comes to school on foot. His father works as a mason and his mother is a housewife. He is not regular at school. He absents himself quite often from school and very often comes late to school. He is a needy student and he is registered in the Social Register Mauritius, therefore he receives social assistance from the NEF. He likes playing basketball.

Jerome is also of the Catholic faith and is of African origin. He comes to school on foot. He rarely arrives at school late. He lives in the same town as the school. His father is a policeman and his mother works in the nearby supermarket. His mother is an executive member of the PTA. He likes playing football and basketball.

Parents' Profile

Mrs Mahadwa is Shaniil's mother and an executive member of the PTA. Mrs Mahadwa is very active at school. She participates in practically all school functions. She works nearby in an insurance company.

Mr Genevieve is the father of student Bertrand, and he is also an executive member of the PTA. He has two sons in this school. Bertrand is in Grade 9, and the other son is in Grade12. He is a musician, and he extends a helping hand to the school music club.

4. 4 School Environment

The school environment encompasses many aspects of a school such as its culture, physical infrastructure, organic structure, human relations, values, rules, safety, and discipline policies. Hargreaves (2003) elaborated that culture is expressed by the way in which people are involved socially and emotionally whenever they come together for a purpose and over a long period of time. The culture of a school is very often shaped by its history, location, context, and people.

4.4.1 School's physical environment

The school is situated at the centre of a famous town in Mauritius and was founded in 1976. PWSS was a junior secondary school in that year but became a fully fledged state secondary school in 1986. The total enrolment of the school is 750 students distributed over the following sections: 4 classes of Grade7, 4 classes of Grade 8, 3 classes of Grade 9, 4 classes of Grade10, 4 classes of Grade 11, 3 classes of Grade 12, and 3 classes of Grade13. The following subjects are offered at the school: Mathematics, English, French, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Computer Science, Sociology, Design and Technology, Arts, Fashion, Economics, Physical education, Accountings, Business Studies, Entrepreneurship, Life Skills, Home Economics, Travel and Tourism, Telugu, Tamil, Urdu, Marathi, Hindi, Arabic, Islamic studies, Hinduism, and Mauritian Creole Language. The school administration consists of a rector, one deputy rector, one senior educator, one school superintendent, one assistant school superintendent, one school clerk, one typist and 4 school caretakers. The school is headed by a male rector aged 62 years who has extensive experience as a secondary school rector. The administrative block is found on the first floor of a two-story building; all visitors have to pass through the block first before accessing other parts of the school. From his office, the rector has a good view of the front yard of the school. There are six science laboratories, one computer lab, two art rooms, one music room, three design and technology workshops, a gymnasium, one outdoor basketball court, two volleyball courts, one small football pitch, one library, two small playing fields, one canteen, two toilet blocks for students (one on the ground floor and one on the first floor), separate toilet blocks for male teachers and female teachers and 29 classrooms with whiteboards, of which 12 do not have electricity supply. The whole area of the school is covered by CCTV cameras.

4.4.2Faculties

There are 62 full-time teaching staff, 10 contract teachers (supply teachers in the context), and 12 part-time teachers. Some 11 of these full-time teachers are heads of departments. There is one library officer, one library clerk, 8 science laboratory auxiliaries, 2 workshop assistants in the design and technology department, and 4 cleaners.

Students of Grades 7 to 9 follow a national curriculum which is imposed by the Ministry of Education and is prepared by the Mauritius Institute of Education. The academic year is divided into 3 trimesters: Trimester 1 runs from January to April; Trimester 2 runs from May to July;

and the third trimester runs from August to October. At the end of the first and second trimesters, feedback on academic performance is given to parents; and is based on continuous school-based assessments. However, at the end of the third semester there is a summative internal examination. As per the rule of the MoE students are allowed to repeat a particular grade only once; otherwise, be compelled to leave school. The summative examination at the end of the lower secondary cycle, i.e., at Grade 9 level, is prepared by the Mauritius Examination Syndicate. However, students in Grades 10 to 13 follow the Cambridge International Examination (CIE) programme. At the end of Grade11, students take part in the CIE which leads to a School Certificate (SC). Students who have obtained at least 3 credits (above 50 marks) in subjects which they intend to take in Grade12 are promoted to Grade12; otherwise they have to repeat. Similarly, at the end of Grade13 students take part in another CIE leading to a Higher School Certificate (HSC). Students who are not satisfied with their performance are allowed to repeat till they reach the age of 20 years old.

4.5 The Parent Teachers Association

The Parent Teachers Association is an association registered with the Registrar's Office of Mauritius. According to the SMM (2009), the members of the PTA are generally teachers and parents. While all parents may join the association voluntarily, the PTA collects an official annual contribution fee from the parents. However, teachers become members of the PTA by default in the school they serve; and they do not make any monetary contribution. The rector is simply an advisor to the PTA; therefore he sits in on practically all committees. Among the duties cited in the SMM (2009), the PTA is supposed to participate in school activities that will help to draw on resources necessary for improving the quality of education at the school, including the welfare of all students. The executive committee is empowered to represent the voice of the parents through an election. The executive committee is constituted of five teachers and six parents. As per the protocol established, the president should be a parent, and the vice president should be a teacher. The PTA receives funds from the parents in terms of the contribution fees and in the form of grants from the MOE.

4.6 Classroom Environments

At PWSS, there are twenty-nine classrooms all equipped with a whiteboard, a teacher's table, a teacher's chair, and about forty wooden desks and chairs for pupils. In many classrooms, the furniture is in a despicable state. Some of the classrooms are not well painted and not all of

them are provided with electricity as the wiring is not in good condition. When it rains or when it is cloudy the classrooms become quite dark which makes teaching and learning very difficult.

4.7 Personal Positioning

Despite that I worked as a physics teacher at PWSS, I had to seek permission from the MoE for conducting this research. It took about two months to receive clearance from the MoE. This is part of the ethical clearance process. Before I gained the official clearance I had to submit a list of possible questions that I intended to ask the participants. Thereafter, an agreement was signed with the responsible officer of the Ministry of Education. In the agreement, it was clearly explained that I should not remain after school hours on the research site; I was not to disturb either the children or the teachers when they were in class. All pictures taken that I would intend to use for the purpose of the research should be shown to the officer in charge of secondary education, MoE, for approval; otherwise, they may stop the research.

4.8 The Researcher's Positionality

Rowe (2014), and Holmes (2020) emphasized that the researcher's 'positionality' is critical to an ethnography. These researchers defined 'positionality' as the position that the researcher would adopt within research. This thesis is constructed based on my philosophical views of the social world as a teacher. Therefore, the topic of the research, the theoretical assumptions, ethical framework, choice of methodology, and my relationship with participants are significantly shaped by my own ethics and values, my personal and professional experiences as a teacher, together with the opportunities and resources crossing my path. I view education as an opportunity for people to forge their character so as to be the person they want to be. At school, I believe that all students should be given all facilities and opportunities in order to address life issues such as health, poverty, work skills, knowledge, and human relations. Accordingly, I threw myself into the field as a physics teacher.

4.9 Difficulties in the Field

Initially, it was very difficult and frustrating to meet teacher participants during their free slots for discussion, and interviews. And very often during their non-contact time, when they did not have any lesson to teach, they had to attend to some personal matter. Most of my participants had already informed me before signing their consent that they would not like to be disturbed outside school hours. I knew that the interviews would not be very short. Waiting and patience were the only options for combatting that issue (Bruyn, 1966; Wilson 1983). Also, Lawrence-Lightfoot (2004) argued that most teachers take time before they share information about their

class. It is also noted that teachers take time to develop trust with other people. Whenever I had to interview my participants or when I intended to have a casual talk with them, I would inform them in the morning so that they could plan for it. I did not want them to feel pressured to comply with my request.

Another challenge was classroom observation. I was aware, being a teacher myself, that a class lesson is a closed group of interactions and any outsider would be a kind of disturbance. I am also aware that generally, learners are not used to have an outsider in their classes. The fact that I was a teacher myself in the school might have reduced their suspicion, but I could not be sure of this. Barnard (1998) admitted that classroom participant observation could be very challenging as it could raise issues of conflict due to its highly subjective nature. Therefore, whenever I was in a classroom, I would try not to interfere with any participants. I looked for a place as far away as possible so as to perform the observation unobtrusively. I helped the teachers (participants) to write notes on the board or to fix projectors or do some minor repairs.

The possibility of falling back on my own bias as a researcher is higher with ethnography. I faced that challenge by taking support from a critical friend. Noor & Shafee (2021) suggested that critical friends could be very useful in addressing the researcher's bias; and also to illuminate classroom observation. There were two teacher participants in the study who acted as my critical friends, with whom I used to discuss certain issues regarding the phenomenon of quality education at the school. The first informant was Mr Neezam and the second teacher was Mr Jayen. I have selected these two teachers based on their long experience at school, and also because they are members of the PTA Committee, and the Environment Club, amongst others.

Ethnography basically works on cultural imperatives, as cited in Reeves (2013). To enhance my perspective of school ethnography, I looked for a group within the site that could enrich my observations. I decided to include students of different categories and with different profiles. Among the learner participants, there were the school vice head boy, a member of the student council, a class captain, as well as students who enjoy sport, the arts, and science.

Accessing relevant school documents was also a challenge. I used my position as an insider researcher and my good relationship with the head of school to address this challenge. The school rector is an important informant in this study because he is primarily responsible for shaping the school's culture. Smyth & Holian (2008) and Yaacob & Shaidin (2016) posited that insider researchers could easily identify the key informer. My key informant has guided

my selection of observations, selection of other key informants, and selection of artefacts and documents for review. His perspectives allowed me to gain a greater understanding of the underlying beliefs that inform the social and structural components of the school's culture.

4.10 Relationship with Children

According to Harvey et al.(2020), in order to win the trust of children, the researcher should adopt the least adult participating role on the research site. I was very polite and friendly with the children and that was not very easy for me as the children knew me as a teacher working in that school. I had to participate in a few activities with them such as a football match, badminton, and outings. The students in Grade12 viewed me more as a playmate than as a teacher. That generated both advantages and disadvantages. Being too close to learners had made me a less authoritative adult. Barley (2021)describes this as something quite common when studying children in ethnographic studies. It is argued in the same literature that children should identify the ethnographer as part of the site; otherwise they will not be able to open up to him or her. Bearing this in mind, I have tried to strike a balance between being too authoritative and too friendly during the whole observation phase.

4.11 Relationship with Teachers

Before starting the research at school, I discussed, separately, with the five teachers who were my colleagues my role as a researcher during the course of the study. The objective of the first meeting was mostly to clear all confusions that might crop up. For example, Mrs Nazreen had expressed concerns about whether she would be assessed during the research and this is a legitimate concern. Bryman (2008) warned that there is always an expression of fear of being assessed on part of participants in ethnographic research, as they are subject to observation. Other participants also showed a certain amount of concern suspicion of being judged during the research. I clarified this issue with them by assuring them that they would not at any time be an object of my study. I explained to my colleagues that the recordings would be used later only for the purpose of writing and analysis. In the class with Mrs Nazreen, I helped her by writing questions on the whiteboard; and also by walking around to see whether the learners were completing their tasks. While in the biology class I helped Mr Jayen with the practical classes. This allowed me as an insider researcher to carry out my participant observation as I intended. I organized many small social activities outside the school setting such as taking lunch or coffee with my teacher participants. Thus, apart from my physics class, I have

positioned myself as someone willing to help the teachers in any class activity, encouraging in a way my volunteering as a teaching assistant.

The other teachers who were not participating in the research were not aware of my researcher role therefore they remained undistracted. In the beginning, I felt very uncomfortable to constantly watch my colleague's movements and to listen attentively to what they said. Later, I devised an observation schedule. I recorded all peculiar or non-peculiar observations only according to the schedule. Nevertheless, no researcher could catch all the realities of school life. Also, although at the start, I felt very comfortable and confident, I was quite surprised by the reactions of the students. I must confide that I had a feeling of being judged, and my attitudes and my actions were being scrutinized. Learners even showed some kind of unease when seeing me as an assistant teacher.

Another personal challenge I faced as an ethnographer was giving up on my teacher's evaluative gaze. After the first week of observations, I became aware that my position was to some extent contrived because of being a teacher in the school. This difficulty was cited by several scholars (Epstein, 1998; Delamont & Atkinson, 1995) who pointed out that teacher ethnographers faced difficulties of having to give away their natural tendencies as a teacher; and they could not unravel the unfamiliarity when conducting research in the classroom. Making the familiar strange is very challenging for an insider teacher-researcher. However, there are examples cited in Poulton (2021) showing how an insider teacher-researcher can cope with those difficulties. As mentioned earlier in this section, I also shared the same point of view, to conduct selective observations as per the schedule planned a priori. Bearing these examples in mind, I decided to keep a diary, in which I wrote my thoughts and reflections after the observations. Despite this exercise seeming evident, I must say it was quite difficult for me to jot down my feelings and self-criticism. Sometimes I wrote pages, and at other times, I could only write one or two sentences. The diary was a very helpful tool to ensure that my roles as teacher and researcher were distinct; which I referred to as the equilibrium of identities. My experience as a teacher had a strong impact on the way in which I analysed the data. My educational philosophy and values exerted an influence on the analysis. However, the diary was of great help for me in acting according to the ethical agreement I shared with all the participants, especially my colleague teachers. Thus, I had to bear in mind my research role and objectives.

4.12 Relationship with Parents

While meeting with the parents, my researcher identity in the family settings was less complicated. I was treated more like a friend visiting the family to have a cup of tea and a chat. My conversations with the parents were always very informal and relaxed; and my visits lasted usually about 30 to 40 minutes. As a researcher, I was aware that I had to keep both school and home settings as natural as possible; therefore I had to swap my language during the interviews. More particularly, I communicated with parents, as with all the participants, in Creole. My interviews were rather conversational. Having developed a good relationship with the family enabled me to extract rich data. For the scope of this study, I did not need full home immersion. One of the parent informants was included in this sample because she was an executive member of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Hence, I believed that her perspectives would shed more light on the parents' role in building and supporting the school culture under study; whereas the other parent was selected because of his peripheral role within the school community.

4.13 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were central to this study because adolescents were involved; and because of power dynamics that may result from age differences between participants and me. Establishing rapport with students was of great help in addressing that issue; and I did clarify my role at the very beginning of the research. Likewise, participants in the study were assured that their responses would remain anonymous, to eliminate the threat of retaliation, in the event that their perspectives jibed with others. Clarifying the researcher's role and reiterating the objectives of the study helped address this ethical dilemma. Another ethical consideration was to deal with challenges related to families' participation in the study. Thus I took steps to establish rapport with families. Furthermore, I made sure that findings from the study were shared with the two families in the Creole language and per the relevant format. Fortunately, I did not experience any incidents I considered especially egregious.

4.14 Clearance and Procedures

The fieldwork of the research could not be initiated before gaining ethical clearance from the department concerned at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This took almost one year; thereafter, I had to seek authorization from the Ministry of Education, Mauritius, to go into the field. Fortunately, this procedure did not take too long − about two months. However, the MoE requested a copy of all possible interview questions that I intended to ask. Despite my work at

that school, I had to wait for these two documents before beginning to negotiate the consent of the participants.

4.14.1 Negotiation to access

According to Bryman & Bell (2019), the research setting is described as either closed or open. A closed setting is a place that has a restriction for social activities. This means that access to the site is controlled. For example, private clubs, or gang meetings are usually private or restricted settings, as are organisations, including schools. It is further argued in the same literature that for access to such closed settings, the researcher would have to seek permission from the gatekeeper who is the person with authority either to give or to deny access to the setting. In my case, I intended to conduct research in a state secondary school where I work as a physics teacher. First, I had to write a letter requesting permission from the Directorate of the Secondary Education section of the MOE. It took me two months to receive the approval of the first gatekeeper; then I made a request to the rector to allow me access to the school. I obtained the second gatekeeper pass quite easily because I was a teacher in that school, PWSS. Attached to the gatekeeper permission was a series of conditions that needed to be strictly followed: 1. No photographs to be taken without consent of the persons or guardians in the case of students. 2. No video recording 3. Participation in the research is purely voluntary. 4. No disturbance of the school activities. 5. Participants in the research should not be influenced. 6. Research to be carried out only during school time.

4.14.2 Consent of teachers and parents

Interviewing parents, as well as teachers, may require them to talk about certain confidential matters that they would not wish to speak about. Also, I might, during observation, witness aspects of their private lives. Thus, the signing of the agreement regarding the consent and the ethics to be observed by the researcher brought reassurance to both the participants and the researcher. I was aware that observing families and teachers going about their day-to-day lives might be perceived by them as intrusive; thus, I talked to them in detail about the process of the study, and asked them to read carefully before signing the consent forms (see Appendix). I participated in conversations related to my study more as though a family member rather than a researcher. I also sought permission to take notes on the discussion.

4.14.3 Consent of participating children

Despite the fact that the parents had consented, I felt it was still imperative to notify the children that they were being used in a study. According to Alderson (2001), children are “social actors”,

capable of understanding the specifics of a study, and having the right to know what they are being subjected to. As a result, I took the time to go through my plans, goals, and processes with them; and explained why I was shooting images.

4.15 Research Procedure and Data-collection Methods

4.15.1 Observation

Between September 2016 and December 2017, I observed from the perspective of a researcher the children's activities at the school. I know the school culture very well as I have been working in the school for seven years. During the observation period, I always carried my diary with me. I noted everything new that I observed and I thought useful and connected with my interview questions. I admit that that was the most difficult part of being an insider researcher. There were so many things happening every day during that period in the school that it was difficult to note it all, and then to discern when to use what information. For the scope of this study I used semi-structured observation as stipulated by Curdt-Christiansen (2020), who explained that observations could be either highly structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. I did not want to run the risk of drowning in the abundance of data that was produced by an insider researcher. I also used my interview questions as a guiding tool for managing the production of data from observation.

4.15.2 Classroom observations

Spradley (2016) explained that there are five kinds of observation: complete participation, active participation, moderate participation, passive participation, and non-participation. As suggested by Frank & Uy (2004), in the classroom, I observed and described in detail only the activities and involvement of informants. After class, I surveyed the opinions of my informants by asking questions such as (i) Do you like the class? (ii) How do you feel about the class? (iii) What happened in the class? and What did not happen? As for teachers, I jotted down the pedagogy in three modes (i) transmission (transfer knowledge), (ii) the transaction (action-based) and transformational (self-development of the learner). I took notes of how the teachers were delivering pedagogy using transmission (transfer of knowledge using text) and transaction (action-based teaching and learning).

4.15.2 Field notes

Copland (2018) argued that there is no hard and fast rule for writing field notes. The researcher draws on the premise that field notes are open to scrutiny regardless of whether this is

impressionistic or subjective. In my field notes, I drew up a table for noting the time, and the name of the participant, and jotted down whatever I saw, felt, and observed. My observations were mainly the facts and the details of what occurred at the site. I used many diagrams, symbols, and emoticons to represent ideas and facts that I gathered on the site. All these field notes were jotted in a diary called the researcher's diary. In another notebook which I called the post-observation notes, I transferred all the observations in detail. Immediately I had reached my research workplace at home, I expanded these observation notes into complete sentences and sometimes into paragraphs. I always tried as far as possible to relate these observations to the dimensions of QE that have been discussed in the literature.

4.15.3 Ethnographic interviews

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) posited that participant observation is difficult to separate from informal qualitative interviews, as it includes interaction with the participants. Listening to and observing the participants allowed me to draw closer to them and resulted in numerous short ethnographic informal interviews. The purpose of those interviews, which were not recorded, was to discover the participants' standpoint, and to extract further information and details about some points in my field notes. Since I am an insider researcher, my interviews were somewhat easier although different. After gaining the consent of my participants, I very often engaged in conversation with them. After all the conversations, I asked the participants whether I could use the interview data in my research. As mentioned by Prior (2018), conducting observations before the interviews allowed me to engage better with the participants, which I considered a rich data source. Spradley (1979) described ethnographic interviews as "*speech events*" that entail features of "*friendly conversation*" as compared with other qualitative interviews which are more formalized, as cited in Forsey (2010).

4.15.4 Focus group discussions

Patton (1987) approved the focus group discussion (FGD) in qualitative research as an important data-collection tool. Especially in schools, when interviewing pupils is difficult, the FGD provides a solid alternative, as it helps to generate multiple views. Furthermore, Macnaghten (2017) asserted that in FGDs there are different types of facilitators who play various important roles in the enhancement of data production. These researchers described the facilitators as either 'flexible', 'less empathetic', or 'interventionist'.

4.15.5 Photographs

The use of photographs is a very common practice in the history of ethnography. A camera has always been a mandatory element in the toolkit of ethnographers for several generations. Collier (1986) cited that many school ethnographers had produced reliable data by using photographs to demonstrate the past. Photographs are known to capture reality in the minutest detail. In this study, photographs were taken to capture the realities of events such as prize-giving ceremonies and sports days. One advantage of photographs is that the slightest change that has occurred on the site can easily be detected. During the thematic analysis, I combined all the data produced by all the methods from all sources, including photographs, to create the themes. By contrast, Fiscman (2001) argued that photographs could distort reality depending on the moment they were taken. Therefore, I ensured that the photographs taken served the purpose of the research.

4.16 Data Analysis

In this study, observations, field notes, conversational interviews, friendly conversations, photographs, and documents were the methods mostly used for data production. As in the majority of the ethnographic research, observations, field notes, and documents were heavily used in this research, and more importantly, focus group discussion with all three classes sampled was also included. Lester et al. (2020) reminded that, in thematic data analysis, the researcher makes use of his or her own experiences – both personal and professional, the data produced from the field, the critical questions, and the literature to initiate a thematic data analysis. In my case, some main themes were developed by adopting the methods suggested by Islam (2020) Wolcott. I admit that I stood guided by extant literature on QE.

4.16.1 Data reduction process

The data produced by the methods of observations, interviews, and documents were fairly abundant and varied. A careful reorganization, meaningful reduction, and reconfiguration were required to facilitate analysis. Lester et al. (2020) confirmed that data reduction is a tedious exercise that involves selecting, simplifying, focusing, and transforming all written field notes and transcriptions. It is also mentioned that data should be condensed into meaningful chunks so that they can be managed easily. To convey a message related to the issues being addressed in this study, data were categorized according to the research questions, and then again winnowed by using descriptive codes. The process was fairly difficult as there is always a risk

of losing important data that could be of great help in further analysis; and also since qualitative data are very rich and could induce new meaning at any moment of analysis. The real acid test was in the process of highlighting the relevance of a particular data for answering a particular question. I was very careful while exploring the views of the participants. Particular attention was given to the frequency of arguments, opinions, and ideas being repeated; and also to the intensity with which they were expressed.

4.16.2 Descriptive analysis - transcribing and translating from Creole to English

Lester et al. (2020) conveyed that transcription is a meticulous exercise as it is supposed to give a vivid reproduction of reality through representations and explanations. There are diverse definitions for transcription. However, from an anthropological point of view, the process of transcription is perceived as a cultural practice; and the transcripts are regarded as pieces of history. It was also mentioned in Lochmiller and Lester (2017) that the process of transcribing was a mere political act. In this study, I collected and transcribed data in both the Creole and English languages. In this study, most interviews, observations, and focus group discussions were conducted in Creole. I acknowledge that the translation was not easy. However, my positioning as an insider researcher and being a teacher myself gave me the advantage of better understanding their language and its cultural meaning. Lochmiller and Lester (2017) evoked the issue of language misinterpretation; and argued that the process of transcription and translation were central to both discoursing and researching in social science. Also, Terry et al.(2017) stated that poor transcripts often lead to misinterpretation and affect the purpose of the research, including validity. It was also mentioned that poor transcriptions might make the participants lose their voices. Thus, I translated the transcripts word for word from Creole to English, and then in brackets, I wrote the meaning in English.

4.17 Data Presentation

Delamont (2013) clarified that data presentation forms part of a good ethnographic research as it describes the realities of the setting and it leads to good analysis. Delamont (2013) further asserted that the authenticity of the data, the presentation of data, and the way the analysis is ascertained contributes to the quality of research. In this research, the data are presented in themes and subthemes that related to the particular research questions. During the analysis, when I was describing and interpreting the data, I had to separate myself from the self as a researcher to maintain objectivity. I used the pronoun ‘I’ instead of ‘the researcher’ to show my personal involvement in the production of data. However, I adopted the strategies to *‘fight*

*familiarity' as m*entioned in Akitson & Pugsley (2010). After categorizing all the data into themes, they were viewed under the lens provided by the theoretical framework for an eventual expansion into rich descriptions as narratives. Only then, were the relevant data presented with simple evaluations and commentaries.

4.18 Trustworthiness of the Study

In qualitative research, the validation of the data production process, as well as the whole study, depends greatly on the trustworthiness of the researcher vis-à-vis his or her informants, the accuracy and the suitability of data-analysis processes and tools (Mahbub, 2016). Various researchers, depending on the research tradition, use panoply of frameworks for data analysis. For the scope of this research, I used accuracy, trustworthiness in terms of reliability and validity, and member checking. (Creswell, 2013; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

While validity and reliability are commonly used to demonstrate rigour in a quantitative research paradigm (Winter, 2000; Rashid et al., 2016), trustworthiness ensures the same in qualitative research paradigms (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Rashid et al., 2016). However, the variation in how researchers achieve rigour depends very much on their epistemological stance (Nowell et al., 2017). Joppe (2000) stressed that researchers should ensure that what it was intended to measure is being measured and that research results are truthful. As a researcher, I am fully aware that the nature of the phenomenon is ephemeral and changing. I am also eager and very willing to make this research as widely recognised as well as legitimate as far as possible. I also share the opinion that assuming trustworthiness will allow me to reach more readers (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Nowell, 2017). In this research, trustworthiness is achieved through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Rashid et al., 2016).

4.19 Addressing Reliability and Validity Issues

All research aims at producing valid and reliable data. Each research study, whether quantitative or qualitative, is assessed on its validity and reliability. Creswell (2007) suggested that a study will have high reliability and high validity if careful attention is given to the research design and methodology, including the way the study is conceptualized, how the data were produced, analysed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented.

Internal validity refers, according to Creswell (2007), to the degree of accuracy in which reality is captured. It is also mentioned that in ethnography, the reality is more complicated, as it is multidimensional and ever-changing. Hence, capturing reality in ethnography is extremely

challenging. For this study, issues of internal validity were addressed according to the guidance of Le Compte and Goetz (1982), as cited in Noble (2015). In ethnographic research, as well as in other qualitative research, validity is referred to as credibility; and internal validity as 'truth value'. In this research, 'truth value' was ascertained by writing down observations in the minutest details and as promptly as possible. Also, all the interviews with informants and observations were recorded and transcribed within a short period of time. In addition, I requested my informants to comment on their own interviews so as to assure a high level of corroboration between what was said and what was transcribed. Another issue that might have affected the 'credibility' of the research was the translation of the interview transcripts from Creole to English. That issue was least probable to occur owing to my positionality as an insider researcher. I have a good level of understanding of both languages and of the cultural aspects of the site.

Another aspect of the research that deserves attention is external validity. In qualitative research, this is referred to as 'applicability' (Noble, 2015). External validity is defined by Merriam (2009) as the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other similar situations. Such concerns mostly the generalizability of the research. I agree that in ethnography applicability or external validity is among the most extreme challenges. In fact, no two settings may resemble each other as there are too many external dynamics that constantly influence the setting. I declared that the possibility of having a similar setting or reproducing the same setting was out of my control. However, I maintained that all provisions were made for ascertaining applicability. I had suspended my bias as an insider teacher and what I knew about the phenomenon while producing the data; and I acknowledged those biases when analysing the data. Therefore I approached the data analysis with a high degree of reflexivity, as cited in Jones (2017).

Alcser (2011) defines reliability as the degree to which a data-production method yields the same result each time it is used with the same participants under the same conditions. Reliability is also referred to as the consistency in the data-production process. Creswell (2007) refers to internal reliability as the quality of the data production methods put into practice. For this study, I explained to all the participants the purpose of the study. I also conducted the interviews as per the request of the participants; and gave them enough time to answer questions fully. I jotted down all observations; and also wrote down my bias and preconceived ideas in the comments.

Noble (2015) refers to external reliability to as the extent to which the findings of a research are replicable. It is also mentioned that qualitative research, especially ethnographies, is not replicable as the setting is unique; as is the relationship between researcher and participants. Creswell (2007) commented that qualitative researchers are aware that realities are multiple and dynamic. Therefore each researcher attempts to filter those realities to match his own reality (Creswell, 2007). I had in all situations leaned on the trust built with the participants.

4.20 Credibility, Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability

Credibility

According to Tobin and Begley (2004), credibility is about how closely the researcher will represent the correspondents' views. As an insider researcher, despite having the advantage of knowing the site and informants, the readers may still cast doubt on the credibility of the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this research, I have taken all necessary steps to ensure credibility by discussing findings with my critical friend, writing all observations in the minutest details in my reflexive diary, and producing data by means of various tools such as interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documents available on the site.

Transferability

I understand that it is very challenging to ensure transferability in ethnographic research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), especially when adopting a constructionist epistemological stance (Norwell et al., 2017). The types of interactions that occur in a particular site are always particular, if not unique (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this research, I have chosen to make thick description of the site and the participants so as to project a clear picture of the site.

Dependability

Dependability serves to demonstrate the level of integrity in research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). For example, in the quantitative positivist paradigm, dependability is referred to as reliability and objectivity (Ibid, p.316). In a certain way, dependability ascertains that the findings are consistent and can be reproducible. To achieve this, I have followed the recommendations of Tobin and Begley (2004) in that I have secured all the data produced and given a thorough explanation in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 on how the data were produced and how

to reproduce them. Also, I have documented all the research processes involved so that another researcher can reproduce the same if the need is felt.

Confirmability

Confirmability is about delineating of all the analytical processes employed by the researcher in order to reach conclusions and interpretations (Tobin & Begley, 2004). According to Koch (1994), the researcher must explicitly state all the justifications for all theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices made throughout the entire study so that others can gain insight into how and why decisions were made. Furthermore, confirmability can also be defined as the degree to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents' views apart from researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Norwell et al., 2017). For the scope of this research, I used a reflective journal to jot down all reflections on emerging issues throughout the entire study. I also wrote down reflective memos. At times I discussed all these reflections with my critical friend, as suggested by Rashid et al. (2016).

4.21 Strengths and Limitations

As with all studies, this ethnography has its own strengths and limitations. One of the strengths of this study is its credibility and trustworthiness. My study has its trustworthiness and truth value because of my researcher positionality as an insider researcher, and my participating interaction procedures with the context and the participants. This is the best way to determine the "reality" of that situation (Creswell, 2007).

An unavoidable limitation of any qualitative research that involves interviews and observations is that some individuals would not agree to be interviewed and observed. The question always remains: What would those who were not interviewed have said? I can confidently say that this limitation is reduced in this scope based on my positionality as an insider researcher, as argued in Naaeke et al. (2012).

This research aimed at bringing better insight into QE in a state secondary school. More precisely, it had to shed more light on how the school community espoused the notion of QE; and also on how the notion was enacted and experienced at school. I agree that the size of the sample could be seen as a threat. However, this limitation was ably addressed by applying a rigorous deductive and inductive analysis on the data (Armat et al., 2018).

Another limitation of this study came from the long duration of the ethnographic methodology. Despite suiting the purpose of the study, its protracted period of time might have caused unwanted stress on the participants. I observed some participants feeling slightly nervous, quietly irritated, tense, resentful, and uncomfortable when the interviews or classroom observations took longer than 30 minutes. To allay such a burden on participants, observations were scheduled to last no longer than one lesson, and interviews less than 20 minutes. Another stand was taken: to reduce 'observer fatigue', the time spent on jotting down observations in field notes was reduced. Only main points and keywords were written and then were later elaborated. However, this inevitably led to some loss of data; and therefore might constitute a limitation to the study, as cited in Jones (2017).

4.22 Delimitations − Language as a Boundary

Simon & Goes, (2013) argued that delimitations of a study are mostly about stating the limits and boundaries of the scope of a study; and these depend on the researcher's choice of what to include or exclude in research in order to be normatively consistent.

This study did not cover the range of learners who were taking part in international examinations for the achievements of SC and HSC. Based on the principle that no two persons are identical, including these students in the research would have further enriched our understanding of the phenomenon of QE.

This research has not been extended to many of the ancillary staff and the school superintendent of the school. Generally, these people would have revealed the resources that should be aligned to enhance the school experiences of both staff and students at the school. The laboratory auxiliaries know well what is broken and what is not functioning in the laboratories. They would have contributed in revealing other aspects of QE.

The choice of being a participant observer has both its advantages and disadvantages. The researcher has a choice to make: a choice to adopt one of the roles in the continuum of observations ranging from the complete participant-observer, participant-observer (partial participant), to the non-participant observer. Another choice would have allowed us to explore other aspects of the phenomenon, QE.

4.23 Sampling

Mackenzie (2006) owned that 'sampling' is a crucial part of data gathering and analysis in all research, including ethnography. It is argued that ethnographers should consider sampling as a

function of the number of participants, locations, or activities against the depth of research or the time it would take to develop a thorough, richly documented report. According to Atkinson (2005), participants, activities, and interactions can either be sampled opportunistically or purposefully. My research focuses on the school community's understanding of the idea of quality enhancement (QE). The learner participants were selected from three different categories of learners: Grades 9, 10, and 12, hailing from different social backgrounds, to ensure diversity and to allow comparisons to be made. In the same way, teachers were selected on the basis of their experience at PWSS. Both male and female teachers were selected; however, they had to have had at least 3 years of experience at the school. Interviews and observations of five teachers would give adequate data; and would also be a good representation of the teachers' voices. Creswell (2013) and Lester (2017) argue that a purposive sampling technique with a set of criteria that considered gender, ethnic group, social background, age, years of experience, a different category of classes, and a subject specialist would be sufficient for an ethnography of this scale.

According to Arnott (2013), while researching children, a sample should be taken depending on their age; however, O'Hara (2008) claimed that sampling should be done in schools based on classes. There are 31 participants in all, comprising 22 students, 6 teachers, 2 parents, and 1 rector, who have been purposely selected for this study. My insider positionality gave me the advantage of a sound knowledge of most of the participants. I have chosen Mr Jayen, Mrs Nazleen and Mr Neezam as informants, because I know them quite well. From my perspective of an insider I would gain a complete picture of QE from these teachers; and from the students' perspective, because each of these groups has distinct aims and motives, with the precise objective of producing rich data.

4.24 Verification of Data and Ownership of Data

In most cases, ethnographic narratives are the product of the researcher's observations and interpretations of those observations. The narrative is the most contested process in the ethnographic tradition (Rudkin, 2002). It is inadmissible for an individual to be part of a research and to be an observer at the same time (Llewellyn, 1999). It is argued that comprehension is very often influenced by one's social position; hence universal truth is always denied to an observer-participant (Van Maanen, 1982). Participant observation and statistical positivism have many misunderstandings in the underlying distinctions between them. This

constitutes a drawback to the ethnographic approach − the difficulty of verifying and claiming ownership of the data collected.

Poulton (2021) argued that, in an interpretivist paradigm, it would be difficult to produce and analyse data without a participant observer. It was further argued in the same literature that data verification cannot be separated from actual data gathering and analysis. Furthermore, it was also mentioned that the data-production process and validity of highly qualitative research such as ethnography could not be submitted to scientific reasoning that is used in other research methodology. I did not see how my positionality as a participant-observer would compromise the validity of the research. In support of this (Vossoughi & Zavala, 2020) agreed that both participants and the researcher had co-constructed the phenomenon and knowledge of the phenomenon through their interactions. However, without any play of power dynamics between researcher and participants, it is further considered that in any research, including ethnography, there is no single interpretation that can be assigned to all the participants. Also, every person of a culture has a different social position. Therefore participants may have diverse values and ideological beliefs because of their differing backgrounds; and the same is true for the researcher. In this singularity of experience, according to Clifford (1986, p. 121), ethnographers develop tales about themselves and others based on what they perceive to be true.

4.25 Reflexivity

Woolgar (1988) describes reflexivity as a requirement that compels researchers to expose underlying assumptions in the research. It also demands that a researcher declare beliefs and interests and practices, thus providing a form of investigative transparency and honesty. Researchers should be truthful, and subscribe to the ethnographic authority, suspending any bias that may arise from personal experience, and give way to the originality of expression (Palaganas et al., 2017). Chia (1996), insisted that qualitative researchers who claim to distance themselves from positivist views, have a propensity to be unreflective about the presentations they generate because they fail to realize their role in the construction of social reality. In ethnography, the focus is generally based on the belief that the researcher is capable of uncovering the 'truth' about the world or management and organization through a sequence of representations. However, Rabbidge (2017) disagreed in that, when writing a description of experiences at a research site, the ethnographer tends to create an account of the construct in which he or she is involved. (Palaganas et al., 2017). explained that reflexivity is about acknowledging the processes as they are, and that experiences are not uniform. It is also argued

in the same literature that the researcher should declare any personal interest and bias before writing the ethnographic accounts. Every version of an ethnographic narrative is also a construction of a self (Sharma & Sarkar, 2019). Undertaking ethnographic research requires the researcher to speak and write interpretations, and these are thus reflexive and autobiographical (Barrett et al., 2020).

4.26 Document Analysis

The use of documents is deeply anchored in the tradition of ethnography, more specifically in school ethnography. Therefore, for the scope of this study, I had recourse to the five specific functions of documentary material, as specified by Bowen (2009). These functions were for understanding context, for acquiring information, for developing insight, for tracking changes and development, and for searching for evidence. I have used these functions to analyse and obtain a better understanding, and thus to uncover meaning relevant to the research problem. The following documents were requested from the school to expose the contributory factors to the success and effectiveness of management in those schools: school timetable, attendance register, school development plans (SDPs), school journals, school management manual (SMM), and performance reports. These documents gave me more insight into those activities planned for improvement, be it curriculum, provision of resources, or development. The SDPs were prepared; however, progress columns were not updated to report the status of their implementation. The school plans for achievement of success as well as management activities were observed.

4.27 Concluding Thought

This section summarizes what has been achieved in this chapter. It explains what has been conducted as per the requirements of the ethnographic inquiry. It starts with an introduction, and then provides a brief description about an ethnography, the procedures to be followed before conducting an ethnography in a school, the data-production, data analysis, and decisions taken to ensure reliability, validity, and trustworthiness to ensure rigour and accuracy.

CHAPTER 5 : ANALYSIS - Patterns and threads (1)

QE as espoused by the school community

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I focused intensively on the research methodology and the research design used for conducting this research. In this chapter, I am presenting the first level of analysis of data produced by using interviews, questionnaires, and observations conducted with the learners, teachers, parents, and the Rector of PWSS on what meaning they give to QE to develop insight on how the notion of quality is constructed and implemented in school. I have also used data from my reflective journal in which I recorded my own reflections and insights after each interview and observation. In fact, this chapter regroups all data produced from the site that attempts to answer the first research question - what notions of QE does the school community espouse? The chapter shows a thematic approach to the meaning of QE. These themes are already established in the literature and previous discourse on QE. The themes were equal outcomes, quality teaching and learning, quality teaching context, distributive leadership, and school policy. Also, several subthemes were produced from data analysis and were linked to the established themes. For example, high academic performance, holistic development, values and discipline, curriculum, cared pedagogy, infrastructure pupil-teacher ratio, ICT, distributive leadership, communication and shared vision, inclusion and PMS.

5.1. WORKING WITH THE DATA

Having generated the information from the various participants of the school, I put together a plan to organize and manage the information received from participants. The plan included five main steps as stipulated in Creswell (2007) - 1) data managing, 2) coding and developing themes, 3) describing, 4) interpreting and 5) representing. These five steps helped me to better engage in the production of good narrative accounts from the sets of data that were essentially produced from the site. These data were mostly in the form of texts and images, and in their raw condition, they did not convey much meaning. So, those steps served like analytic circles in a way to make it more meaningful.

For the scope of this study, most of the interviews were done mainly in the Creole language. It was preferred so as to make the participants feel more at ease in their descriptions of their true feelings and thoughts. It was not difficult for me to unpack the meanings of what was said since

I also come from the same site and am myself a native speaker of the Creole language. Thus, I simply adopted a general sequence that is commonly used in Data Analysis.

Step 1 Transcribing interviews (direct transcriptions)

Step 2 Translating transcripts (full English)

Step 3 Paragraphing (according to main ideas, supporting ideas, and examples)

Step 4 Create general coding /initial coding process and categories

Step 5 All descriptive codes were regrouped under anchored codes and ideas and concepts related to QE as per literature and were then regrouped under anchored themes

Step 6 Inserting all descriptive codes in a table according to their categories or themes

Step 7 Establishing a general/overall mind map of the transcript

Step 8 Dissect the mind map according to the students, teachers, rector, and parents.

Step 9 Re-establishing mind maps according to students, teachers, rector, and parents

Step 10 Re-analyzing of data for identification of pro and cons arguments

The transcription itself took me a long time as I had to listen to the recorded audiotapes repeatedly. All these interviews were digitally recorded and a double transcription was carried out; one in English and one in the Creole language. All the interviews were transcribed in digital forms and I saved them in computer files. After completing all the transcriptions, each interview was read several times before translating into English. Fortunately, the translation was quite easy and natural. I attempted to my best ability to find the most suitable words that reflected the respondent's original thoughts. All interviews were saved in separate files under different names, but all in a single folder. A printed copy was then given to the participants for validation. This exercise was also done without much trouble. I have requested all participants to read and sign their copies. It took almost three weeks to get the signature of all the participants. As in all ethnographic studies, I found it imperative to gain a sense of the whole data. In order to achieve this objective, I read transcripts of interviews, field notes, and documents more than five times so as to get a gist of what was being said as a whole before

getting into the examination of small chunks of data. After the fifth reading, I gained a good insight into the content. Then, I changed the focus of my attention slowly from the whole to a small chunk of four to five lines. I read that particular chunk of data, again and again, almost three or four times, and then noted down the ideas or key concepts that were related to the research questions. The next step is coding and it came quite naturally because like any researcher, after the transcription phase, I was very much enthused to re-organize the textual data so that to give them some kind of meaning. The technique of repeated reading really helps because only after several readings that the data start to tell you a story.

For the scope of this study, I have used two methods for analyzing the data. The first method involved jotting down in a table all ideas, words, and concepts from the transcribed interviews under pre-established themes and subthemes of QE drawn from the data. All these codes were classified under a particular theme or subtheme on the basis of their relationship or concurrence. Extensive reading of research conducted on QE enabled me to identify central key ideas and key concepts that surround the notion of QE. These key concepts and ideas constituted the themes and the subthemes. The second method may appear to be a similar activity; but in truth, it is just the opposite. It involves more about extracting descriptive codes that may lead to new themes through proper analysis. Descriptive coding as explained by Saldana (2015) is a data reduction process whereby a word or a short phrase is used to give meaning to a set of data like for a paragraph of a few sentences. Any ideas and concepts which are related to a particular pre-assigned code are regrouped under it. In this way, all the data set was divided into these codes or categories. The data in each category were again subdivided by new codes. In this research, I designed a matrix where all the descriptive codes together with their sub-categories were already inserted a priori. Blank spaces were purposely left in the matrix so as to allow space for new emerging descriptive codes. In this way, new elements and domains were added to QE by considering all the new codes that emerged quite recurrently from the data set.

Another step that follows in the Data analysis is the interpretive phase. In a move to add more clarity to the storyline, different main ideas were expressed in different paragraphs. Lester et al. (2017) explain that descriptive reporting and theory building is the result of a process of analysis. In this way, new themes were pulled out of the data by bringing the descriptive codes under a deeper level of analysis like finding commonalities, differences, patterns, and structures, and also by comparing and contrasting ideas across the data. At a deeper level of interpretation, the researcher makes inferences, develops models, or generates theory. Miles

and Huberman (1994) describe the process of "moving up from the empirical trenches to a more conceptual overview of the landscape. We're no longer just dealing with observables, but also with the unobservable, and are connecting the two with successive layers of inferential glue." I also employed a thematic narrative approach to present the data. All these processes were done manually, though I know quite a many computer software available to do the organizing, indexing, and searching of the data. However, I did not want to follow the trend of using computer software for data analysis despite it could address, to some extent, some issues of validity. In my case, I preferred to do all the data analysis processes manually so as not to lose track of the data. I chose to spend my time with my data rather than learning the software.

All pertinent topics, themes or subthemes, common elements, and new ideas that emerged could lead me to my research questions: *how QE is defined, experienced, and promoted* in that context, were entered in a table that was prepared for analysis. I am very much aware that in qualitative research "truth" or "reality," is very difficult to capture. In fact, it is almost near impossible. So, in a way to increase the credibility of my findings, I have collected them through multiple methods and through multiple sources. This strategy concurs well with Wolcott (2005) who writes, "Increase the correspondence between research and the real world." In this research, data were collected through multiple sources and from multiple methods which include interviews, observations, questionnaires, and a review of documents from the school and the Ministry of Education.

5.2 NOTIONS OF QE

Noting that the concept of QE is complex and relative (Guravjeet, 2013; Challwa) , I sought to get a sense of how the participants had constructed their understanding of what QE is and how they might have implemented it as teachers, rectors, etc. I have identified sub-themes within the data that speak to such relativity. These sub-themes emerged from the data analysis following the rigorous synthesis process of descriptive coding and based on their recurrence in all the different sources and through the various methods utilized purposely. The subthemes include high academic performance, values and discipline, holistic development, curriculum, infrastructure, teaching and learning resources, quality teachers, pupils-teacher ratio, use of ICT, inclusion, and school leadership. These subthemes were regrouped under five main rubrics namely equal outcomes, teaching and learning, teaching context, policy and school leadership as they were referred to as the baseline of QE in school (Eze, 2009; Incheon 2015). Each of the five rubrics will be presented as a separate theme describing the notions of QE.

Following is a table showing how the themes around the notion of QE are subdivided into subthemes based on the data produced,

Notion of QE in a secondary school		
Theme1	Quality Educational outcomes	Subtheme 1.1: High academic performance
		Subtheme 1.2: Holistic development
		Subtheme 1.3: Values and discipline
Theme2	Quality teaching and learning	Subtheme2.1: Curriculum
		Subtheme 2.3: Cared pedagogy
Theme3	Quality teaching Context	Subtheme 3.1: Infrastructure
		Subtheme3.2: Pupil Teacher Ratio
		Subtheme3.3: ICT
Theme4	Quality school Leadership	Subtheme4.1: Distributive leadership
		Subtheme4.2: communication and Shared Vision
Theme5	Quality school Policy	Subtheme5.1: Inclusion
		Subtheme5.2: PMS

Table 4 : Themes and Subthemes of Quality Education

5.2.1 Theme 1 QE outcomes

The term QE outcomes here refers to the desired educational outcomes from a QE system. The data from all sources show that there is a strong connection between QE and desired educational outcomes as stipulated in Vurbic (2014) which states that QE is equated mostly with educational outcomes rather than learner satisfaction. QE outcomes include subthemes such as high academic performance, holistic development, discipline, and values.

5.2.1.1 Subtheme: High Academic Performance

According to Liem (2019), academic performance is all about the degree to which students attain objectives and goals set in the educational program, and curriculum they follow at school. Academic performance is very often referred to as attainment, achievements, and results that are expressed through grades. Similarly, Willcox (2011) defined academic performance as the level of knowledge, competencies, and skills on a scale in comparison with some standards established called grades ranging from the lowest to the highest. High academic performance

refers to excellent academic results in national and international examinations. In Mauritius, there are three important examinations in the secondary education cycle which are pitched as level 2, level 3, and level 4 in the Qualification Framework. The level 2 examination is a national examination that is conducted at the end of the lower secondary cycle. The high academic performance here amounts to doing very well in these examinations. For example, a well-done performance would mean obtaining admission to academies at the NCE examination or scoring an average exceeding 70 % in all subjects in any Examinations.

Despite all learner participants describing QE by many determinants like holistic development, the relevance of curriculum, etc., they still expressed that high academic performance remains the top determinant of QE. Similarly, the parents' interviews revealed that QE is judged primarily on the basis of the overall academic performance of the school and the individual performance of the students - more precisely at national and international examinations. In Mauritius, parents are called to choose a school for their ward based on his/her academic performance at three different junctures, after PSAC, NCE, and SC examinations. Their choice of school is very much dependent on the reputation of the school. Often, during this exercise parents are desirous to compare the academic performance of one school to another.

> Mr Genevieve stated, "*First I would say students' academic performance is a very important indicator of QE. I look at the percentage pass rate of the school. In some schools we look at how many laureates they are getting and in other schools which do not get laureates, then we look at the percentage pass rate at SC. The higher the percentage pass would the best school."*

It is also indicative from the teachers' interview that teachers tend to consider academic performance as an important indicator of QE as they believe that good academic performance would bring better prospects to the life of learners. For them, a good academic performance is more likely to give a competitive advantage for a decent job or to secure a seat in a university. Teachers viewed the academic performance of learners as future opportunities and life chances for the learners.

> Mrs Nazreen stated, "*I think that students do receive QE in different ways. For me, QE amounts to when students can obtain good academic results (certificate) so that they can secure a good job or a seat in a university."*
>
> *Neezam," QE is all about getting good results and a good job. That is the satisfaction of our customers which are our students. Secondary school is a seven-year program and we want our students at the end of it to get good results and be in the right path in life. For me, QE is about how we can help the students to get good results so that they can start a career in their professional life."*

The Rector reported that QE is not the work of one person or one category of actors, but rather is the concern of each and every actor in the education sector. He also attributes the academic performance to QE. However, he indicated that the reputation of the school and the examining body matters a lot. He expressed: "*Hmmm. In one way, the students are getting a QE. Yes…. Because our students are awarded a worldwide……recognized certificate at both SC and HSC. Cambridge. Cambridge remains a prestigious university."* While parents and learners cared more about the individual performance of the learners, teachers show more concern about the performance of students in their subjects, and the Rector eventually cared more about the overall performance of the school. It is indicative that QE is very much articulated in terms of high academic performance, nevertheless with a degree of relativity and comparability. It is also suggested that high performance is not an end itself, rather it should serve other purposes in life like getting a job, going to university, and finally they could have a good standard of living.

5.2.1.2 Subtheme: Holistic development

Holistic development, in this context, means the overall development of a child including mental, physical, social, and emotional aspects. The principle of holistic development considers all these aspects as an interconnected and integrated whole. The approach requires teachers to build on what the learners already know and by making use of all aspects of the environment, community, emotions, and resources as they deem could influence their teaching (Kim, 2011).

Learners including, Ashley, Jevin, Fadil, and Jean, responded to 'Question 1' and expressed that QE is a system of education that provides opportunities for students to develop themselves holistically. Learners revealed that QE is associated with holistic development which encompasses all aspects of the development of a human being, including social, academic, emotional, and physical. However, the learners highlighted that very little time is dedicated to holistic development. Ashley commented the following on holistic development in his questionnaire - *we have only two periods of PE per week and the rest is mainly on academic."* Learners also mentioned that they do not have the same level of interest in the different areas of development. For example, Jevin, Nadim, Fadil, and Jerome expressed that they are more inclined toward social and physical development as they mentioned that they like coming to school to meet friends and to do sports.

The responses obtained in the questionnaires of participants of grade 10 revealed that the learners of that grade expressed QE more as personal rather than general. The variedness in the responses has contributed to the broadening of the scope of holistic development. Kalyan reported, "QE *is all about preparing students, young people, for life."* Whereas Ivan stated, *"QE helps to grow intellectually and healthily."* One learner of grade 9 also mentioned the following - *QE is more about acquiring knowledge and other life skills."* These views suggest that academic development should not be the sole focus of a school, but should rather lay more emphasis on other forms of human development.

Concurrently, many teachers revealed that holistic development forms part of the desired outcome of QE. They clearly expressed that a school should not be limited only to developing the academic potential of learners. They all indicated that learners have unlimited potential and that schools should strive to make significant improvements equally in other areas, such as social, physical, and emotional development. This is what Jayen had to say

> *"QE to me, it means a form of education that caters to the holistic development of children. It should allow children to reach their fullest potential in terms of cognitive, emotional, and creative capacities. It should not be limited to academic subjects only. It should include all aspects of education."*

It was also indicated from teachers' interviews that a more holistic approach to education would enhance the lives of learners. Also, it would help them to become more creative and to think critically. For them, QE would transform learners into better and more responsible citizens. They also opine that learners would be able to reach all these via holistic development.

> Francois stated, '. *I would define QE as equal to developing the capacities of students to the fullest. How? It is the how that brings in elements of QE. Like helping them to acquire required competencies and encouraging critical thinking within a set of moral and ethical values as well as forming them to become responsible citizens."*

The Rector also revealed in his interview that QE is about preparing learners for life. It is also indicative that within the concept of QE, learners are given all support to develop life skills that would help them to integrate the society. He even expressed that through holistic development the learners could develop skills, other than academics, to embrace the careers they would have wished.

> He mentioned, "*You know for me, QE is more towards holistic development, my boys should become men first, respected people of the community, society and*

finally good citizens with good certificates and good jobs. I would like to see my students as good musicians, and good sportsmen. To be socially, emotionally, physically and academically fit."

Drawing on the parents' interviews, it is revealed that parents viewed holistic development as a serious determinant of QE. As for Bertrand, he believed that the incumbent is on the school to ensure the holistic development of the learners. Noticeably, teachers and the Rector tend to demonstrate greater inclinations towards the social and emotional development of the learners, whereas the learners themselves showed greater concern for their physical development. Patterns in the data showed that all participants are motivated by their actual and future roles in society.

5.2.1.3 Subtheme: Values and Disciplines

Discipline in the school context is referred to as actions taken by the school administration so as to ensure organizational standards (the action by management to enforce organizational standards (Mussa, 2015). In this research context, discipline is also considered to be the preventive measure and plan of action that guide all staff and students in a school so as to maintain a set of values and achieve the goals set (Cotton, 2006).

Discipline and values were frequently mentioned by most of the participants as an indicator of QE. At PWSS, discipline is maintained through a set of rules and regulations established by the school community to promote positive learning behaviours among learners. There are certain provisions, like rules and regulations, detention classes, rustication and cancellation of privileges, which are set up at school to maintain discipline so as to inculcate values like respect, integrity, compassion, and honesty among others.

Most learner participants revealed that discipline and values are central to QE. Responding to question 16 in the questionnaire given to them, most learners expressed that discipline, values, and life skills are imperatives for QE. Moreover, it is indicative from the teachers' interviews that discipline plays an important role in the creation of a predictable and conducive environment for learning. While some teachers view discipline as an enabler of QE, others believed that discipline could help to instil values in learners. They also consider discipline, as well as values, to be fundamental educational outcomes of QE. They also expressed assuredly that discipline and values are what society expects from schools.

Mrs Nazreen revealed, *"I think that rules and regulations in the school help enormously to create an organized and predictable environment that is conducive*

for both teaching and learning processes. If rules and regulations are not applied seriously, it would be difficult to manage teaching and learning. So, school's rules and regulations are established with the purpose to encourage cooperation and harmony among students in schools."

Mr. Neezam mentioned, "… p*articipation in every activity related to school life, like for example, a committed student will be punctual and show interest in his studies. Be disciplined and well organized in all that he does to achieve high standards in terms of marks and personal growth.*

It is also indicated that learners are first judged on their behaviour inside and outside the school. Teachers believed that with an appropriate dose of discipline at school, learners may become better citizens of tomorrow. Sanjay mentioned the following,

"Students should learn how to live together and respect the school, school rules, and regulations, like, coming to school on time and in proper school uniform. Also, inculcate in them how to respect teachers and to participate in class."

Teachers also believed that discipline would contribute to instilling the desired culture at school and would enhance learners' behaviour. Otherwise, the school would have been very difficult to manage. The lateness of students would have hiked up. They also indicated that discipline at school is very much enacted by school rules and regulations.

Francois indicated the following in a friendly conversation - *I think rules and regulations are important pillars of discipline. Without rules and regulations, the whole school would be chaotic and would be like a market fair. Students would come late, would not wear school uniforms, and students would not obey teachers. Things would have been very difficult. They help to build the school culture."*

The Rector pointed out in his interviews that both discipline and values constitute the most important attainment in the life of the student and as a very strong determinant of QE in the eyes of the society.

He mentioned the following, "First, *I would say, Discipline. This is the most important thing in the life of the student. The goal of life is not only to obtain certificates. I think it should be about developing respect for others, living with others in a community or in a society and accepting differences.*

The views of the parents concerning discipline concurred well with that of the other participants including teachers and the Rector. Parents believed that inculcating discipline and values in learners form part of the learning outcomes of a school. Mrs Mahadwa indicated in her interview that discipline is important for QE. She described discipline as a means to control students' behaviour. Despite the fact that parents believed that academic development is important for earning a living, they also indicated that discipline would make them more responsible in life.

> She stated, "*Of course discipline is important. Without discipline, the school will not be able to bring about QE. Apart from academic development, I would like my son to become a good citizen, and to develop other skills like communication skills, soft skills and social skills. I think that the school has the responsibility to bring that development in all children."*

Interestingly, discipline is considered a desired educational outcome, and at the same time a provision of QE that enhances teaching and learning. The school community also viewed discipline and values as a factor that contributes to the development of social aspects of the learners.

5.2.2 Theme 2 Quality Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning include all the learning strategies, teaching strategies, learning styles, teaching skills, activities, content, curriculum, and pedagogy. Teaching and learning indeed involve all the processes of teaching and learning, like planning the lessons and the way instructions are given to learners. More essentially, they are about '*what and how'* teachers teach and learners learn. In the scope of this research, teaching and learning are referred to as 'quality teaching and learning' as it was an emerging theme of QE. The subthemes that surfaced from the analysis of data under this rubric of quality teaching and learning are 'meaningful and relevant curriculum', and 'cared pedagogy'.

5.2.2.1 Subtheme: Meaningful and relevant curriculum

A curriculum is generally described as all about what learners should learn including when, where, how, and why to learn (Mulenga, 2018). It is very often prepared and planned by curriculum experts outside the school context so that learners could achieve learning outcomes desired by society and government policies. The curriculum becomes meaningful and relevant if the learners' interests are given all attention. For the scope of this research, meaningful and relevant curriculum are related to all processes of learning including the content that is supposed to help the development of the learners to achieve their desired goals. A meaningful and relevant curriculum regroups all processes put in place at school so as to help learners to acquire knowledge, skills, and values, and more importantly to develop capabilities and competencies that would be useful to them in life.

The responses from the questionnaires revealed that learners believed that the curriculum is supposedly designed to help the development of their potential to face the world. It was also indicative that learners showed great concern for employment and they even mentioned that

the purpose of schooling is to obtain a good job. For example, in a response to 'question 1', Akshay of grade 10 mentioned that QE is about preparing learners for their careers. The following are the responses of learners of grade 9: Arshad mentioned that he comes to school '*to get a good job'*; Rayaan indicated that he wants to get a good job so that he can help his parents financially; whereas Faryaaz mentioned that he wants to get a job that would allow him to travel around the world. Drawing from what they said, it is obvious that learners come to school with a particular agenda to develop high skills and high competencies so that they become easily employable. Thus, a meaningful and relevant curriculum for them would amount to a curriculum that promotes the development of their capabilities to be employed.

The majority of teachers believed that QE is very much influenced by a meaningful and relevant curriculum that contributes to the development of the skills and competencies that ensure professional prospects and lead a healthy lifestyle. The following are excerpts of what some teachers expressed in the interviews

> Mr Neezam stated, "*For me, this QE, is a good transition from primary to secondary, the student is happy at school with the resources we are providing to him so that he can get good results and is ready to start a professional life."*
>
> Mrs Nazreen reported, "*Yes, there are in fact a few good things put in place by the school and the ministry of education for QE. Health program to monitor the health conditions of the students. This is done every year. People, I mean…. Doctors and nurses come to school to diagnose, that is, screening exercises. In fact, students get good advice on the quality of food they eat and the ill effect of cigarettes and drugs."*

The National curriculum framework (MoEHR, 2006) has already set the goals for the secondary education sector and has enforced the required curriculum at the secondary school level so as to achieve the desired goals. However, schools are expected to render it more meaningful and relevant. Observation notes revealed that there were certain activities run at school, with the collaboration of the Ministry of Health, for sensitization and screening purposes.

Like other participants, the Rector also shared the view that the curriculum should serve the purpose of equipping students with knowledge and skills that would be useful to them in life. In his interview, the Rector revealed that QE should aim at preparing students for life and the

curriculum taught should be meaningful. He also mentioned that the curriculum should apprise the learners of the advantages and disadvantages of living on an island.

> *"I think a school should be empowered to draft their own curriculum. For example, we are on a small island, and lower secondary students should learn about the risk and potential of living on an island. .....our citizens should be aware and well-informed to cope with calamities such as drought, floods, cyclones, and tsunamis. But concerning the readaptation of the curriculum, it happens to a certain degree. Some teachers do rewrite their own notes, but most of them follow the book as it is. It is less stressful for them and also parents can easily follow. It is also about how students are prepared for life so that they have a good standard of living."*

Both parents interviewed reported that they believed that a meaningful curriculum is central to QE. They indicated that learners would show more interest in school if they knew the importance of what to learn and if they knew how this knowledge and skills would enhance their lives. For them, a meaningful curriculum would ensure the employability of the learners, and at the same time should be based to preserve cultural values. Also, meaningful and relevant curriculum is considered to be rooted in the lives and processes of the society, community, etc.

Below is an extract from the interview of Mrs Mahadwa about the meaningful curriculum.

> Mrs Mahadwa stated, "*a good/QE should help a child to develop good behaviours and skills required to earn a good living. Nowadays our children tend to go astray from their culture, religion, and societal norms. A good education should endeavour to restore the culture, religion and societal norms. We have entrusted the school with guidance.*

5.2.2.2Subtheme: Cared Pedagogy

Cared pedagogy is a very recurrent theme coming from the responses of learners and interviews of parents. The term Cared pedagogy, in this research context, is referred to any caring and compassionate aspects in the pedagogical approach to address, to some extent, the inequities, inequalities, imbalance, and disparities that exist naturally in a school setting, especially in Mauritius which is a multiethnic and multicultural country. This subtheme particularly focuses on the attitude and practice of teachers in the classrooms towards mitigating the differences and segregation that might arise. According to Goldstein (1999), "caring relationships are the necessary condition for the development of an individual including intellectual, physical, emotional and social growth." It also shows that there is a clear implication between the cared pedagogy approach and the success of learners.

A great majority of the learner participants indicated that pedagogy is strongly related to QE and they revealed that the pedagogy used by teachers is not adapted to their learning needs and necessitates a more caring attitude. They believed that the school should cater for all students. For instance, Nadim and Ashley, grade 9 learners, clearly expressed that 'no *child should be left behind'* and they believed that the concept of QE should give equal opportunities for all learners to develop equally. Similarly, many learners of grade 12 including Jerome, reported that the remedial classes were rarely adapted to their educational needs. He indicated that very few teachers really listened to them or prepared a remedial class that duly address their learning difficulties. This is what Jerome had to say: *remedial classes are rare and are not appropriate.*

Drawing from the interviews of parents, it is indicative that parents believed that the concept of QE would require a more caring attitude from the teachers. However, the parents mentioned that the whole school should also heed the needs of the learners. For them, the pedagogy deployed by teachers seemed to be inappropriate and they would suggest teachers adopt a more caring approach to teaching by being more considerate and attentive to the learners.

> He stated, "The *school is not engaged in offering QE. The school is equipped to offer good education only, not QE. This is because the school is not listening to the needs (learning) of the learners. Teachers should explain according to the ability of the students."*

Teachers also shared the view that a cared pedagogy would be more beneficial to students. A teacher related that a cared pedagogy approach would allow teachers to match their teaching to the ability of the learners. Teachers should make use of proper learning diagnosis to find the difficulties encountered by the learners and consequently, give accurate feedback for improvement. While others, like Sanjay, relate cared pedagogy to how the curriculum is unfolded in the class so as to raise the level of interest of students.

> Mrs Nazreen clearly mentioned in her interview, *"During the first contact with the students, I think teachers should assess the learning needs of the students. Hmmm,,,, yes we should make a proper diagnosis. Based on the diagnosis we should devise the most appropriate teaching methods to match the level and learning needs of the learners. We also give feedback to parents; not only on academic results but also on behaviour. About what the students were doing in the class, in school and outside the school in general."*

However, my observation notes indicated that teachers tried their best to adopt a caring attitude in their teaching and that learners were very satisfied with such a caring approach. It was also

noted that Mr. Sanjay extended adequate support to his students for completing the tasks given to them in class.

> On Monday, 19 September 2016. During the 3rd period. *Mr Sanjay, a teacher, is in the class of Art and Design and is helping his students to speak confidently about the work of different artists. They researched the work of those artists before the class. They are now proudly sharing the different artworks they have produced. By the time the teacher is getting ready for the presentation, some students are exchanging and buzzing with their ideas, confidently developing the theme further. Visibly, there is an excellent relationship between the teacher and the students and among the students themselves. The teacher has been able to create a hard-working environment in which pupils are happy and confident enough to explore new techniques and are supportive of each other. The teacher successfully captured the pupils' interests through his prompts, presence, and the tone of his voice. Pupils are enthralled as one exclaims 'wow that's awesome, another declares 'I am going to persevere and try my hardest!' A range of activities ensures that pupils have the opportunity to extend their language and explore their ideas in depth with each other before they start their individual pieces of artwork. For example, one group thoroughly enjoys painting, students were working collaboratively, some were mixing the colours and others were cutting coloured paper. All ideas come from the pupils themselves and the teacher only supports them by putting questions to further develop pupils' ideas. Pupils were encouraged to discuss and share their most imaginative and creative ideas.*

This class observation demonstrates that the teacher has made use of a cared pedagogy approach and the students were very happy. This is what the learners seemed to want. They need a caring teacher who listens to them and unfolds the curriculum in such a way as to enhance their learning experiences.

5.2.3 Theme 3 The teaching context

Teaching context, in this study, refers to the conditions in which teaching and learning take place. It includes the type of schools - public or private, girls or boys or mixed, primary or secondary. The teaching context varies according to the types of learners enrolled in the school which may represent a different class of learners coming from different economic, social, educational, and cultural backgrounds. In whatever teaching context, what matters most is the notions of the process of teaching and learning. (Zeichner and Grant 1981). Here, the teaching context encompasses the ways that teachers are expected to teach, classroom conditions, PTR and outside classroom conditions, sports facilities, infrastructure, school culture, and teachers' working conditions.

5.2.3.1Subtheme: Teaching conditions

Teaching conditions refer to all school facilities and conditions that enhance teachers' performance and efficiency. Teachers' working conditions are, to some extent, equal to the learning conditions of learners. In this research context, it includes opportunities for promoting teacher leadership, access to instructional resources such as whiteboards, markers, digital tools, communication technologies, a conducive physical environment, and students' behaviour. (Steinberg and Garrett, 2016). It also includes an adequate place for teaching with the adequate contact time, and a dedicated place for research and correcting students' work.

The data analysis demonstrates that teachers believed that teaching conditions or teachers' working conditions are necessary for implementing QE. While they indicated that teaching resources like whiteboard markers, whiteboards, internet facilities, technologies, and ICT (printers and projectors) are crucial for providing the desired learning outcomes, they also highlighted that these resources seemed to be inadequate, i.e., they are not enough to serve the purpose. They were highlighting that some of the resources are just cosmetic in the sense that they were not sufficient enough, either in quantity or quality or both, for yielding the desired outcomes. This is what was argued in Vlăsceanu (2007) in an attempt to highlight the difference between fitness of purpose and fitness for purpose. For example, an internet connection is available; but the connectivity is not enough to be used by all teachers. They, the teachers, also mentioned that their voices are too weak in the decision-making process. They are always taken up with their heavy workload and replacement that very little time is left for committees and discussions.

Mr Francois had the following to say about teachers working conditions. He expressed his dissatisfaction with the teaching conditions at PWSS. He believed that without adequate instructional resources, QE will remain a utopia.

> *We don't have many resources. Let me tell you. It is not a joke. I got only 4 whiteboard markers per term and a few books from the library. Anyway, we don't use the library. We bring our books and very often we use that of the pupils.....We don't have internet access. There is an internet connection only in the administration. And also, I am a literature teacher. I need a projector. I need internet but Projectors are fixed only in the specialist room."* And later he expressed the following *"Also. I see big boxes in the staffroom. I can detect Wi-Fi signals in the staffroom but there are no passwords. The MOE has not extended the facility yet. It is just a showoff. In infrastructure I may include internet facilities and ICT facilities Do they serve their purpose?*

If I need to print a paper, I shall ask for it in the rector's office. There, I will not be able to do it myself I have to go through the whole administrative process. If I am on good terms with people there. I will surely get it done immediately otherwise I have to wait. What I suggest is that we look beyond the infrastructure. Do they serve their purpose?"

The same feeling is shared amongst other teachers; teaching condition is a key factor in improving teachers' performance. They believed that teachers' working conditions are an integral part of the concept of QE. Contrastingly, teachers expressed in their interviews that teachers' working conditions at school were not triggering their motivation to work. They reported that they have too many replacement periods on top of their normal working time. For example, Mrs Nazreen expressed the following.

Conditions of work are important because if we are not motivated, we will not perform well in classes and thereby making it difficult to achieve desired learning outcomes.

Another issue is contact time with students. If we take into account of replacement period, it becomes too long and tiresome. Very often we have to replace more than 3 periods (100 minutes) per week.

As for Mr Jayen, he expressed that the working condition is not limited to instructional resources, but he believed that QE would be achieved if teachers are given more opportunities to participate in some of the decision-making processes and also for following professional development courses and in capability-building activities. Actually, there are opportunities given to them, but it is not an established feature that promotes collegiality. The delegation is more transactional and instructional. The rector delegates a task only when it suits him. This is what he had to say,

I would say yes. I do get opportunities to voice out my opinions- participate in the decision-making process. Very often decision has already been taken. We just talk like that. The rector listens and sometimes gives us opportunities to make amendments to policy or decisions taken.

The rector believed that teaching condition is a primordial requisite for QE. He expressed in his interview that teachers who are on permanent employment perform better than those supply teachers (on contract). Despite he was aware that many supply teachers did not take their work

seriously, he could not do much about it as he does have the autonomy to recruit teachers. He also mentioned, that most of the supply teachers do not remain in the profession for a long time because of the conditions of service such as no prospect for permanence, no leaves, and no increase in salary, etc. It is also indicative that 'supply teachers' do not adhere to the school culture as compared to permanent teachers. The rector had this to say,

> Rector: "For *me, QE means quality teachers. It is the rector who knows well what profile of teachers he will need for his school. The supply teachers may leave any time of the year, whenever they are offered a permanent job. The problem of supply teachers. These teachers working on short contracts do not bond with other staff. They do not develop a sense of belonging. They do not really acculture the culture of the school. Most of them come directly from universities. They are young. They have not followed any courses in teaching and learning. They don't have any knowledge of classroom management."*

5.2.3.2 Subtheme: The classroom conditions

There is a good majority of teachers and learners who believed that the conditions of classrooms at PWSS are not that conducive to teaching and learning and therefore hamper QE. Nevertheless, the condition of the classroom is very much connected to effective teaching (Farrell, 2002). This opinion is shared by both parents and the Rector.

Learners expressed their concern about the conditions of classrooms at the school in the FGD. They believed that classrooms should be more conducive and pregnant with learning opportunities. They suggested that better classroom conditions would have a greater impact on QE. Despite there being provisions for maintaining classroom conditions, there are no proper follow-ups and as a consequence, classrooms are left without basic facilities, such as electricity, proper whiteboards, chairs, and desks. While QE is believed to be a concept that caters to making the learning conditions more attractive and conducive, learners expressed that they would prefer to shirk classes to give vent to their frustrations rather than stay back in classes that are not well-aerated and serviced. One of the students of Grade 10, Kaushik, voiced out in the focus group discussion.

> *'The size of the classroom is ok, but there is no electricity. Sometimes it is very dark inside. I cannot see what is written on the board. I don't know whether the classes were cleaned as they are supposed to be. The school administration told us that the classrooms were cleaned but I did not see the caretakers cleaning the classrooms. The caretaker who is in charge just sweeps to remove the dust and paper waste. Personally, I don't feel like*

staying in the classroom. The chairs and tables are there, but they are not in good condition. We feel that there is no proper circulation of air. After one period we cannot concentrate. This is why some of our classmates shirk certain classes.... otherwise, students keep asking permission to go out

When it comes to classroom conditions, teachers indicated that the quality of class furniture, proper lighting, and quality markers and whiteboards are essential for teaching and learning. They laid more emphasis on maintenance and upgrading the conditions of the classroom. In fact, both teachers and learners were expressing more or less the same contentions. They believed that classrooms should be in good condition so as to promote QE. However, teachers complained that classrooms should be adapted to the environment. For example, in Mauritius, classrooms should be equipped with fans to cope with issues of hot temperature and humidity.

Mr Francois had this to say

Good teaching requires the right conditions like well-lit and spacious classrooms. I have seen it here. A blatant example I will give you. We live on an island and the temperature rises to 30 degrees. How could you expect students to be alert? Here in many of the classrooms, there is no electricity. Teachers can't teach as well, students can't learn properly in summer as there is no fan. In such conditions, teachers can't teach and students can't learn properly.

5.2.3.3 Subtheme: Pupil-Teacher Ratio PTR

Some teacher participants confided in their interviews that they believed that PTR and QE are strongly related. They indicated that a high PTR would compromise students' participation in class and would even exacerbate the attention divide from teachers to learners. They also indicated that working in crowded classes is very exhausting as students tend to be more disruptive. Teachers, consequently, whined those classes with high PTR are detrimental to learning. Teachers also indicated that classes with high PTR are very stressful and are demotivated to work, However, classes with low PTR would impact positively teaching and learning and eventually would improve the quality of education.

This is an extract of what Mrs Nazreen said about PTR

I sincerely think that Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) is one of the most important determinants of QE. In some classes, we have 40 students. Working with 40 students in a class is not an easy task. We cannot ensure learning takes place as it should. Not only me, but I am sure that many teachers are de-motivated to work in

classes of high PTR as working with crowded classes is very exhausting. In lower classes, the PTR is relatively high and students tend to be more disruptive. They disturb the class for petty issues as if they call for attention.

5.2.3.4 Subtheme: The school infrastructure

School infrastructure is mentioned quite recurrently by all participants to be the baseline of QE. School infrastructure, in this context, includes all facilities and provisions that help to improve educational processes. In fact, it comprises all tangible facilities like buildings, school furniture, toilets, educational technology, markers, computers, projectors, printers, photocopying machines, whiteboards, and intangible facilities like school space, internet connection, and electricity among others.

Data analysis of responses of learners from the questionnaires tends to show that school infrastructure and availability of resources are crucial to QE. Learners of PWSS indeed give a lot of importance to sports education and therefore consider sports facilities as an enabler of QE. For example, many learners including, Ashley, Fadil, Jean, and Jerome of grade12, mentioned that they like coming to school because of the sports facilities provided to them.

Another point raised by learners' participants is the condition of toilet facilities. The majority of them expressed their dissatisfaction with the conditions of the toilets. They also indicated that if they were the rector they would have upgraded, above all, the conditions of the toilets.

In a similar manner, teacher participants indicated in their interviews that they believed QE is primarily linked with school infrastructure. They attributed school infrastructure and the availability of resources as necessary conditions for QE. They even mentioned quality infrastructure as an indicator of QE. They further mentioned that without basic infrastructures like playgrounds, classrooms, and libraries, it would be next to impossible to impart QE. Cheng stated the following,

> *Another important indicator of QE is the school environment including infrastructure. It is by looking at the infrastructure that I know whether a school is making progress or not. The basic infrastructure like playgrounds, classrooms, and libraries are not adequate for imparting QE. We need quality infrastructure like classrooms that can accommodate students comfortably. All the units of the infrastructure should be equipped with maximum amenities",*

The Rector also indicated in his interview that he believes that school infrastructure plays a key role in QE. He showed a tendency to compare infrastructure among schools. He believed that all schools should have more or less the same quality of infrastructure He highlighted how QE is relativistic in the sense that a rector of a school should survey what the school has or does

not have with regard to other schools. Also, he underlined the importance of infrastructure by showing the efforts he put in to call the attention of the MOE. He pointed out that in Government schools, rectors do not have the autonomy and funds to upgrade or maintain the school infrastructure. The school community demonstrated the importance they attributed to school infrastructure by providing the required funds from the PTA to bring out proper upgrading of infrastructure.

> He stated. "*When I came here, the infrastructure was already here. Very little thing has changed. You are well aware OF my persistent request for the construction of a new block for additional classes and lecture theatre. This design dates more than 35 years… we don't have a lecture theatre. All the new schools have one. It is important to keep the same condition everywhere, in every school. Quality is also relative…… look at the painting, it is fresh. It was painted quite recently, some two years back. I have used the PTA fund for painting all these. I find it important. I cannot intervene in all situations. In state schools, the MOE takes relatively a very long time to intervene. In this school, we have a severe problem of a power cut. Anytime we can have a power cut over here. I wrote to MOE to remedy the situation but in vain. It has been more than two years that we are waiting. Another thing, most of the cameras are not working, the whole block B is deprived of electricity. Even in the library, the air conditioner is not working because of this.."*

As for the parent participants, they also indicated that school infrastructure is very crucial for the development of their children and is a key requirement for QE. They further mentioned that their choice for admitting their ward was based, to some degree, on the quality of the school infrastructure. It was also highlighted in the interviews that building is not the only determinant of school infrastructure, but it also includes other facilities like toilets, library, etc. while they were referring to infrastructure as a central element of QE, they were also referring to its maintenance and availability of resources for facilitating the use of these infrastructures put in place.

> Mr Genevieve stated, "*Toilet forms part of the basic infrastructure. Not only toilets but clean toilets. There are two toilet blocks. Very often they are not well-cleaned. There is an incommoding smell emanating from the toilet. They are not well maintained."*
>
> As for Mrs Mahadwa, she expressed the following- *First I look at the building itself. It is a good, clean, and well-maintained building, with good classrooms equipped with electric fans so that students are not disturbed in summer. They have a good playground and also internet facilities. They have a library and computer room.*

5.2.3.5 Subtheme: Information and Communication Technology ICT

In this research context, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in school is of two folds. Firstly, it is a subject of study in the curriculum, and secondly, as a means to support teaching and learning and also to improve the efficiency of administrative services that enhance, and optimize school outcomes. In schools, it includes using a computer and all its accessories and paraphernalia to plan and deliver lessons, and to facilitate school processes like preparing the timetable (Olusela, 2016).

All students (participants) believed that ICT as a subject would allow them to learn computer literacy and this would give them an edge in the job market. Furthermore, they believed that ICT would enhance their learning ability by opening access to large banks of knowledge at their fingertips. For them, in this information era, ICT is a sine qua non-condition for QE.

It was revealed from the focus group discussion that ICT had contributed much to the improvement of both teaching and learning. Learners expressed that ICT had given them better and faster access to a larger amount of resources. ICT has made learning more interesting as they, now, have faster access to knowledge anywhere and at any time. So here, ICT is referred to as an important enabler of QE.

> Fadiil: '*we use our mobile phones to do our homework and class work. Now, we have the possibility to access the CIE website to download past exam papers and marking schemes. It is just a matter of seconds. We no longer require to carry books.'*

According to Mr Genevieve, a parent participant, ICT is an important indicator of QE and he showed concern about integrating ICT in all school processes as well as in the unfolding of the curriculum.

> He mentioned the following in the interview '… *Well-equipped classrooms, laboratories, and ICT tools are indicators of QE. We cannot have QE without necessary facilities.'*

Most teachers (participants) believed that teaching ICT as a subject at school subject as well as making use of ICT for improving school processes are essential for QE. Teachers also believed that using ICT as a tool for improving teaching and learning constitutes another premise for QE. The difference between ICT as a QE outcome and ICT as an enabler of QE are well underlined. They also indicated that while children are living in a digital world, so not

attempting to develop their ICT skills and not offering ICT as a subject at school, would be a serious compromise to QE.

> As for Neezam, "*And also, we have ICT. We are living in the digital world, we should use ICT. And ICT is being implemented in every aspect of our school. Not only in the IT department but in all the departments like in the physics department and even in the English Department we use IT. Nowadays students are very conversant in using IT devices.*"

Furthermore, it is indicative from the data analysis that teachers considered ICT as an essential tool that could prompt them to innovate and enhance their teaching styles. The school has upgraded two contiguous classrooms and converted them into a multimedia room so as to allow both teachers and learners to benefit from the support of ICT.

> Sanjay indicated the following in his interview, "*In this modern era, QE is almost impossible without the use of ICT in teaching and learning. Putting a multimedia room at the disposal of teachers to help them integrate technology in both teaching and learning. The teacher can make use of a projector, television, internet access and good sound system."*

5.2.4 Theme School Leadership

Leadership is another theme that emerged from the data which regroups all ideas that are related to the management styles of the Rector and the implementation of school policies. Leadership in this research includes the modalities on which decisions are taken at the management level, the way change and innovation is managed, the way policies are communicated, and the modalities for aligning resources (Petrovic & Vracar, 2019).

5.2.4.1 Subtheme: Distributive leadership

It is indicative from the data analysis that the majority of learners across all categories believed that the leadership styles of a Rector have a strong bearing on QE. According to them, the leadership of a rector in a school matters a lot. Below are some responses to question 12: *Does the school regularly survey the students to collect their experiences and opinions on school matters?* Data analysis reveals that learners believed that empowering students to take part in the decision of school matters like discipline, school rules and regulations, choice of subjects, and choice of winter wear and design of school uniforms would have demonstrated good leadership of the Rector. This would have contributed to enhancing the school climate and also instilling a sense of belonging

Jerome: rarely. Only when it comes to verification of timetable.

Kaushik: yes, but not frequently. Only the class representatives.

Bertrand: only through student council and prefect body committees.

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As for the teachers, most of them indicated that leadership amounts to decision-making and managing the implementation of school policies. They also mentioned that there is a clear relationship between the leadership styles of a Rector and a QE. They believed that the leadership style of a Rector has an important role to play in the concept of QE. They mentioned that they are given opportunities to participate in different committees like Canteen Committee, School Emergency Response Team, SMT, etc. to voice their opinions and also to implement policies as they would wish. It is also reflected in the data analysis that teachers felt empowered as partners in the management of school affairs. One teacher mentioned that the Rector of PWSS demonstrated a good leadership style by allowing staff to participate in the decision-making process through delegation. It is also indicative that opportunities were given to them to participate in committees, not all of them were happy because teachers believed that it is the Rector who chose whom to be members of the committee, and also because the power given to them was limited by the terms of reference.

Cheng had the following to say.

> *A few committees have been set up at school. And these committees bring changes. We have, for example, the canteen committee where we collect feedback from students. We have also an Emergency response team. It is a good thing because many positive changes have occurred. We now have a parent desk at school, and a school emergency response team, and as a consequence fire alarms have been installed. Personally, I formed part of the Canteen Committee. We bring changes as per the feedback obtained from the students. Based on the feedback, we can impose or come up with regulations concerning the quality of food items sold at the school.*

> *Francois stated, "We have committees and clubs. We have committees like the Staff welfare committee, pedagogical committee, health and safety, Discipline, and Senior Management Team. Although I am not too happy about the Senior Management Team. It is not that because you are a senior that your decisions would be exact. These are the structure put in place at the school to ensure QE. In this way, power is conferred to the committees so that they identify gaps in areas as delimited by the term of reference of the committee and come up with practical solutions.*

It was also revealed that the Rector, also, believed that leadership is crucial in QE. He indicated that he listened to all stakeholders and empowered them through committees by giving them a voice and responsibilities. He reported that he has always been adopting the principles that underpin distributive leadership and mentioned with the assurance that it works for his school.

> Rector stated, "*Distributive leadership. Listen to all stakeholders. The doors of my office are always open. I give voices to all members of the school community. We have a school development plan where all departments of a school are given the opportunity to bring their contribution for the improvement of the department and ultimately contributing to the improvement of school outcomes."*

However, parents mentioned that did not have the same consideration as teachers do in matters of decentralization of power. Parents are rarely invited to help in the teaching and learning processes. Parents found their involvement in school matters very restricted. They reported that more collaboration among school community members including, the Rector, teachers, and parents would have enhanced many school processes, and alignment of resources quite significantly as advocated in the QE

> Mr Genevieve stated, "*Once a year I meet the rector and walk around to see the changes brought at school. There are some changes/ progress…If parents work in collaboration with the rector together, there would be some improvement. Parents could contribute to buy equipment needed to facilitate teaching and learning and this is good."*

While the rector was indicating that he believed in the positive impact of distributive leadership in schools, and he thought of projecting a distributive leadership style in school, contrastingly, other participants were whining that the rector was more inclined towards adopting an instructional leadership style.

5.2.4.2 Subtheme: Shared Vision

Panagiotopoulos (2018) argues that shared vision is one of the cornerstones of a learning organization and it is an amalgamation of personal visions, dreams, and ambitions of all of its members for the organization. It also reflects the development and achievement of both personal goals and the goals of the organization. It also tends to represent what type of organization the members desire to create in the future. In Mauritius, all schools are requested to submit the school vision and mission to the MOE and it should be somehow aligned with that of the MOE. In the same vein, Jacobs (2007) contends that a shared vision of an organization helps to create a sense of commitment on the part of all its members, and also it constitutes both the driving force and the guiding force to achieve the goals set. It (the shared vision) is pretty well associated with the style of leadership of the Rector.

Observation notes showed that at PWSS, a lot of importance is given to the school vision. Indeed, it is written in big characters in a beautiful aluminium casing and displayed in the most not-to-be-missed manner at the entrance of the lobby. It happens to appear in almost all correspondences, including letters and emails, of the school and also in many official documents like in the school's Journal. However, the staff did not show a high level of commitment to help the school navigate toward the vision.

Teachers expressed that the leadership of the rector is very central to school development. They believed that a school leader should be able to communicate his or her vision to all the staff, the students, and the whole school community. They also indicated that the school community should be guided through the rector's vision. However, if the school vision is not clear, the staff would not be able to participate in realizing that vision. They also expressed that there were not enough discussion forums and capability-building exercises to ensure alignment with the vision. Teachers mentioned that resources and school processes or school activities were properly aligned as preconized in the concept of QE so as to fulfill the vision. This is what Cheng had to say.

> He stated, "*If the school vision is well communicated, then all teaching and non-teaching staff will move towards the same goal. It is the vision and mission that would determine the success of a school. All the students and teachers, parents also must understand the vision of the school. All the activities should be aligned with the vision of the leader. Rector should put in place a series of platforms to explain his vision and also capability-building exercises to ensure that the staff and students perform their duties towards achieving that vision. In this school, the vision is clear, but there are no proper processes established to guide us towards the vision. For example, the SDP. We are requested to submit plans for the department and school, but no resources are allocated to achieve the desired goal in the plan.*

Parents believed that good communication and a shared vision would have impacted more positively on the school's development in terms of quality. According to Yavuz & Celik (2017), good communication skills also mean good listening skills. So, the parents indicated that if the rector was more attentive to them, much confusion and misunderstanding would have been dispelled and there would have been more collaboration as articulated in the concept of QE. Despite the rector showing concern about sharing the vision of the school, it is indicated that not all parents understood the school vision as per the discourse of distributive leadership. Some parents expressed that they would have felt reassured and more committed if they understood the vision of the school. They seemed to be confused about how the vision of the school would be achieved.

> Mrs Mahadwa had the following to say- *Yes. To some extent. He listens to us but we don't know whether our ideas and suggestions are put into practice. We do contribute to school projects. For example, we contributed to setting up a Book Club at school. This is very interesting.*

5.2.5 Theme: School Policy

The vision of Mauritius is to achieve the status of a high-income country by the year 2030(MOE, 2016). Hence, many policies have to be formulated in the education sector in order to facilitate the achievement of the same. According to Wies (1996), a policy is defined as a guided course of action that is formulated to achieve the organizational goal. Similarly, school policies are a set of established actions, expectations and norms to be followed within a school to ensure the smooth running of the school and to achieve the desired goals (Mynbayeva & Yelbayeva, 2018). In this section, the focus is on the implementation of two school policies namely 'Inclusion' and 'PMS'.

5.2.5.1 Subtheme: Inclusiveness

Inclusion refers to the concept of 'education for all' where all learners, regardless of their differences and disabilities, are given access to the general education system (Salamanca, 1994). The idea of inclusion stemmed from the premise that all learners are equal despite having unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and particular learning needs. Lika (2016) argued that inclusion is not only about giving those children access to school but also about the provisions made to facilitate adaptation of the school curriculum, teaching methods, and organizations according to their needs so that they could participate normally in a regular classroom condition, on the same foot, as other students.

Inclusiveness is one of the recursive indicators of QE that was mentioned by many learner participants. Nadim, for instance, referred QE to as a system that is more inclusive where all learners are treated, equally and fairly, irrespective of gender, caste, race, colour, and religion. He responded to the question- '*No student is left behind. All students are given the same treatment.*

Teachers relate QE to the provisions for schools to provide all facilities needed for development to all learners without any discrimination of gender or any physical difference. They also expressed that the education system should not carry out any exercise or practice that tends to select students for certain facilities. Teachers viewed QE as a system of education that gives

the same treatment to all learners regardless of their social, academic, cultural, physical, and economic differences.

> Cheng: *I believe that good or QE is education that is inclusive; provides optimum resources to cater to educational needs and is not gender-biased. QE means giving access to education to all kinds of learners and should not be selective. QE also means taking all learners on board for achieving the one ultimate goal.*

Observation diary shows

> *In every toilet block, there is a special toilet dedicated to students with disability. All staircases are equipped with handrails that serve to help students with walking impairments. However, no ramps are available to facilitate mobility for students with physical disabilities.*

As an insider researcher, I have the advantage to know the school very well. I am aware that there is one student in grade 8 who has severe muscular dystrophy. Visibly, the school endeavours to support the student, though not enough, so as to facilitate teaching and learning for the said students. Data in this respect are mostly produced through an informal conversation with the Rector, participant observation, and document analysis.

5.2.5.2 Subtheme: Performance Management System.

A performance Management System is a system for managing the performance of members working in the public sector including schools. MCSA (2013) defines performance management as a process of management that involves all members of an organization to improve services and for yielding better results. Normally, at the end of the financial year, the rector would rate the performance of teachers and other staff on pre-established key result areas and key competencies. The key result areas are Teaching and learning, participation in capability-building activities, pedagogy, reporting to rector and parents, and assessment and evaluation whereas the key competencies are communication skills, team building, work ethics, leadership, job knowledge, and management.

Drawing on the data analysis, the rector revealed that the PMS was an important provision in the school policy that had encouraged teachers to continuously groom themselves with new teaching styles, and new technologies and to attend capability-building activities. He also mentioned that the PMS is an opportunity given to teachers and other staff to reflect on their practice and also to identify areas that require development and improvement. Also, the rector added that the PMS has been an excellent opportunity to reward teachers and staff for their commitment to work by giving them a high rating in the field they had excelled. The rector

reported that the PMS was used as a management tool to control and manage extra-teaching activities like meeting with parents and their involvement in school projects. He expressed that if they did not have financial constraints, he would have supported them by providing resources that would boost their motivation to work better. The rector has the following to say.

> *"One more thing, I will tell you…. I based myself on the frequency at which teachers meet parents or use parent feedback sheets to rate the performance of teachers in the exercise of Performance Management System (PMS)"*
>
> *He continued, "I think there are many students who have made a marvellous effort, but we could not reward them. Our school is very small and hard hit by financial constraints; however, we design award certificates and issue medals for excellent achievement and effort towards good performance for both learners and teachers. However, for teachers, I give them good ratings in their PMS. I encourage and motivate them ".*

5.3 Concluding thought.

In this chapter, I presented the pre-established themes of QE as stipulated in the literature with a view to answering the first critical question. The themes are QE outcomes, quality teaching and learning, quality teaching context, quality leadership, and quality school policies. Then, under each theme, there was a discussion of the subthemes that emerged from the data analysis. They were high academic performance, holistic development, values and discipline, curriculum, cared pedagogy, infrastructure pupil-teacher ratio, ICT, Distributive leadership, communication and shared vision, inclusion and PMS.

CHAPTER SIX: Analysis - Patterns and threads (part 2)

6.0 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with a first-level analysis of the data produced in connection with the first research question. It was merely a thematic approach to how the notion of QE is espoused by the school community of PWSS.

In this chapter also, the data produced from the different sources through different methods will be analyzed and arranged to answer the second research question. The data were prepared and presented in such a way as to enhance our understanding of how QE is enacted at PWSS.

6.1 The notion of QE viewed by the school community

The notion of QE has been elaborated thematically by both the school community of PWSS and existing literature. Despite the themes being pre-established in literature and subthemes have been identified based on the belief of the members of the school community, yet, QE is a construct that is grounded in the school. The themes of QE were QE outcomes, quality teaching and learning, quality teaching context, school leadership, and school policy. The subthemes of QE outcomes are high academic performance, holistic development, discipline and values. Similarly, the subthemes of quality teaching and learning are relevant and meaningful curriculum and cared pedagogy, and that of quality teaching context are teaching conditions, and school infrastructure. School Leadership is represented by subthemes like distributed leadership and shared vision and communication. In the same way school policy is represented by inclusion and performance management systems.

Development of QE as enacted.

Notion Of Quality Education	Themes	Subthemes	Enactment of QE through
	QE outcomes	High academic performance	• Assessment and examination • Wall of fame
		Holistic development	• Extra curriculum activities • Clubs
		Discipline and values	Rules and regulations
	Quality Teaching and learning	Meaningful and relevant curriculum	• Lived curriculum • Subject offered
		Cared pedagogy	• Remedial classes • Feedback giving
	Quality teaching context	Teaching conditions	• Staff Room • Recruitment of teachers • timetable
		Classroom conditions	Classroom furniture
		Infrastructure	• Laboratories, • Facilities • Libraries
		ICT	• Used of ICT in the school process
	School Leadership	Distributive leadership	Committees
		Communication and shared vision	Display board/staff meeting
	School Policy	Inclusion and equity	• Book distibution • SRM • facilities
		Performance management system	SDP

Table 5: Subthemes of QE in practice

6.2 Enactment of quality education outcomes

6.2.1 Through Assessments

In chapter 5, 'high academic performance has been identified as an important educational outcome of QE and was referred to as one of the QE outcomes. There are indeed many school processes that are put in place at PWSS to trigger QE. The scope of this research does not allow me to make any judgement about whether these processes are effective or not. Among all these processes 'Assessment and Evaluation' was mentioned by the participants and was also one of my findings during observation. In this research, assessments are processes where teachers would extend their help to learners to improve their performance by giving them, the learners, proper feedback about the tasks given. It could also be a test to evaluate the transfer of the curriculum taught. (Yambi & Yambi, 2020)

While literature supports that learners' academic performance could be enhanced by assessments (Adeyemi, 2015), data analysis reveals that teachers are requested to give a minimum of three assessments during each term. Nevertheless, teachers could choose any type of assessment including, formative and summative. The data analysis indicates the high importance given to assessments, one teacher mentioned he had to give an assessment in the last week of the term because he had an issue with the completion of the syllabus.

Sanjay had the following to say in connection with the assessment.

> Sanjay: "*I perform continuous assessment normally. As such in one term 3-4 assessments are conducted for each grade for one term. .. a teacher can assess(students) in the last week (of the term). Every teacher has his reason why he/she is doing it in the last week of the term. One main reason is, I think why teachers give last-minute assignments is because of completion of the syllabus."*

Also, teachers indicated that 'Assessment and Evaluation' were considered important school processes put in place to identify learners' difficulties so as to prepare for proper remedial classes. The teachers believed that assessments and evaluation were essential to teaching and learning approaches that would enhance academic performance and also QE at PWSS.

> Cheng:" *All teachers are now supposed to conduct several assessments and also to have remedial classes based on these assessments. I think that QE can be improved through assessments and evaluation."*

Drawing from the observation notes, it seems that assessment is considered a crucial part of their learning process and that students rarely miss any of their assessment activities. In the previous chapter, high academic achievement was considered to be a notion of QE. The

assessments that students take are an indication of academic achievement and as such, are conscious of taking each assessment task and their study more seriously to achieve high-quality pass grades.

> *Students rarely absent themselves from school on days when assessments are scheduled and also the number of late arrivals in the morning went significantly down during the assessment period. During the same period, many students are found with their copybooks sitting everywhere in the schoolyard for revision. At the end of every term, a progress report sheet to parents informing them about the academic progress of their wards and their behaviour also.*

6.2.2 Wall of fame

The Wall of fame is another enactment to motivate learners to achieve high academic performance. My observation notes revealed that the wall of fame was set up at PWSS with the specific purpose of showcasing academic achievement as the school's pride and honour. The way it is maintained clean and shiny shows the importance that the school attached to high academic achievements. The hall of fame is used to display the value accorded by the school to high academic achievements. Crabtree& Debusk (2008) reported that many companies linked their high performance to the wall of fame and Balance Scorecard. Similarly, Wingender, Raval & Schuett (2015) argued that a hall of fame could contribute largely to instilling a culture of high expectation in an organization and inspire staff to walk the extra mile for achieving the company's goal.

> *…As I passed the parking area, I found a staircase that leads me to the administrative block. There, I entered the waiting room and I saw something striking that caught my immediate attention. I saw a big wall of fame that proudly displays the names of students who have made outstanding academic performances in the HSC examination at a national level. The list of laureates. The wall of fame is a large sheet of glass on which names are written in golden letters. It was very shiny and marvellously clean. Sitting there for half an hour, I saw many visitors stop for a while to cast a look at the wall of fame. Many among them made in a subtle way a sign of respect or appreciation by making some elegant gesture with their head…. many times, I had been in the waiting room to meet the rector. I noticed that many pupils, apparently the newcomers of grade 7, came into a group to look at the wall of fame. Sometimes, they touched the plate and also talked among themselves…*

6.2.3 Extra-Curricular Activities and Clubs

In chapter five, holistic development was mentioned as an element of QE. At PWSS, holistic development was believed to be achieved through extra-curricular activity periods and school clubs. These periods are supposedly put in place at the school so that the social and emotional development of learners could be unleashed. Observation notes revealed that only two to four

lessons out of a weekly total of 45 lessons are reserved for extracurricular activities. This seems to be less compared to the number of lessons allocated for academic subjects. Despite there being many sports facilities like a football pitch, volleyball pitch, basketball pitch, gymnasium, etc., the observation notes indicated that not all the students could benefit from them it seems to have sports facilities, specifically during break times and recess times.

Monday, 19th September 2016 at 10 15 a.m. in the gymnasium.

> *It was during the fourth period. Many students were sitting on scattered pupil desks placed off the volleyball pitch near the wall. Eight students were playing an indoor football match and they were all students in grade 12. In the corridor near the main entrance, four pupils were playing table tennis. Similarly, four students were playing table tennis at the back of the hall. Thirty-eight students were watching each other playing. Similarly, outside, on the basketball pitch, there were twelve pupils of grade 10 playing football and some fifty students sitting under the canteen shed and watching happily their friends playing football. Three classes were having their PE classes - grade 10, grade 12, and grade 9.*

The rector indicated in his interviews that all students were given at least 2 hours of holistic education. However, not all students were given the same activities. The students of lower grades have formal classes for Music, Fine Arts, PE, Life Skills, Social and Well-being, and Library. By contrast, students of higher grades were given the freedom to choose what extracurricular activities they wanted to do. It was also indicated that despite the strong will of the rector for providing more opportunities for holistic development, as articulated in the concept of QE, he mentioned that the school did not have adequate resources and resource persons for promoting the same.

> *Rector: "To some extent, I can say. Yes, all students in my school are given opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. We have allocated four activity periods every week for students of Grade 10, Grade 11, Grade 12, and Grade 13. I will tell you frankly.. not all students are interested in extracurricular activities. I agree that we don't have enough resources or resource persons to conduct our activity periods as we should…… students of Grades 7,8 and 9, are having life skills and social and emotional well beings. This is a policy decision."*

Based on the teachers' interviews, it is indicative that there are provisions made at the school for non-academic development during activity periods. They believed that these 'activity periods' and the clubs established at school were fulfilling the purpose of holistic education.

> Mr Jayen mentioned," *Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities organized in the activity periods to promote the holistic development of students. There are also many clubs like UNESCO Clubs, ECO SCHOOL projects,*

and the Integrity club. In these clubs, students are given opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills and creativity."

While holistic education is considered to be a notion of QE, the reality at the case study school is that extracurricular activities are not given the interest deserved as preconized in the concept of QE. Students are left on their own, and some are saying that they use this time to do school work, suggesting that they default to academic achievement as being their de facto notion of QE.

This is what they said in the FGD

Ashley(Grade 12): "Not all. We are left on our own. We play on our mobiles. Teachers do not permit us to go outside to play football."

Shamil (Grade 12) in the beginning, teachers were talking about many interesting topics like drugs, leadership, etc….practically we do homework during activity periods.

6.2.4 School Rules and Regulations

At PWSS, the rules and regulations are formulated to promote the good behaviour of learners (FeKadu, 2019) and are enforced in school by the School Superintendent. All parents would receive a copy of the rules and regulations of the school on the admission day and they had to sign cognizance of the same as per the school policy. Indeed, the following are some of the disciplinary measures that may be taken to sanction misdemeanours: reporting to parents, detentions of students, cancellation of privileges like excursions, and rustications.

Observations carried out reveal that the school shows much concern when it comes to discipline. All the staff collaborate to maintain discipline at the school, both inside and outside the classrooms. Every day, right in the morning, there is a form period of fifteen minutes for monitoring discipline such as checking school uniforms and recording students' lateness.

Every day in the morning, students meet their Grade master during the Form period which is 15 minutes long to do the roll call, check whether students are in proper school uniform, and inform them about the standing orders of the day. Lateness is closely monitored every day according to the protocol established at school. In addition, during breaks and recess times some teachers assure orderly all over the schoolyard.

It was indicative in the FGD that learners believed that school rules and regulations put in place at the school would have a positive impact on their behaviour at school and in society in general. While a majority of the participants (students) mentioned that these rules are set up to shape their behaviour so as to increase the chance of transforming them into good people and

good citizens, others expressed that they were not sure whether these rules would help them to improve their performance. Learners tended to link rules and regulations as an enactment of discipline as an educational outcome rather than an enabler for improving academic performance. The school's rules and regulations are viewed by learners as means of encouraging cooperation and harmony in the school and elsewhere.

> *Jerome: The rules and regulations are important. They tend to make us good students and good people in general.*
>
> *Vince: They (rules and regulations) methods to control and guide us to improve learning. But not all students take them seriously.*
>
> *Fadil: yes, it is good. They prevent fights among students.*

Interviews of teachers revealed that most teachers believed that rules and regulations in the school help enormously to create an organized and predictable environment that is conducive to both teaching and learning processes as articulated in the discourse of QE. However, they also indicated that rules and regulations are key factors that contribute to the promotion of a positive culture at school. They also mentioned that rules and regulations would also help to avoid unwanted situations like bullying, and disobedience and would encourage cooperation and harmony among learners. This seems to be an outcome in itself rather than an enabler for improving academic performance.

> Francois mentioned, *"I think rules and regulations are important pillars of discipline. Without rules and regulations, the whole school would be chaotic and would be like a market fair. Students would come late, would not wear school uniforms, and students would not obey teachers. Things would have been very difficult. So, I think school rules and regulations are established only with the purpose to encourage cooperation and harmony among students in schools. They help to build the school culture."*

6.3. Enactment of quality teaching and learning

In this section, I am going to discuss all the strategies, methods, and arrangements that are put in place at the level of the school to promote quality teaching and learning at school as preconized in discourses on QE. These are methods that have been established at the school with the specific objective to achieve quality teaching and learning. They are curriculum taught, the curriculum structure, remedial classes, and giving appropriate and timely feedback to learners.

6.3.1 Curriculum

The curriculum structure at PWSS is twofold.: the lower secondary education curriculum and the upper secondary education. For the lower secondary, from grade 7 to grade 9, the

curriculum is developed by the MIE under the guidance of the National Education Council, whereas the upper secondary students, from grade 10 to grade 13, follow the curriculum of the CIE. It is the MIE that has the sole responsibility to develop the curriculum for lower secondary students and also to write textbooks for all grades and all subjects. The following subjects are offered in lower secondary education: Mathematics -5 lessons, English- 5 lessons, French -4 lessons, Integrated Science - 6 lessons, Entrepreneurship Education – 4 lessons, Modern Social Studies – 2 lessons, Technology Studies – 4 lessons, Art and Design – 2 lessons, Computer studies – 2 lessons, Music – 2 lessons, Asian Language – 3 lessons, Life Skills and Values– 1 lesson, Social and Emotional Well-being – 1 lesson, Library – 1 lesson and Physical Education – 2 lessons. A lesson is also referred to as a unit or period and it is of a duration of 35 minutes.

As preconized in the concept of QE, textbooks are viewed to be very helpful tools for engaging students in their learning process. At PWSS, observations revealed that textbooks are given freely to learners of lower grades. Also, it is indicated that the curriculum taught at the lower secondary level is quite broad. The taught curriculum consists of enough subjects, about 16 subjects, to allow the learners better choices for the upper secondary education level. It was also indicated in the observation notes that the textbooks are written in English. All the papers taken in the CIE, as well as the lessons and the curricula, are in the English language, except for the French subject, but the people of Mauritius speak mostly Creole and French. This seems to be in contradiction with what is specified as a quality curriculum. It is articulated by MacDonald et al. (2016) that a quality curriculum would be produced only if the language of instruction and the content are in the mother tongue language of the learners. This seems to be a contradicting element of a quality curriculum.

Drawing from the rector's interviews, it is reflected that curriculum plays a central role in the concept of QE. He even mentioned that the competencies, skills, and knowledge acquired by the learners of the school, at upper secondary levels are accredited worldwide as the school follows the Cambridge International Curriculum. He also indicated that Cambridge Internation Curriculum has a good reputation and is a marker of QE. Contrastingly, the rector revealed that the policy of the MOE of imposing a list of textbooks on the learners seemed to be contradicting, in a way, the concept of QE. The teachers would have developed the curriculum as per the learnings of the students. As articulated in the concept of QE, the rector indicated that a more meaningful curriculum at the lower secondary education level would have been better for the learners while reconnecting what they are learning to their environment and culture (Aoki, 2004).

The rector mentioned the following:" *Curriculum is very much related to QE. For the upper grades, I understand that in a globalized world, it has some advantages to follow an international curriculum. CIE has a reputation. This allows our students to match their competencies internationally. ..... However, for the lower grades, I don't think it is a good idea. I think a school should be empowered to draft its own curriculum. For example, we are on a small island, and lower secondary students should learn about the risk and potential of living on an island. .....our citizens should be aware and well-informed to cope with calamities such as drought, floods, cyclones, and tsunamis. But concerning the readaptation of the curriculum, it happens to a certain degree. Some teachers do rewrite their own notes, but most of them follow the book as it is. It is less stressful for them and also parents can easily follow*."

Data analysis of teachers' interviews reveals that teachers believed that the textbooks prepared by the MIE were didactically correct. They also indicated that not all learners would find it easy to follow. However, teachers could unfold the curriculum as they deemed fit for the learners.

This is what Francois said, ".*I think books are well organized. Learners, if they want, can learn by themselves. Now, I think it would be easier to learn with the help of a teacher. An Educator should be a facilitator."*

6.3.2 Subject Combination

In chapter five, 'quality teaching and learning' was mentioned as a salient element of QE. This section elucidates subject combination as an enactment of quality teaching and learning at PWSS through a quality curriculum. Observation notes reveal that learners have relatively quite a large choice of subject combinations. While allowing students the freedom to express their choice of subjects to be studied at school represents a salient feature of QE, the limitation of resources also matters for the school. This seems to be compromising the quality of the curriculum.

The curriculum structure at PWSS reveals the following.

As far as upper Grades, i.e. grades 10 to grade 13, the school offers the international curriculum of Cambridge International Examinations. Grade 10 and Grade 11 students are allowed to follow only 8 subjects out of the 22 subjects offered at the school: Mathematics, English, French, French literature, English Literature, Computer Studies, Art and Design, Sociology, Design and Technology, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Additional Mathematics, Art and Design and Communications, Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, Travel and Tourism, Asian Language, Hinduism, Islamic Studies are concerned. There are three compulsory subjects, namely Mathematics, English, and French and for the remaining five subjects, students have to choose among the remaining 19 subjects.

However, there are restrictions imposed by the school administration, like established combination and number of students factor. The number of lessons for a particular subject is almost equal. Similarly, for HSC, students can opt for a combination of three main subjects that are offered at the school and two subsidiary subjects including General Paper which is compulsory. The restrictions are tighter than in the case of Grades 10 and 11. In these two Grades, the number of lessons is divided as follows: 9 lessons for main subjects and 5 lessons for subsidiary level. The rector had the following to say concerning the subject combination

In the Focus Group Discussion, most of the learners of Grade 12 revealed that subject combination was the major source of demotivation. They also mentioned that in many cases students were forced to drop out because they had not done well in subjects that appeared in the subject combination. Contrastingly, subject combinations seem to be a conflicting issue for QE in general. Subject combination, albeit all the efforts made, is far from a good enactment of QE. The following is what they said in the Focus Group Discussion

Jevin: The subject combination is a big issue in our school. A good number of students have to leave school because of the subject combination. Look I am good at Art and Chemistry, But the school does not offer this combination. Now I do Art, French, and Sociology.

Jean: A friend, who was in my class last year, had to be transferred to another school because of the option. He wanted to do all three sciences as he intended to do medicine at the University.

Similarly, several teachers indicated in their interviews that subject combination represents a major impediment to QE. While many teachers mentioned that subject combination is one of the reasons that triggered students to drop out, it is also indicated that few teachers have suggested age factor as a potential cause. This is what Mrs Nareen has mentioned, "*Subject combination is a big issue. Only we teachers know about this injustice. Many students are forced to leave school after grade 11 because of subject combinations and age factors. "*

Drawing from the interviews of the rector, subject combinations at PWSS is a major tension that affects the quality of the curriculum and in consequence, it affects the quality of teaching and learning. The rector indicated, as per the government policy, there are certain criteria to be respected regarding subject combinations. The major criteria that restrict subject combination at PWSS are: firstly, the student must obtain at least five credits at SC level in order to be admitted in grade 12, and secondly, the number of students opting for any particular subject combination should be greater than 10. Despite it is apparent that the school is providing a large choice of subject combinations, data analysis tends to show that it is actually inadequate

for promoting a quality curriculum as expected. The concept of QE would require the school to put in more effort to improve the provisions for subject combinations so as to reduce the number of dropouts in grade 11.

> *Rector: "I know that few students have to leave school if they cannot opt for the combination of subjects offered at school. We try our best to minimize the occurrence of such a situation. In the month of March, we distribute option forms to students to apprise parents of the choices of subjects they have. Parents and students have one month to choose the combination they deem fit. ….we are quite flexible, we do allow students to change their combination even in January, but they should show evidence of their parent's consent….. These option forms are distributed to Grade 9 and Grade 11 students. The choices are for the coming year, grade 10 and grade 12. Students do not have any choice of subject in grade 9….. These options or subject combinations are due to constraints. Everything has a financial cost.. Anyway, it is a policy decision. Yes, it is true. In my school, as in any other school, the options are not that open, for example, a student cannot opt for Physics and Economics. There is no such combination that exists here…… We can run an option provided we have at least 10 students requesting that particular option. yes in some schools the options are more open. This a policy decision depending on the availability of resources….. Hmmm, like teachers, laboratories, etc."*

6.3.3 Remedial classes

Remedial classes are supposedly special classes dedicated to developmental teaching that is based on learning difficulties encountered by learners during classes It is mentioned in the SDP that remedial classes are additional learning support given to learners. Literature has shown that remedial classes could help to improve quality teaching and learning and are viewed as an enactment of QE. Kumar (2016) argued that in remedial classes, teachers are expected to use an intrinsic motivational approach that motivates learners to improve their competencies. It involves a careful diagnosis of learning needs and devising remedial plans based on the interests of the learners.

Data analysis reveals that most learners responded affirmatively to question 6 – 'Do you have remedial classes or similar exercises?' However, they expressed that they were not satisfied with the way it is conducted. This appears conflictual with the concept of QE which articulates that classes should inspire learners to improve their performance by providing the right support (Magrini, 2015).

> *Asley: Yes, Just for the namesake.*
>
> *Nadim: Yes, rarely.*

Fadil: No, Not really. They are just revision classes.

Shanil: Yes. Not interesting. Too many pupils.

Jerome: Yes, rarely. It is not appropriate. Too many students. We are given classwork.

It is reflected from the teachers' interviews that the contact time with students is so fixed and tight that they complained to have almost no room for manoeuvre. They had to complete the syllabus in the prescribed time and on top of that, they do have replacement periods. Jayen had this to say, *" I do remedial classes during replacement periods. I have to inform the administration to give me a replacement with my classes."* Drawing on the data analysis, remedial classes were not being conducted as per the provisions of QE. According to Schwartz (2012), in remedial classes teachers were supposed to select a targeted group of students who are commonly facing almost the same difficulties in certain learning areas and the teacher would design a specific program intervention to address the difficulties identified. The intention to put in place remedial education at PWSS seems to conform well with the concept of QE. However, the way it is implemented, as per the data analysis, tends to deviate from the philosophical underpinning of the concept of QE.

6.3.4 Giving feedback to learners and parents

While assessments are considered to be processes to improve academic performance, proper and appropriate 'feedback giving' to learners would just accentuate further academic performance (Clarke, 2014; William, 2013; Sol 2020). Observation notes reveal that the school shows great concern about giving timely feedback to both learners and learners' parents. According to the school policy, teachers are requested to give timely feedback to learners on their performance in assessment - at most two weeks after an assessment. And for general feedback on performance and behaviour, parents are called in person to collect the same from teachers either at the end or beginning of each term. A progress report is given to the parents on that day.

The rector mentioned in his interview that he believed that giving timely and appropriate feedback to students on their progress in learning would help to improve quality academic performance. He added that feedback should be given both qualitatively and quantitatively. It is indicative from the data analysis that there are arrangements made at school to encourage giving feedback to learners and learners' parents. For example, teachers are requested to give a qualitative feedback sheet to parents on both behaviour and academic progress quite

regularly. Furthermore, the seriousness of 'feedback giving' is heightened by the exercise of PMS. The frequency at which teachers give feedback to parents is considered a key task in the PMS. The following is what the rector had to say,

> *"I encourage teachers to give feedback to students. I do give great importance to giving feedback because I believe it helps a lot to improve learning. Teachers should give feedback at most two weeks after an assessment, or sometimes immediately after the completion of a task. Feedback also should be given to parents. I urge teachers to call parents at school to give qualitative feedback. Officially, we call parents at school at the end of every term to give feedback on the progress of their wards. Feedback should not be only for academic progress. Teachers should inform parents about the behaviour of their wards in class and in the yard. I know that the report sheet to them is not sufficient. This is why I request teachers to fill out the qualitative feedback sheet. Sadly, parents do not give due importance to the qualitative feedback sheet……One more thing, I will tell you…. I based myself on the frequency at which teachers meet parents or use parent feedback sheets to rate the performance of teachers in the exercise of Performance Management System (PMS)."*

Most teachers revealed in their interviews that they subscribed to the policy of giving feedback to students in the form of constructive comments. However, they mentioned that they did call parents at school to discuss the learning attitudes and behaviour of their wards at school. Different teachers use different methods to give feedback to parents and students. It was also indicated in the teachers' interviews that teachers frequently used the school journal to send feedback to parents. The following is what was said in a friendly conversation with Cheng.

> *Very often I write a note to parents in school journals to show evidence of having taken cognizance of the note by putting their signature under the comment. I do it whenever the need arises. Concerning face-to-face meetings, I keep them only during the official distribution of result slips. But I do meet parents at school upon request. However, in urgent cases, I also phone the parents sometimes to inform them of the situation. In extreme indiscipline cases, some parents are called to the school.*

Mr Francois said the following,

> *I give feedback to students through corrections, model answers, marking, annotating, and putting ticks, crosses, emojis, and verbal debriefing. I constantly correct and mark essays. I do meet parents as and when required, but mostly I communicate through the student journal…*

6.4. Quality teaching context.

For the scope of this research, the following are considered as the teaching context - conditions of the staffroom, teachers' working conditions, recruitment of teachers, infrastructure, and ICT facilities. Based on the findings of chapter 5, 'quality teaching context' is the term used to refer to when the elements of teaching context are operated effectively as provisioned in the concept of QE.

6.4.1 Staff Room

As mentioned by Ohide and Mbogo (2017) that the quality of teaching experience is very much related to teachers' working conditions, teachers at PWSS revealed in their interviews that they were not happy with their conditions of work. They mentioned that the staffroom was not well equipped. Some reported that they did not have a proper chair to sit in and a proper place to eat during recess and short breaks, and they whined about not having proper access to internet facilities. It seems that the conditions of the staffroom do not match the standard expected within the notion of quality literature. Observation notes indicated that the conditions of the staffroom were not well equipped in terms of resources and space for promoting staff interactions, cooperation, and collaboration. The staff did not seem to have enough space for professional and personal development as they would have wished.

> Francois (Teacher): *I see big boxes in the staffroom. I can detect Wi-Fi signals in the staffroom but there are no passwords. The MOE has not extended the facility yet. It is just a showoff. In infrastructure, I may include internet facilities and ICT facilities.*

Field notes:

> *Field notes revealed that the staffroom at PWSS is about an area of 65 meters square and is not big enough to accommodate 63 teachers. Practically, only 45 teachers could find a place in the staffroom and every teacher has a personal space of 1.2 meters square, just enough to fit a table and a chair. The school has a staff of 63 teachers, therefore 18 teachers remain in their specialist rooms which include science laboratories, Art room. Design and Technology Workshops, Computer rooms, PE room, and Music room. Most of the teachers complain that the staffroom is congested during recess and short breaks and that the situation is unbearable in summer as there are no air conditioners. However, they acknowledged that they have separate toilet facilities, for both men and women, attached to the staffroom. The toilets are cleaned regularly.*

6.4.2 Recruitment of teachers and Supply teachers

PWSS is a state secondary school; so, all recruitment of school staff is done by the Public Service Commission (PSC). However, if there is a shortage of staff during the academic year, or if a teacher would take long leaves, more than two weeks, then the Department of Human

Resources of the MOE can recruit Contract Teachers also known as Supply teachers. Every year the MOE prepares a shortlist of Supply Teachers and calls them to work whenever there is a shortage in schools. These Supply Teachers are mostly fresh graduates from university and do not have adequate teaching experience.

Drawing from the rector's interview, it was indicated the policy of recruiting STs very often compromised teaching and learning at the school. While the rector opined that STs helped with replacement classes, nevertheless, they did not have adequate teaching experience for their own classes. The rector also mentioned that the recruitment of teachers is a very important exercise, as it allows him to select teachers having the right profile for the school. He believed that the practice of recruiting STs did not bring much stability to the school as STs did not really develop a sense of belonging to the school. However, this seems not to be the case at PWSS.

> *" I don't have the autonomy to recruit teachers as in the private schools. I just inform the HR department about the shortage and redundancy. They will send teachers after one month. I understand them…… you know… the transfer of teachers is a very complex exercise. Too many interferences, the Ministry, the trade unions of teachers, Rectors, the teachers and sometimes parents.. it follows certain logic for sure, but it is very bad for the school. For me, QE means quality teachers. It is the rector who knows well what profile of teachers he will need for his school. The supply teachers may leave any time of the year, whenever they are offered a permanent job. " Rector*

Analysis of the teachers' interviews indicates that ST is a factor that exacerbates the problem of student indiscipline at school. They also mentioned that many cases of indiscipline were related to ineffective classroom management of those inexperienced STs. While teachers' accountability for teaching and learning is central to the notion of QE, STs did not seem to have developed a sense of belonging to the school and did show any care for the school culture. They did not commit themselves to the vision of the school. Also, STs were not motivated enough by their conditions of work such as they didn't receive their salary on time and they did not have facilities such as sick leaves and casual leaves.

The following was what Nazleen said

> *Nazleen: Supply teacher…… Indiscipline can be related to the quality of classroom management of those inexperienced Supply Teachers. Recruiting supply teachers for teaching in a school is a blunder. It is an injustice done to the students. They do not commit themselves to the vision of the school. Supply teachers are not motivated by their conditions of work like they don't receive their salary on time and they do not enjoy facilities such as sick leaves and casual leaves.*

6.4.3 The school timetable – A day at PWSS

Observation notes revealed that at school the timetable, for both teachers and students, is very tight and loaded - there is no room for other activities like free periods for libraries, research, or non-academic activities. Everything is planned. There is no provision for talks, seminars, conferences, or any other non-academic activities. If ever there is a need for such activities, the time allocated will be deducted from the teaching time. In fact, according to the PRB Report (2013), a normal teacher is required to work 1190 minutes per week, whereas the Head of a department is required to work 840 minutes per week. So, a teacher has very little time for professional growth and rest. A teacher has only 385 minutes as non-contact time and from this non-contact time, very often she/he has about 160 minutes of replacement periods per week. Ezeonwumelu (2020) asserted that the timetable for teachers in some secondary schools is too compact that the delivery of QE is compromised. Allowing time in the school timetable for teacher collaboration eventually enhanced students. Ronfeldt et al. (2015) argued that teachers should be given adequate time to exchange among themselves meaningful ideas, experiences, and knowledge. They further mentioned, in the same literature that teacher collaboration is a key indicator for QE. However, it seems that at PWSS, the timetable planning at the school is not giving due consideration to teacher collaboration time is not allocated for it.

The following is an extract of the observation notes:

> *The bell in the morning rings at 0800 sharp and students run to their respective classes for the form period where the Form teacher takes the attendance. Every class has two Form teachers who alternately do the attendance register. The form teacher is responsible for maintaining discipline in the class; he or she is informed of all misbehaviour of the students in the class. Subject teachers normally report misbehaving students to their Form teacher and even parents will inquire about the behaviour of their wards from the Form teacher. The form teachers are those who prepare the final report cards for the students. They are the ones who generally comment on behaviour and make sure that all the grades and examination marks are well entered. The form period lasts for about 15 minutes. Many Form teachers use the Form periods to sign the student's journals. After the Form Periods, students move to their respective classes as per their timetable. The duration of one period is 35 minutes and after the first two periods, students get a small morning short break of 10 minutes. During the first short break, most of the students go to the washroom and also rush to the canteen. There is always a long queue in front of the school canteen during that first break. The bell rings at 0930 for the 3rd, 4th and 5th periods which also last 35 minutes each. And after the 5th period, there is a recess time of thirty minutes. Students used to eat their bread, or foodstuffs they have bought from the canteen. During recess, practically all students are out of class, walking, playing, and sitting. The whole schoolyard is full of students including the school gymnasium and the air is full of noise. It is during*

recess time that the School Superintendent is more vigilant because it is the time that students are most likely to hurt themselves. The School Superintendent is the one who should give first-hand care to the students. If there is a serious case of injury, a staff designated by the SS will take the injured student to the nearest hospital. At 1200 sharp the bell rings for the 6th and 7th period which lasts again 35 minutes each. Immediately after the 7th period, the bell rings again for a short afternoon break of 10 minutes. During the short afternoon break, the students go to the washroom. Many students choose to stay in their classroom during the SAB. At 13 20 the bell rings for the last two periods, 8th and 9th, of a duration of 35 minutes each. During the 8th Period, Subject teachers do the afternoon attendance register before conducting their classes. It is a very important exercise as it deters students from shirking classes. The school releases at 1430, except for grade 7 students who are allowed to leave school at 1425. About half of the student population return home by dedicated buses which are awaiting in the schoolyard. The same facility is given to students in the morning also. Despite this, about 5% of the student population arrive at school late by more than 10 minutes. All teachers have one afternoon off which means that they can leave school at 13 10. However, teachers who are free for the last two periods are allowed to leave school against casual leaves. All students have a working table of 9 periods of 35 minutes every day. The school is not open to students on Saturdays. However, non-teaching staff excluding the rector and Deputy Rectors should attend to ensure the cleaning of the yard, classes, and laboratories. Thus, students have 45 periods in total per week including 2 PE classes, 1 Form Period, 1 library Class, 2 activity periods and the rest are academic classes.

6.4.4 Classroom Setting

Drawing on the FGD with learners, it was indicated that classroom conditions were not conducive to teaching and learning. They revealed that certain classes were even devoid of basic facilities such as electricity. It is evident from the classroom conditions reported by the learners that the school is not promoting the notion of QE. One of the students of Grade 9 mentioned the following in a conversational dialogue.

> *...the size of the classroom is ok but there is no electricity. Sometimes it is very dark inside. I cannot see what is written on the board. I don't know whether the classes were cleaned as they are supposed to be. The school administration told us that the classrooms were cleaned but I have never seen the caretakers cleaning the classrooms as they should*

Teachers asserted in their interviews that the classroom conditions at the school were appalling. They revealed that the classrooms were not equipped with basic facilities that would enhance teaching and learning. For example, they mentioned that in summer the teaching conditions are unbearable. The conditions of the classrooms influence the way teachers teach, speak, behave and think (Steele, 1973; Ndlovu, S. & Muthivhi, 2013; Stadler- Altman, 2015). In the same literature, it is argued that attractive classrooms could have a positive influence on attendance

and also foster participation in classes. It is evident that the classroom conditions are not promoting the delivery of QE. Mr Francois (teacher) mentioned the following.

> *Mr Francois: Good teaching requires the right conditions, like well-lit and spacious classrooms. I have seen it here. A blatant example I will give you. We live on an island and the temperature rises to 30 degrees. How could you expect students to be alert? Here in many of the classrooms, there is no electricity. Teachers can't teach as well as students can't learn properly in summer as there is no fan. In such conditions, teachers can't teach and students can't learn properly.*

6.4.5 Infrastructure

School infrastructure includes buildings, equipment, civic amenities, laboratories, classrooms, playgrounds, libraries, and so forth. In Mauritius, the infrastructure of state schools remains within the purview of MOE and the Ministry of Public Infrastructure. To upgrade any facilities regarding public infrastructure, the MOE has to seek approval and funding from the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and this renders the maintenance procedures in schools quite uneasy.

Analysis of the rector's interview indicates that school infrastructure is central to the notion of QE. However, he mentioned that the notion of QE is relative because different schools used their infrastructure differently. For example, the rector believed that learning should be done in a conducive physical setting rather than in a stressful, alienating, chaotic, or dull school environment without basic amenities like electricity, fan, and light. According to him, QE would not be possible without proper infrastructure.

> *When I came here, the infrastructure was already here. Very little thing has changed. You are well aware that after my persistent request for the construction of a new block for additional classes and lecture theatre. This design dates more than 35 years… we don't have a lecture theatre. All the new schools have one. It is important to keep the same condition everywhere, in every school. Quality is also relative…… look at the painting, it is fresh. It was painted quite recently, some two years back. I have used the PTA fund for painting all these. I find it important. I could not intervene in all situations. In state schools, the MOE takes relatively a very long time to intervene. In this school, we have a severe problem of a power cut. Anytime we can have a power cut over here. I wrote to MOE to remedy the situation but in vain. It has been more than two years that we are waiting. Another thing, most of the cameras are not working, the whole block B is deprived of electricity. Even in the library, the air conditioner is not working because of this.*

Drawing from the interviews of teachers, it is indicated that the conditions of the school infrastructure played a lot in the psychology of teachers regarding health and safety. The precarious conditions of the school infrastructure worried the teachers much for their security

and that of the learners. At school, teachers, learners, and other non-teaching staff would have to walk along uncovered corridors which are sometimes very slippery and dirty when they have to move from one wing to another The roofs of classrooms leak. When it rains, water stagnates on the floor. Teachers asserted in a way a school with poor infrastructure would not be able to promote the notion of QE.

> *Mrs Nazreeen: The stairs are in a pitiable state. One of my colleagues slipped and fell on the stairs. Her right leg was fractured. Now we have to move fearfully on the slippery floor. What I am aware of is that the MOE has given instructions not to use it. We have to walk quite a long distance to go to the Canteen and we have only 15 minutes for the short break.*

Similarly, an analysis of the parents' interviews reveals that infrastructure remains a key indicator of QE. They mentioned that school facilities and school infrastructure were the determining factors for their school choice. They reported that they had the opportunity of visiting the schools in the vicinity before making a decision. They also indicated that a good school infrastructure would raise school attendance. For them, aligning the appropriate resources would contribute to the enhancement of the quality of education at school. However, it seems that there is a cogent need to upgrade the school infrastructure so as to improve the QE at PWSS. The following is what Mr Genevieve had to say

> *Mr Genevieve: I give an example. I know students who do not go to the toilets at school and they prefer to wait for coming back home to attend to these nature calls. How could you expect them to learn in these conditions? All the conditions should be upgraded and resources should be aligned, like toilets, schoolyards, and buildings so as to make the students at ease at school.*

As in a common Mauritian adage *'if you want to know somebody better, visit his toilets'.* At PWSS there are eight toilet blocks and four of them are attached to the specialist rooms including Science and PE departments. Out of the remaining four, two blocks are reserved for the school staff only. One for the male staff and one for the female staff. So, only two blocks of 20 cubicles are at the disposal of the 750 students. The toilets are very crowded during the short breaks and recess. The Occurrence book showed that students often complain that the toilets are not well cleaned and serviced. Consequently, many students prefer not to go to the toilets. In case of urgency, some students prefer to call their parents to come and request an early leave.

It is indicative that toilets are important parts of school infrastructure and ultimately contribute to the notion of QE. Parents also mentioned that not having proper, clean toilets and sanitary

conditions at school would hinder the participation of learners in the school program and may also lead to student absenteeism which is considered a serious concern for QE.

Mr Genevieve, a parent had the following to say

> *From the outside, it is beautiful and seems to be all right. Toilet forms part of the basic infrastructure. Not only toilets but clean toilets. There are two toilet blocks. Very often they are not well-cleaned. There is an incommoding smell emanating from the toilet. They are not well maintained. Even if Education is mostly about academic performance, all the conditions should be provided to help the students and raise their interest in school. I give an example. I know students who do not go to the toilets at school and they prefer to wait for coming back home to attend to these nature calls. How could you expect to learn in these conditions? All the conditions should be upgraded and resources should be aligned, like toilets, schoolyards, and buildings so as to make the students at ease at school.*

6.5 Quality School leadership

6.5.1 School Committees

A school committee is essentially a group of staff who have been delegated by the rector to complete a task for a common cause. At PWSS, various committees are formed to ensure the smooth and efficient running of school processes and activities. In a certain way, it is viewed as a decentralization of power in the form of delegation. It also serves as a platform where staff can develop appropriate managerial skills (Maketh, 2015). At PWSS, all committees are designed to operate with specific terms of reference. Examples are the Senior Management team, Pedagogical committee, Staff welfare committee, extracurricular activities, management committee, Health, and safety committee, Discipline committee, PTA, and school event committee. Members are appointed to the committee in a very democratic and fair manner. Members are generally invited to join a committee according to their choice of preference. However, they have to inform the rector and seek his/her approval.

It is indicative from the rector's interview that he believed that the school had much to gain when he used the distributive leadership style by delegating his power to committees for taking specific decisions. He also mentioned that the school would benefit from many educational advantages if the leader knew how to win the trust of his staff. He also revealed that when teachers worked together to find solutions to school issues, a culture of collegiality would be formed. He further asserted that when teachers worked in committees, they would be more committed to the school's mission and values, and would accept responsibility for implementing school policies and decisions. For example, delegating power to the PTA had enhanced many school activities including teaching and learning.

Rector: "As the rector, I do conduct class visits, using moderation form for teachers as a tool." The school has a committed PTA that ensures that the school is providing all necessary facilities that promote teaching and learning. The conference room and the staff lounge are examples. Teachers are continuously developed to meet the ever-changing curriculum. This is achieved in collaboration with the MOE and MIE ...My other role played as the principal is to motivate learners to instil in them a sense of responsibility toward their attainment."

Drawing from the teachers' interviews, they indicated that in the distributive leadership style of the rector, teachers were empowered in the decision-making process. They revealed that they felt important when their ideas were taken into consideration and as result, they were more committed to the tasks and duties assigned to them. They also mentioned that the participative leadership of the rector allowed them to grow professionally and allowed them to develop their teacher leadership qualities. Collectively, within a committee, they had identified many issues and had been able to make proper recommendations. For them, distributive, participative, or democratic leadership at school would be like a springboard for promoting QE at PWSS as it would improve, by large, teaching and learning processes and school life in general. The following was what Francois and Cheng had to say.

Mr Francois - We have committees and clubs. We have committees like the Staff welfare committee, pedagogical committee, health and safety, Discipline, and Senior Management Team. Although I am not too happy about the Senior Management Team. It is not that because you are a senior that your decisions would be exact. These are the structures put in place at the school to ensure QE. In this way, power is conferred to the committees so that they identify gaps in areas as delimited by the term of reference of the committee and come up with practical solutions.

Cheng: A few committees have been set up at school. And these committees bring changes. We have for example the canteen committee where we collect feedback from students. We have also the Emergency Response Team. It is a good thing because many positive changes have occurred. We now have a parent desk at school, and a school emergency response team, and as a consequence fire alarms have been installed. Personally, I formed part of the Canteen Committee. We bring changes as per the feedback obtained from the students. Based on the feedback, we can impose or come up with regulations concerning the quality of food items sold at the school.

6.5.2 School Vision

Field notes revealed that there was a big display board at the entrance of the school which mentioned the School's Vision. *"Inspiring youth to achieve and sustain excellence in the educational pursuit"* All the staff, students, parents, and visitors could read the school's vision, mission, and core values on which the school derives its pride and honour. Also, the vision

statement is written on the school letterhead for all correspondence. Observation notes revealed that all school documents had the school vision written in the header, including the lesson plans, scheme of work, the SDP, the school Journal, school copybooks, and notes of meeting among others.

Analysis of the teachers' interviews reveals that the rector was very adamant about sharing the vision of the school with all stakeholders. They also mentioned that without knowing and understanding the vision, both learners and teachers would be at a loss and would not be able to achieve the desired outcomes. The vision for them is a guiding instrument. A school community understands distributed leadership as an indicator of QE as it gives them a sense of purpose and direction. This is what Mr Sanjay had to say on 'SchoolVision'

> *Both teachers and students should have a clear understanding of the school's vision. Students should be able to fix their objectives so that they can pave their pathway to achieve them and also prevent them from being misled.*

6.6 Quality School policy

6.6.1 Free Book distribution, school materials and No examination fees policies.

Analysis of the document reveals that at PWSS, there is a government policy that all students of primary and secondary schools receive new textbooks free of cost every year. And there is no restriction on age or social group. Every student registered in the school or any school does receive all textbooks prescribed by the MOE. This shows an important enactment of policy pertaining to QE. In addition to this facility, the government waives all examination fees for all students who are taking part in the SC and HSC Cambridge International Examination. This no examination fees policy extends to all categories of learners for their first sitting only. However, observation notes reveal that at the school level, a series of processes were put in place to facilitate the implementation of this facility. For example, both teaching and non-teaching staff mobilized efforts and resources to disseminate information to parents and learners. They also participated collectively to prepare and distribute and collect factsheets from parents to the Examination body.

Similarly, The National Empowerment Foundation(NEF) has been set up by the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity, with one objective among others to extend support to low-income and vulnerable groups by providing them assistance and opportunities for their social and economic development. As such, students whose parents are

registered under the Educational Needs Scheme put in place by the NEF receive school materials which include 3 sets of school uniforms, 2 pairs of shoes, 2 pairs of socks, 1 bag, notebooks, stationeries, school accessories, and a monthly stipend. Drawing from the observational notes, it was indicated that the school's PTA has extended the same facilities to all needy students whose parents are of the same category but who are not registered with the NEF. (School Policy document, 2014). It was also revealed that the school's staff collectively extended their help at all discretion to these categories of students. This seems to be a good example of the enactment of the notion of QE as it promotes 'inclusiveness and democratizing access to education as articulated in the literature on QE. Within the notion of QE, inclusive schools are those that cater to the diverse needs of all students and also ensure that students receive fair treatment (Paterson et al., 2014). The school community of PWSS has expressed concerns about adopting good equity initiatives that seek to fulfil the ambitions of inclusion, maybe in the broadest manner to promote the notion of QE.

6.6.3 The School Development Plan

The School Development Plan (SPD) is a three-year strategic planning document prepared by the whole school community for enhancing the quality of the school's instruction and student learning. It outlines what the school wants to improve and how it intends to do so. The first pages of the document talk more about the school profile and also about the committees and clubs operating in the school. It describes in detail the school's vision, mission statement, and values on which the school stands. The second part of the document constitutes a SWOT analysis, a Need analysis, and a Need assessment. The third part deals with the planning section (Huzefa, 2017).

At PWSS, the SDP is a prerequisite for the school self-evaluation exercise as stipulated by the Quality Assurance and Inspection division. There is a policy that requires schools to submit their SDP by the beginning of the second term. The planning part is further divided into two sections. The first one is about planning done by the administration to improve overall school effectiveness which involves the upgrading of infrastructure. The second part of the planning section is about departmental planning. This exercise is based on the performance analysis of students.

Data analysis of teachers' interviews revealed that the SDP is an essential tool for enhancing the educational processes that will eventually impact positively on educational outcomes.

Teachers mentioned that SDP showed how the school prepared itself to deliver QE. They also believed that SDP was a planning project that roped in all major stakeholders for their contribution to improving school processes and outcomes. All the members of the school community were deeply involved in an attempt to fill gaps that were stifling school development. This accounts for how the school community enacts the provisions of QE at PWSS. This is what Neezam (teacher) had to say

> *Another important point to note that explains clearly how QE is enacted in our school is the SDP and SIP. The SDP shows the intention of the school as a community to impart QE in the school. It shows the involvement of each and every one. Look at the counter desk projects.*

Drawing from the parents' interview, it was indicative that parents trusted the teachers' ability to bring the required changes to enhance teaching and learning. They believed in the empowerment of teachers and also asserted that the SDP was a good enabler of QE. They further indicated that they believed that QE would be imparted at PWSS if the SDP is realistic and prepared by teachers. Most importantly, QE would be achieved at PWSS if the SDP is implemented. Mr Genevieve stated the following regarding SDP:

> *The SDP is a good initiative to improve QE. It would be important if the plan is executed and put into practice. I heard about it, but I maintain that it should be put into practice and it will contribute to the development of the school. If teachers have contributed to writing the plan, certainly they might have written good things for their department and the school. I don't know whether it is feasible. I heard that the teachers of the Art department have made a request for a projector in the art room and it has been installed. This must benefit the students.*

6.7 Concluding Thought

This section presents what has been done in this chapter regarding what provisions of QE have been enacted at PWSS. All the data produced from the different sources were subjected to a rigorous process analysis so as to produce accounts that describe the procedures, processes, and arrangements that were put in place to realize the themes identified as constituting elements of QE.

CHAPTER 7: Analysis- Patterns and threads (part3)

How QE is experienced at school?

7.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, data produced from various sources and via various methods were presented in themes that are directly related to the second research question. The data were arranged after a rigorous first-level analysis.

In this chapter, the same procedures of the first level analysis have been applied to data produced with regard to the third critical question: How QE is experienced at school? Again, the presentation is done thematically so as to make understanding the phenomenon easier. The themes developed were 'Student achievement, 'lived curriculum', 'discipline', 'reputation of the school', 'Sports Day', 'School Assembly', 'Food Day', 'Prize giving ceremony, 'Community engagement', 'Canteen' and 'extra-curricular activities'. Each of these themes represents moments and places during which students, teachers, parents, and the rector were actually experiencing QE. These experiences were expressed as happiness, joy, satisfaction, glory, pride, etc. and the chapter ends with a concluding thought.

7.1 High student achievement

In this section, data are presented based on how the school community experienced QE concerning student achievement. Students, most certainly, come to school for various purposes and one of them is academic achievement. So, it becomes tempting to know how the school community feel about students' achievement and how is it celebrated at the school.

Analysis of responses of learners to question 10 (what makes you feel proud about your school?) in the questionnaire reveals that most of the learners (participants) of grade 10 mentioned that they felt happy and proud when they obtained good results in examinations. Literature has very often linked good results with QE. So, in a way, the learners were experiencing QE when they have acquired the required competencies as certified by those examinations (Szell, 2013).

Analysis of teachers' interviews reveals that teachers experienced QE when their students produced a high academic performance in examinations and assessments. It was also indicated that teachers at PWSS gave a lot of importance to academic results, more precisely at SC and

HSC. The data emerging from the interviews of the teacher participants shows that high academic performance makes teachers feel proud as it conveys to them a signal of having accomplished their assigned tasks and beyond. Teachers were most likely to believe that a good academic performance on the part of their students would project a positive image of them (teachers) in the public gaze. Their feeling of pride accentuates when the results (SC and HSC) are published in the Media.

> Francois said, *"Of course, I do relate extraordinary performance to QE. When I meet students who have succeeded, those who are contributing actively to society with a sense of duty and who seem to lead a balanced life. When we record 100% pass in French at the SC level and when we record a high number (more than 10) of students obtaining distinctions (grade 1). This is where I see QE.'*

As for Cheng, he said that he considered student academic performance as the main purpose of education. "

> *Every year in January and February, students, parents, rector, and teachers show their eagerness to know the pass rate at SC and HSC levels. These are the moments that the school cherishes the most. This is celebrated by the whole school community. Firecrackers and students singing fill the whole atmosphere with happiness."*

It was unanimous among the participants that students' achievement is one of the most expected outcomes of the major stakeholders of the school. They all expressed their satisfaction and pride when the school recorded high student achievements. They were all referring to students' achievement as high academic performance. Emerged data tend to establish that good academic performance is a strong indicator of QE. In a way, it also shows, to some extent, that a school or a student who has failed to achieve a good academic performance would equally mean lacunas in the education system.

Concerning students' achievement, the rector had this to say.

> "*Of course, obtaining a good result in the examinations. I feel proud when my students succeed in their examinations. It gives value to what we are doing."*

Mrs Mahadwa mentioned,

> *"I would feel proud of my child and the school when my son would receive good academic results at HSC and move to university. Or when he gets a seat at UOM. Only then I will feel that the education received is of good quality."*

Similarly, observation notes revealed that some parents chose to accompany their wards to school to collect their result slips, and those who obtained excellent academic performance

would distribute sweets to the teachers, and staff of the school. This shows the pride, satisfaction, and degree of importance that the parent holds for academic performance.

Figure 5: Celebration of laureate at school 2009

Figure 5 (photograph, archive 2009) demonstrates the fervour of the celebration. The students were expressing their joy when they heard on the radio that the school had got a laureate (science side).

On the whole, the finding that emerged from the analysis of the data shows that quality is experienced at school by any member of the school community when learners give very good performance in examinations. The higher the accreditation of the examinations is ranked in the world, the more intense the feeling of achievement of QE.

7.2 Lived curriculum

Pedagogy means all the approaches and strategies employed to facilitate teaching and learning. It also refers to the theory and practice of learning including the processes that influence the social, emotional, and psychological development of the learners. It also involves the process of mastering the system of acquiring knowledge and cognitive skills through interactions between teachers and students in a conducive learning environment over a learning task (Mynbayeva, 2018).

As a researcher, I felt it inappropriate to ask students of grade 9 about pedagogies. I opted to observe a class of grade 9 Blue doing French with Mr Francois.

> *The class was very attentive and silent. Mr Francois was standing up near the whiteboard which is almost at the centre of the wall facing the students. He was reading a paragraph from the textbook. All the students were following from the Textbooks. Mr Francois wrote a few words which he picked up from the textbook on the whiteboard. He*

asked the students to write the meaning of the words based on their use in the context. In fact, there were five words. A noise suddenly started to rise and then came slowly to the normal level after the loud intervention of Mr Francois. They were busy looking at and studying the task given to them. After two minutes many students, especially those sitting at the back and those near the wall have already abandoned the task given to them. Mr Francois walked around helping students who were having difficulties. He might have helped some 20 students in the class. After ten minutes he asked whether all have completed the task. The majority of the students raised their hands to express an affirmative answer. He called the names of students to speak their answers. Students who knew the answer seemed to be very interested in the correction exercise. Some students were copying the answer from their friends. A few students were left completely on their own.

The data that emerged from the observation notes shows that the teacher understood that the students required more individual attention. The teacher displayed a more caring attitude towards the learners by calling all the students by their names and by allowing them time to express themselves more freely in class. Despite it being a typical learner-centred approach, the teacher demonstrated firmness in his attitude and flagged the students that he was the one taking charge of the class.

Another observation was the class of Mrs Nazreen.

From the start of the lesson, the eagerness of students to participate in the class was very visible. They demonstrated high respect for the teacher. Their attitudes and behaviour were natural and came out as a result of the good teacher-learner relationship established by the teacher herself. The high esteem for the teacher's results could also be associated with the way she unfolds the curriculum and the way she praised the efforts of students. The teacher used both gestures and remarks to encourage and reward students. Mrs Nazreen always looked out to create a situation, over the whole lesson, to compliment the students with a rewarding comment to boost their confidence in the learners. Later, she told me that she believed that recognition of success is never exaggerated. She also mentioned that comments should be positive, proportionate, and deserving. She communicated with them (students) in friendly tones and showed high personal professional standards and also demonstrated respect for the student's efforts. Interestingly, students showed great enthusiasm in following the instructions and completing the tasks assigned to them. The class was positively noisy; however, to some extent teaching and learning were ascertained.

Both teachers showed excellent teaching skills and they enabled all pupils to learn by constantly assessing, motivating, and challenging them in a very supportive and calm learning environment. They made

good use of the whiteboard as an effective tool to promote learning. They had been engaging and motivating them with learning tasks that matched the level of their interests and abilities. The learning environments were calm and purposeful. I noticed that learners were confidently attached to their learning because of exceptionally effective teaching. The dialogues entertained with students informed the teacher when to challenge or support students to a higher degree. In addition, it was observed that resources were used exceptionally well by the teacher to support the concepts being taught and as a consequence enable pupils to make progress in their learning. During all the lessons, the teacher gave pupils opportunities to work independently. When questioning pupils (participants), they admitted that the lesson was very clear and interesting. They also mentioned that they were very satisfied with the teaching methodologies. The pupils recognized that the teacher was very caring and patient with them. They also expressed that they would like all teachers to adopt the same teaching styles. After the class, the participants expressed their positive feeling about their learning experiences. There were good humour and respect. The teacher expressed they believed that learners' experiences were enhanced based on their relationship and mutual trust. Students' behaviours were very good as they were fully engaged in the lesson. Mrs Nazreen had created a very purposeful balance between listening, explaining, and doing. The teacher used very subtle techniques to ensure a highly respectful and positive learning culture in the classroom.

Again, the above observation shows how learners (participants) were engaged in their learning process. The data shows that the relationship between the teacher and the learners contributes to the making of the conduciveness of the class environment. While in such a classroom, the teacher, the learners, and the content to be taught or learned were fixed, the resources and the teaching approaches would bring variety to the teaching and learning experience. Though resources were very limited, they were embedded in the pedagogy. The class was very participative; all the learners were happily engaged in the activities prepared for them. After having observed the classes for more than one hour, it became evident to me that learners were very happy and satisfied with the classroom experience and that was due to the caring attitude of the teacher. Visibly, pedagogy is the key factor that contributes to the enhancement of teaching and learning and ultimately to the improvement of academic performance.

7.3 Discipline at school

School discipline has many meanings. For the scope of this research, discipline would be associated with the process of developing self-control through a series of activities put in place to enable learners to express their feelings in more productive ways. (Dupper, 2010, p.15) Observation notes revealed that there were various methods put in place at the school to curb

indiscipline. Indiscipline, in this context, is referred to anything that prevents teaching and learning to occur the way they should. It includes deviant behaviours that are not in conformity with the rules and regulations of the school and the constitutional laws of the country. At PWSS, observations revealed that CCTV cameras were watching the behaviour of students, orderly supervision of teachers, and classes of recess detention. The following is the observation carried out in the recess detention. Normally, upon the request of teachers, recess detention is given to learners who had either misbehaved in the class or had not completed their homework or classwork.

> On that Thursday. I went there a bit earlier to capture the whole essence of that process of disciplining students through 'recess detention'. *As soon as the bell rang at the end of the fifth period, students rushed to the detention class to queue up in front of the door and waited for the arrival of the teacher. About 25 students all with a detention slip in their hands. After five minutes, the teacher came, and all the students were silent. They entered the class in a very orderly way. They took their seats randomly in the class. The teacher collected the slips and recorded their attendance. Students started their work with minimum disturbance. Although detention is viewed as a punishment, students were allowed to eat in class. The teacher walked around to check whether the students were completing the tasks given to them. Only a few students were permitted to go to the toilets.*

The observation notes revealed that discipline, as an approved set of behaviours that conform with the rules and regulations of the schools, was viewed as the enabler of teaching and learning. The excerpt of the observation notes demonstrated that students were very conscious of the importance of discipline. The attitudes of the students in the recess detention class were indicative that learners understood the obligation to conform to the rules and regulations of the school. It is also indicative that learners were aware that their misbehaviours were not acceptable and were punishable. The way students asked for permission to go to the toilets and the way they moved out again revealed that students were in a way acquiescent to embrace those values imparted to them.

> Francois mentioned, "*when students are developing into responsible and capable citizens. This is where I experience QE. when I see students exhibiting acceptable behaviour in classes and outside school. When we don't register indiscipline cases like severe fighting, severe bullying, drug consumption, and suicide. Then I can say that QE is working."*
>
> Cheng said, "*Discipline at school means when students behave well in the class and when students value what you teach them. We do not want recognition from staff. When students value our work, then we feel we*

> *are dispensing QE. If students are not able to connect with you, I don't think there is QE."*

The interviews are again indicating, just as in the observations, that discipline is an important enabler of teaching and learning. Teachers expressed that they would like to see learners showing acceptable behaviours and valuing their teachings. Teachers mentioned that they feel proud of such attitudes of learners. They were also referred to as the experience of QE. Mr Francois mentioned that QE is also about developing students into responsible and capable citizens. In a way, he was expressing discipline as a desired educational outcome of QE. This argument contributes to the delamination of the notion of QE.

7.4 School reputation: QE in the public gaze

Walsh & Beatty (2007), cited in Skallerud (2011), defined the reputation of an organization as a favourable general estimation that the organization has in the public domain. Interviews of teachers reveal that winning prizes in national school competitions and school projects are showcases of the school's reputation in the public gaze. Mention was made equally to academic achievements. They referred reputation to as an experience of QE. The following is what teachers had to say.

> Neezam said, *"I can say that I experience QE when students participate in inter-school competitions. Imagine you win a prize! Even the third prize. Winning in an inter-school competition, like the 'Inoved' project, brings so much satisfaction. When the Jury awards a prize to a participant, it indicates that you are giving what students need. At this moment you feel QE has been imparted to the children.*
>
> The same feeling was shared by Francois who said, "*When students win intercollege competitions, be it academic or non-academic activities. Or when students participate in non-academic activities during Sports day."*

The data that emerged from these extracts from teachers' interviews show that teachers really experience moments of pride when people outside the school recognize what they are doing. The arguments conflate the idea of winning non-academic competitions with that of high academic performance and refer to them as contributing factors to the reputation of a school. In the public gaze, a good reputation symbolizes QE.

7.5 Transiting to tertiary

The majority of the learners (participants), especially Grade 12, expressed in the Focus Group discussion about their interest to pursue tertiary education. They thought that having a degree at hand would open more opportunities for them. While some of the students were not willing

to join university immediately after secondary school, they still showed their intention to join later.

> Fadil: *Going to university is interesting. It means a better job and a better salary*
>
> Ashley: *University is not for now. Maybe later.*
>
> Jevin*: For me ...hmmm. Going to university. The job will be after the university*
>
> Jean: *" Of course, going to university is a big achievement not only for us but for the whole school. I think this explains why they invite-only university graduates to dignify our prize-giving ceremony. It is obvious."*

The data that emerged from the FGD shows that students tended to relate their experience of QE with the admission rate to the university. The students expressed that they considered going to university a big achievement and they viewed it as an indication of QE. They also regarded going to a university as an honour. Similarly, Mrs Mahadwa, indicated how much she values the idea that the school is preparing and encouraging students to join the university. She viewed the transition to university as a symbol of academic success.

> Mrs Mahadwa: "*I feel very happy when my son wins any prize whether in academic or nonacademic activities. I would be happier if he wins in an academic subject. I give much importance to academic success.* Or… *when he gets a seat at UOM. Only then I will feel that the education received is of good quality".*

The data revealed that most of the teachers expressed that QE is experienced when learners obtain the adequate qualifications to be admitted to the university and most importantly to the top-ranked university. Other factors like completion of the secondary cycle and employment were also mentioned.

> Neezam expressed the following: *"QE is shown when students are enrolled in the top-ranked university. What the students do after university is also associated with QE."*
>
> Nazreen *mentioned, " I view, to some extent, QE in terms of transition rate to university I understand also that some students show reluctance to pursue studies."*

The School Rector also expressed that the rate of transition to university is a matter of pride. He also mentioned the completion rate as an indicator of QE. However, he emphasized more on the choice of pursuing tertiary education as a better indication of QE.

> *"Of course, obtaining a good result in the examinations. I feel proud when my students succeed in their examinations. It gives value to what we are doing. The transition rate is very important for us. We like to see students completing the secondary education cycle and going to university and of course to any other post-secondary institutions."*

Not only teachers and students, but the rector also viewed the transition rate to university as the desired outcome of QE. It was observed that the school honoured their students who were successful graduates by inviting them as guests for their annual prize-giving ceremony. It was also indicated in the interviews that the school community

7.6 Sport day

Thursday 20th April 2017.

Sports day at PWSS has always been a special event that runs down the tradition for years. It is very celebrated by the school community with great fervour. It took them, the teachers and students, more than two months to organize such an event. It is one of the main activities of the school as it involves a big budget and the whole school community including parents, the rector, teachers, students, officers of the MOE, people from the locality, ex-students, and executive members of the PTA. For all the students (participants), the Annual Sports Day is their favourite school activity. It is one of the school events during which students demonstrate their sense of belonging to the school. It gives opportunities for all the students to showcase their multifaced talents in sports and are rewarded with trophies. At PWSS, at the very beginning of the year, students and staff are regrouped randomly under four houses: Red, Blue, Yellow and Green as the colours of the Mauritian Flag. Each house has an equal number of members, a 'house captain', a 'vice-captain', a 'housemaster' and a 'vice-housemaster'. The House captains are students whereas the Housemasters are teachers. They all work together to encourage a maximum number of participants in all the events so as to increase the chance of winning the competition. The Annual school Sports Day is given its due value by the whole school community. All parents are invited to attend and to support their children. On average, every year, about one hundred parents, about seventy old boys and about 85 % of the students attend this prestigious school function. Also, many old boys of the school attend the Annual

Sports day to support their house and also to reminisce about their old good times spent at PWSS.

Figure 6: Celebration of Sports Day

> *As a mark to commence the Sports day, the Rector of the school seized this opportunity to speak on the importance of sports and wished good luck to all the participants. On that day, the playground was decorated with colourful flags to give festive look. It took them(a group of staff and students) almost two weeks to prepare for the occasion. The housemasters and house captains held meetings with their members for instructions on participation, discipline on the playground and tips for winning. They collected money to buy decorative materials, and flags and to dress their mascots. The Annual Sports Day has always made the school more lively and used to be a source of inspiration and learning.*

The data indicate that the students believe that the Annual Sports Day is a good way for boosting fraternity among them and also to enhance a teacher-student relationship. It helps students who are academically weak to restore dignity and respect vis-a-vis their peers and other students.

Drawing from the data produced from the interviews, the rector revealed that he considers the sports day on the same foot as any important examinations. QE would be experienced in schools where non-academic achievements are given the same consideration as academic achievements. The preparation for Sports Day requires a lot of effort and collaboration of parents, teachers, and students. The rector said the following with regard to Sports Day,

Concerning sports activities, I consider students who have performed well on Sports Day equal to academic achievement. All students are invited to participate in all activities offered on Sports Day with the consent of their parents. Every year we hold Sports Day during the first term. It is a very big event for our students and staff. It requires a long preparation. Parents are invited to support their children. Yes….More than seventy per cent of the students participate in Sports Day. This is how I experience QE.

In the FGD, most of the students including Irfan, Akshay, Kaushik, Vince, Asley, Jevin, Fadil, and Jean mentioned that they experience QE during activities such as Sports Day. They also expressed that it is indeed a day they enjoy their school life the most.

Kaushik - I really enjoy myself during the sports day. We support each other. It is a moment I can't describe. It is very intense..it is what we expect from quality education.

Jean - For me, it is a moment of bliss, being with our friends on the playground is so much fun.

The Annual Sports Day also serves its purpose of promoting, to some extent, holistic development and decompressing the heavily tense atmosphere prevailing in school. The same feeling is shared among parents and staff.

Figure 7: Winning team in Football Competition

My observation notes also indicated that Sports Day portrayed moments of happiness and collaboration among the school community. In addition, students and teachers showed their enthusiasm and excitement in both the preparation for and also during the event. They demonstrated strong adherence to the school culture and strong social bonding among students and staff. Sports Day at PWSS was viewed as a rewarding time for all the culminating efforts for achieving excellence in non-academic activities. It is indeed regarded as an embodiment of various outcomes other than academic performance. It includes the physical, emotional, and social development of learners. The whole school community came together to share moment of happiness and pride. It was manifestly an experience of QE. It was a demonstration of an

escalation towards holistic development through excellent performance or just the participation of learners.

7.7 The school assembly

At PWSS, the rector holds the morning assembly every Monday in the school gymnasium. At about 9 a.m., all the students present at school stand in rows in the school gymnasium and wait for the message of the Rector. Each Grade Master would stand near their class to ensure order.

> *On that day of observation, the hall was filled with the noise of excited students who were eager to start the week. Students of the Prefect Body and Student Councils walked around the hall to ensure that all students are in proper school uniforms and were behaving well in their rows. The noise suddenly gave way to a dead silence as the Rector walked into the hall. The national anthem ensued by all students under the guidance of the Music teacher. They all sang in one voice that resonated in the hall like in a choir. Then, the Head Boy read aloud the school prayer proudly in chorus with the students. On that day, the Rector read quite a short message based on discipline and made a few announcements. Latecomers were not given access to the hall and were kept waiting near the small lounge near the entrance. After the assembly, the rector took them to his office and talked to them.*

On the same day, during a friendly conversation, the rector said the following,

> *In a way, the morning assembly is a means to communicate with the students. I use it to make necessary announcements. I also give students the opportunity to demonstrate their talents and also to valorize their individuality. I use the assembly as a platform to help students develop their presentation and oratory skills by sharing personal experiences, talking about any issues at school, commenting on Newspaper headlines or reciting poetry, etc. I also invite some renowned persons and educationists to address the students to enrich them with their knowledge, experience and expertise. For me, it is my class to teach them discipline, and moral values and instil in them values and the culture of the school.*

The data that emerged from the observation notes and the friendly conversation with the rector is indicative that the morning assembly plays an important role in preparing students for the day by invigorating their sense of belonging to the school and the spirit of citizenship. Making the students practice and read the National Anthem and do the school prayer demonstrated the processes to inculcate in them the school culture and arise in them the love and respect for their country. The morning assembly seemed to be an activity to discipline students and at the same time to showcase how the learners have imbibed the school culture and values. The learners

stood up silently in rows and their behaviours were being watched over by teachers and prefects. The first discipline check was done in the Morning Assembly.

Figure 8: Morning Assembly

While morning assembly is considered to be the first communication channel for the student, it was also an experience of QE in discipline, patriotism, and a sense of belonging. The school assembly was also a demonstration of the leadership style of the rector. He announced all kinds of achievements of the school and the protocol as per the standing order. During the Assembly, students are reminded of their responsibilities, and duties so that they can develop a sense of purpose.

7.8 Food day

Figure 9: Students eating during Food Day

Food day is a fundraising activity that the school community organizes every year so as to complete certain school projects and for the upgrading of school infrastructure. It is a very special day as it involves the whole school including staff, parents and students. On that day, various activities like a discotheque, horror room, games, cooking, and selling of snacks, and sales of finger foods are organized at school.

> *It was a Thursday, 22nd of June, 2017 at 9 0'clock in the morning. As a researcher, I find it unwise to miss such an opportunity to meet the whole school community in an out-of-normal school context. In the morning, students were already queuing in front of a cashier's table waiting to buy tokens. On that day, students could buy any items with tokens equivalent to Rs. 10, 25, 50, and 100. The whole school was filled up with the noise of excitement and contentment. Some parents arrived at school quite early before 0800 a.m. They brought with them cooking utensils and cooking ingredients in a big carton box. There was no ringing of the bell. Students and staff, together with parents, moved directly to their respective stalls. They were busy arranging, decorating, and preparing their respective stalls. The corridors were well decorated with fancy banners and oriflammes. A lot of invitation posters were affixed on the wall of corridors persuading students to visit their stalls. Quite loud music was also filling the atmosphere with a festive mood. However, students were all dressed in their proper school uniforms.*
>
> *At 10 a.m., The Rector, accompanied by the school superintendent, walked around to ensure the smooth running of the events. He stopped at every stall to talk to the teachers, parents, and students. By that time, a long queue was already waiting in front of every stall to be procured their most desirable foodstuff or activities. The school was very lively and the ambience was electrifying. All the school community*

members were in a state of happiness. There was a good level of social interaction among parents, teachers, and students.
At about 13 45, all students were gathered in the gymnasium for a film show. They waited there until the bell rang. Meanwhile, all teachers and parents were busy doing the cleaning and recording the amount of funds raised. The total fund collected was almost sufficient to finance the projects earmarked for the current year.

The observational notes revealed that, apart from raising funds, the food day and its preparation offered opportunities for students, teachers, and parents to work collectively. It also showed the involvement of parents at school. It also portrayed the level of commitment and collaboration among the school community. It was also observed that everybody was seemingly happy and enjoying the moments. While some students were enjoying the food among friends, others were showing their talents in different booths like horror rooms, discotheques, etc. There were a lot of exchanges between teachers and parents. The change of roles of learners could not be unnoticed. Some of the students were given the responsibility to take charge of some booths. The whole story could be summed up as a team-building activity. The data that emerged from the interviews of parents revealed that Food Day organized at school is a day where the whole school experience QE. Mrs Mahadwa mentioned the following,

> *"We would like to have more activities where parents are involved. I would appreciate if I could work with the staff. We are invited only for fundraising activities like food day.*

Drawing on what the rector said, QE is experienced when the whole school collectively works as a team involving staff, parents, and students to produce desirable outcomes. This is what the rector had to say,

> *Hmmm (thinking) I used to engage them in several activities like preparing report cards for the school, Sports Day, and Food Day.*

Mr Cheng mentioned the following:

If students are not able to connect with you, I don't think there is QE. The connectedness between students and teachers does matter a lot for QE. This is what the school should work on.

Similarly, teachers also revealed that QE is experienced at school when students and parents work collaboratively with teachers in any school activity to achieve the desired result.

7.9 Prize-giving ceremony

At PWSS, it has become a tradition that the prize-giving ceremony is celebrated together with music day in June, but not necessarily on the 21st as decreed by the United Nations. This is a

day that has all the reasons to be duly celebrated as all efforts are being recognized and rewarded. It is a day of great prestige for the whole school community. The following is an extract of my field notes.

> *It was on Friday 30th of June 2017 that the school was holding its annual prize-giving ceremony. The gymnasium was embellished more than ever with all shapes and kinds of colourful decorative oriflammes. It showed culminating efforts of many people including students, teachers, and some parents. I guess it took them a long time to prepare. The freshly painted backdrop reminded me of the days I saw the Art teacher helping some students in its making.*
>
> *At 0830 sharp, all students were seated in the beautifully decorated hall. The first row of chairs was reserved for the chief guest, the Rector, the Senior Educator, and executive members of the PTA. Two lady teachers were guiding parents to their seats. The second, third, and fourth rows were reserved for the prize winners and their names were already written on the chairs. All the prize winners were elegantly dressed in their proper school uniform, and this time with a red tie.*

Figure 10: Celebration of Prize-Giving Ceremony

> *Normally they don't wear a tie. At about 0850 a.m., the chief guest came in, accompanied by the Rector and the two lady teachers. They both took their seat in the first row. The master of the ceremony announced the arrival of the chief guest and claimed a big round of applause. Immediately, everyone stood up gracefully for the national anthem. It was a thrilling moment. And just after, a classical welcoming dance item was gracefully executed by five students of grade 7. I could imagine the number of hours of training and repetition to give such a*

performance. The whole audience applauded. Within minutes ensued the rector's address. His speech was delivered in a high tone and with a degree of seriousness. The audience was in dead silence. After him, the master of the ceremony invited the chief guest, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mauritius, for his address. Students were very attentive to his speech. The prize winners were called to receive their trophies and certificates from the hand of the chief guest with big applauses. Parents and friends were capturing beautiful and proud moments with their cell phones. The prizes were offered to awardees by category - grade by grade. The short intervals of ten minutes between the prize-awarding were elegantly filled with items of songs and dances. These performances seemed to be much appreciated by the audience as they received bigger applause.

At about 1115 a.m., after all the prize winners had received their prizes, they were invited with their parents for a toast with the rector, chief guest, and teachers. While, parents and prize winners were exchanging words with the rector, teachers, and chief guest, the remaining students were served refreshments in the hall. It was a moment of glory. The grandeur of the ceremony showed the importance attributed to students' achievements for the school community of PWSS.

The photograph can speak for itself. It shows a moment when prefects were walking in the alleys to maintain discipline. It was taken during the moment when the audience was waiting impatiently for the arrival of their chief guest. The whole of the above narrative shows the importance that the school community attribute to academic success. Despite only the best academic performers in their respective subjects being rewarded, the school was celebrating with them. For them, they were experiencing moments of glory. The way they applauded the awardees was not only joyful but also signified satisfaction with the mission achieved. The musical items placed during those intervals were rather intentional as they showcased non-academic achievement. These items were not only meant for entertainment but rather to demonstrate the degree of excellence reached by the performance in their non-academic endeavour. The non-academic performers were also applauded with equal respect and consideration.

Drawing on the interview of the Rector, it is indicative that Prize giving ceremony is a moment where the school experience QE. The whole school community would be together to celebrate the success of the learners, teachers, parents, and rector in the most desired outcomes. This is what the rector had to say,

Two moments that I relish the most are Sports Day and Prize Giving Ceremony. Yes, it gives me a feeling of completeness and like I have

achieved what I was supposed to achieve. The whole school becomes one. Just incredible.

Similarly, it was also indicated in the teachers' interviews that the Prize giving ceremony is a moment of displaying satisfaction, glory, and pride by the school. The event is a celebration of all the achievements of learners during the year- in both academic and non-academic aspects.

Mr Jayen had the following to say

Definitely, we are satisfied when we see the performance of the students. We do celebrate success by organizing a prize-giving ceremony, though not all students are receiving a prize.

Nazreen said, *"I would say when my students are graduated with good academic results and when the school helped them to develop good life skills like good communication skills and discipline. When we won the prize in sports and in extracurricular activities. We feel as if we win the prizes together with our students. We share the success."*

7.10 Community engagement

Community engagement is referred to as a set of socializing processes where students are constructively involved with the people of the community through existing organizations. Community engagement is regarded as a means to help students develop social competencies. (Christens and Zeldin, 2016). At PWSS, it is in its tradition to receive elders from the community at school. It was an initiative of the prefect body a long time back. This activity occurs on alternate Thursdays.

<u>Observation notes: Thursday 8th of June 2017.</u>

I was in the company of two teachers who were supposed to watch over and ensure that there was nothing illicit in what they were doing during what is called community engagement. The lieu was as usual, in the hall just behind the conference room. Drawing on the observation notes, it was indicative that there was a good collaboration between students and community members. There was a lot of exchange of ideas and thoughts taking place among people of generations apart. It is viewed more as a transfer of cultural values.

It was on a Thursday during the fifth period. I entered the room number labelled as G01. There, I saw three old ladies whom I know well sitting informally around a table. They were chatting casually about this and that. Snacks and soft drifts were all set on a table and were ready to be served. A few minutes later, the head boy accompanied by five prefects came in. The students greeted all the invitees and joined them in their conversation. In less than five minutes, other people in the community joined the activity.

Figure 11: Students playing games with Elders of the community

> *On that day there were only eleven people who came. At one table the ladies were playing Scrabble and at the other table, the remaining five members, 2 ladies, and three gentlemen were playing dominoes. They were served with refreshments. There were moments of laughter, showing respect, casual chat, and care. They were in a very relaxed mood.*

Figure 11 shows a photo that captured a moment of celebration and happiness. It shows the degree to which students were involved in positive social interactions. It demonstrates the values inculcated in the learners. The exchange seemed to be amusing for both students and the elders of the community. Visibly, the students demonstrated to have developed both social and emotional outcomes.

> Rector said, *"The goal of life is not only to obtain certificates. I think it should be about developing respect for others, living with others in a community or society, and accepting differences. Respecting the environment and animals. These are the objectives of life. Passing examinations is secondary."*
>
> Mrs. Mahadwa: *Apart from academic development I would like my son to become a good citizen, and to develop other skills like communication skills, soft skills, and social skills. I think that the school has the responsibility to bring that development to all children.*

<u>Observation notes Friday 26th May 2017.</u>

> *It was on Friday, 26th of May 2017, during the 5th period, all the students were gathered in the hall accompanied by their respective Form teachers. In the hall, three men, physically well-built were standing on the podium. They were talking with the rector. On the*

> *screen behind them, was displayed a picture of a drug addict in a deplorable condition. The rector introduced to the student these three men as members of the police force who deal with school cases only. They were in casual wear. They were talking about the consequences of indiscipline and the ill effects of drugs. They showed a series of pictures of drug addicts and their conditions of living. The session was about 30 minutes long. Some students were very attentive while others showed some kind of annoyance. However, all of them attended the session till the end. The level of noise was quite low, but the level of interaction was good. The question time was mostly dominated by teachers.*

The observation notes revealed that the school offered a variety of learning experiences to the learners. This extract demonstrated a provision of making use of engaging people from the community to pass on the desired values to and to induce in them the expected behaviours of learners. Similarly, the data that emerged from teachers' interviews revealed that QE is experienced when students respect the environment and care for their health. The main concern of parents and teachers is that teaching and learning could take place in a drug-free school. The following are interview extracts of teachers.

> Neezam, *I sincerely experience QE when students are disciplined and well-organized. Also, when students value the importance of education and give due consideration to their likes and the environment. Health consciousness and quality living*
>
> Nazreen, *Many talks on the ill effects of drugs. I don't know whether they are effective, but I think I can say it affects QE.*

7.11 Canteen - Feel good as an expression of quality Education.

The PWSS has a small canteen which is situated in the backyard near a big mango tree. It is an integrated part of the building housing the school library. It is in fact, just on the ground floor below the library, but it is relatively smaller - about one-quarter of the size of the library. The paint on the inside and outside walls of the canteen is quite dull. The beige colour paint is almost washed away. Almost more than ten years since the walls of the canteen have not received fresh paint. The canteen can be accessed by a large window and an aluminium door. Students are not allowed to enter the canteen. So, whatever food item they want to purchase, they have to do it from the window opened for that purpose. There is an open space in front of the canteen. During recess time and short breaks, it is very crowded. It is only this canteen that

serves the whole school population. Also, there is no adequate sitting arrangement for the students. The absence of proper benches for sitting makes the area even more crowded. Students eat their food while walking and talking with their friends. Wrapping paper thrown all over the ground makes the area dull and dirty. Unsurprisingly, there are only a few food items available for sale at the canteen. Students do not have a variety of choices. The school canteen is managed by an outside member of the school community. She got selected through a rigorous exercise, and in order to operate, the manager should have obtained the required authorization certificate from the ministry of commerce and from the ministry of health. The food items on sale at the canteen are recommended by the ministry of health. Furthermore, at the school, there is a canteen committee that sits every month to cross-verify whether the items on sale conformed to the health and food act. There is a microwave to heat their food. Bread, Chinese noodles, and Indian 'Faratas' are the main food items sold at the canteen. No food is prepared in the canteen as the use of a stove in the canteen is strictly prohibited. All preparations like cooking the food were done outside the school. According to the Food Act (2011), schools are not authorized to sell soft drinks to students because of their high content of sugar. From the front window, one can easily see the price lists of items available, and on a nearby board, one can easily read the menu of the day. During recess and the short breaks, a large number of students used to sit on the benches eating their food. There was a lot of noise that filled up the atmosphere during the break times. It conveyed to me that the students were happy and enjoying the place. The ambience was very cordial and showed good adherence to the school. An important observation is that the students love their canteen area. This is demonstrated in the 'graffitis' on the wall – '*nou baz'* (Figure 12) means 'our place' in English. It is a lively place that shows love and a sense of belonging to the school. The place is a springboard for fostering social behaviours and social bonding.

Figure 12: Canteen area

7.12 Extracurricular activities

Extracurricular activities are lessons where teachers meet students for enrichment, recreational and social interaction. Extracurricular activities are in fact non-examinable activities such as sports, music, arts, drama, and dancing that are not included in the official curriculum that is taught at schools (Annu, 2013; Kapur 2018). At PWSS those extracurricular activities are done during the activity periods that are designed to serve the purpose of ensuring, to some extent holistic development of the students. Observation notes revealed that at PWSS all the upper classes have at least four slots of 'activity periods' every week. More essentially, teachers schedule meetings of clubs during these activity periods. The following are examples of clubs operating at PWSS: Environmental club, School Orchestra, Football Club, MUN Club, Integrity Club, UNESCO club, Film and Drama Club, and Game Club. The office-bearers of the clubs are students only. Students are supposed to manage the activities of the club themselves but under the supervision of teachers.

Figure 13: Students playing Carom during extracurricular activities.

During my observation, I had the opportunity to meet some of my participants in grade 12 in their clubs. I used to meet them on Wednesdays during the 4th and 5th periods. Ashley, Jevin, and Shaniil are members of the Environment Club. The teacher supervising the club was Mr Jayen who is also a participant in the research. There were fifty-seven members in the club. Their objective set for the year was to get recognition as an 'Ecoschool' from Reef, Non-Governmental Organisation. They had toiled hard to obtain the Green Flag, which symbolizes a great achievement in the project. Shaniil is a very active member of the club and he told me that he dedicated a lot of his time to the project.

> *As the bell rang to signal the start of the 4th period, all the members ran to the Biology laboratory. There, the secretary did the attendance by roll call and thereafter he read the plan of work to all members. Students were assuming a dominant role in the clubs. In fact, they were taking care of most of the work while teachers were mostly assuming supervisory roles. On that Wednesday, all the members were divided into three groups and each of the groups was assigned a specific task. One group had the task of cleaning the schoolyard, the second group was visiting the classes and was entrusted to lead the sensitization campaign, and the third group was cleaning the endemic garden. I was in the third group with Shaniil and Ashley. I was surprised by the level of commitment of the members. They have brought the necessary gardening tools to clean the endemic garden. Some of the students were removing the invading weeds while others were putting fertilizers, compost soil to the plants. The endemic garden was very clean and tidy. The plants were well labeled. The whole endemic garden was well fenced. I could feel the connectedness among the students and they were all working with great excitement and enthusiasm. On the same day, I joined other groups of students who were playing Carom and doing some mural paintings. The same feeling of joy and enthusiasm was felt. Students were all in a state of playful learning.*

Figure 14: Students doing a mural painting

The observations were reconstructed to depict how the students were engaged in non-academic activities referred to as activity periods. The students showed great enthusiasm and interest in the non-academic activities. They were in a way engaged in activities that supposedly contribute to instilling social skills. Figure 13 shows students playing Carom in a very relaxed mood. These expressions are not difficult to catch. They were engaging in an activity that would help them to develop necessary social skills. The games demand to follow certain rules and also demand respect for others.

Drawing on the data that emerged from the teachers' interviews, it was indicative that teachers believed that extracurricular activities are out-of-class learning experiences that would trigger the development of other skills and competencies that an individual would need to live harmoniously within a society. It is indicated in his interview Mr Sanjay expressed that he felt that he had accomplished his duties as a teacher. Sanjay indicated the following in his interview:

> "*QE is not restricted to academic results only. It should guide students on how to build their personality and to equip them with a critical thinking ability so that they can view the world with an open mind and above all to bring about their holistic development.*"

In the second picture, Figure 14, students were seen to be enjoying another learning experience. They were collaborating to achieve a common goal. It can be referred to as a team-building activity. Teachers expressed that both students and teachers experienced happiness while working during activity periods. It was also revealed in the emerging data from the interviews

that teachers believed that the extracurricular activities are opportunities for students to show their talents and at the same time would allow them to develop a sense of connectedness to the school and among students. They also indicated that these activities were experiences of QE.

> Cheng*: "when students are given opportunities to prove themselves in extra-curricular activities like sports, drama, and inter-school competition. It is good to give opportunities other than academics for students to show their talents. Not all students do well in the examination, so other activities like sports, music, drama, performing arts, etc. should be valued equally. When the school wins any inter-college national completion like football, Innoved, Drama, Slam, Quiz, MUN, Drawing, short movie shows, etc. at school we celebrate all the achievements of the students. This is announced in the morning assembly or some special assembly. Students often make short video clips and circulate them on social media to demonstrate their pride in having achieved something. Achievements of a few students, yes, but are celebrated by all students. Imagining the happiness of the students when we won the interschool volleyball competition."*
>
> *Neezam, "I experience QE when I feel that students are receptive to what I teach. Especially when there is cooperation among educators. For example, when I work on projects. I feel proud when my students were doing the mural painting.*

Parents also expressed their experience of QE at school through extracurricular activities. They viewed curricular activities as important as academic performance, but more as enablers of holistic development.

> As for Mrs Mahadwa*: "I would also feel happy and proud when my son would obtain an award in a competition like debates, Duke Award and MUN. I believe that allowing students to participate in these extra-curricular activities would help their development to face the real world. I would feel proud when I see my son performs during the music day.*

Drawing from the data analysis, it is indicative that Extra-curricular activities are purposely organised at school for the development of non-academic skills of the learners that are referred to as holistic development. For the whole school community, when learners are engaged in extra-curricular activities, tend to express these moments or lessons as an experience of QE.

7.13 Concluding thought

To sum up, the experience of QE has a variety of tastes, colours, and flavours. Different activities can lead to different experiences of QE. However, whatever the nature of the activities, QE was often linked with happiness, satisfaction, and pride. Experiences of QE were positively connoted. QE was associated with the well-being of students and was viewed as an enabler of the adaptability of learners to function well in society. It triggers the emanation of feel-good factors from individuals.

CHAPTER 8: Unpacking Quality Education

8.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings that emerged from Chapter 5 which are related to the first critical question: '*What notions of QE does the school community espouse?'* The chapter is a dialogue between the findings from Chapter 5 and the literature. This chapter involves a thorough and rigorous examination of the findings around the notion of QE, including the themes and the subthemes that have emerged from the first-level analysis, which are (1) Quality education outcomes, (2) Quality teaching and learning, (3) Quality teaching context, (4) Quality school leadership, (5) Quality school policy, and (6) 21st-century skills. The theorization attempts to shed more light on the 'how' aspects of the theme – the QE relationship.

8.1 Understanding the fluid nature of QE

One finding of the research revealed that the meaning of QE varied significantly among the members of the school community. For one student, QE means holistic development, whereas for another student it is related to employability. Similarly, one parent linked QE with good academic results; and for another parent, QE means acceptable social behaviours. Clearly, the variation of meanings of QE seems to be trending among teacher participants. This finding concurs well with Unterhalter (2019), who also found that QE is a dynamic concept that keeps on evolving. While this study shows that the variation in the meaning of QE is due to the different agendas of the people with regard to QE, Unterhalter (2019) highlighted that the variation in meaning was attributed to the point that understanding of QE is evolving. In a certain way, QE was featured as not rigid, in that it is readily open to changes.

Learners are all different and therefore in various phases of development. Learners come from a variety of backgrounds, including those of family, culture, and financial situation. Thus, their agendas for coming to school are certainly different in accordance with their aspirations and motivations. Learners think of school as a place where opportunities will be given, so that they can accomplish their dreams and aspirations in some unique ways (McDonald et al., 2011).

Bogin (2015) viewed human development from a biocultural perspective, explaining that human development is on a multilevel and requires all these biological, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical needs to be fulfilled. For example, the learner who revealed that QE is linked with holistic development might think that achieving an academic certificate would not be enough to make him a good citizen or a successful man in society. Similarly, other learner participants have their own reasons for holding such aspirations and motivations. Eventually, all learners believe that a QE should in one way or the other provide the facilities, knowledge, and skills to help them become or reach their goals. In this way, QE has gained its hues and shades from the expectations, intentions, and motives of the users. However, it is also argued that QE varies across different nations, provinces, districts, villages, communities, schools, and parents (Narang, 2014; Janmaat, McCowan & Rao, 2016). Schweisfurth (2011) was adamant that the issues of complexity around QE cannot easily be resolved − there are too many stakeholders, each with their own agendas intricately involved. This finding tends to present QE as something that can alter from one version to another. QE is a fluid-like concept − it can certainly flow through different perspectives of the members of the school community. Therefore QE appears to become a construct that has emerged from the multiplicity of human orientations in society.

8.1.1 Educational outcomes

8.1.1.1 High academic performance

This research indicates that the whole school community, including parents, teachers, learners, and the rector tends to relate QE to high academic performance, despite having diverse agendas. The school community mentioned that high academic outcomes are directly linked to employment security which is synonymous with a happy life after school. This argument concurs with the beliefs of Kumar, Agarwal, and Agarwal (2021) who assured that academic performance is given immense importance in society despite being an amorphous idea or concept. And in a similar trend, Narad and Abdullah (2016) determined that academic performance remains the primary goal of all education systems. These researchers revealed that academic performance can be considered the nucleus of all education systems around which all other components revolve. Since ‘academic performance’ is expressed by quantitative indicators such as test scores, the tendency to compare results is real; and looking for the highest academic performance is evident (Mulhall et al., 2002). However, Ma et al. (2018) explained that the public tends to judge both the QE and the ability of the learners on academic performance. Moreover, in the same literature, it was stated that parents believed that

society would use high academic performance as an indicator to judge their parenting. Furthermore, high academic performance is very much believed by all stakeholders, including the school community, to have a high return on investment in education (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2018). This provides substantial evidence for the great importance given to the 'laureate system' in Mauritius, underlining the importance of the high academic performance of learners. This research shows that considerable bursaries are allocated to the highly ranked students at HSC. Also, schools in Mauritius which deliver the best academic performance are rated as high-demand schools.

8.1.1.2 Attainment of non-academic and non-cognitive performance

Another finding of this research revealed that the school community considered non-academic achievements an integral part of the educational outcomes of QE. This finding concurs with the outcomes of much research, including that of Kautz et al. (2014), Stankov & Lee (2014), and Bryman & Bell (2019). In the same vein, Khine (2016) stated that in judging the quality of an education system decisions should also be based on non-academic achievements. While the school community showed their beliefs that the development of non-cognitive skills at school would be beneficial for developing a positive attitude at school, at the workplace, at home, and in society in general, Palardy (2019) concluded that the development of non-cognitive skills would have a positive influence on academic performance as well as the well-being of the child. This finding also indicated that the school community of PWSS believed holistic development, discipline, and citizenship to be non-academic achievements. This argument corroborates with Petway et al. (2016) who decided that non-academic achievements regroup a long infinite list of non-cognitive skills such as psychosocial skills, social-emotional learning skills, soft skills, 21st-century skills, personality, character skills, and grit.

8.1.1.3 Holistic development

In this study, holistic development has been cited by the majority of participants as an integral part of quality educational outcomes. Several learners (participants) insisted that they expected more than academic development at school. They are not satisfied with the proportion of time and resources allocated to the development of non-academic-holistic development. Learners believed that more time and resources should be allocated to non-academic development. Holistic education is indeed a promising pedagogical approach to unlocking the potential in a person to bring about one's broadest development (Mahmoudi et al. (2012). Concurring with the findings of this study, Gidley (2010) added that the school curriculum should cater to all

developmental needs of learners; and holistic education should be given greater consideration in the school curriculum. Likewise, Kaladevi (2020) asserted that the role of schools should be to prepare learners to live in harmony with the environment and with other beings. The school community of PWSS expressed its concern about giving weight to holistic development in a school that intends to promote quality education. Obviously, for a better world, learners at school should be exposed to all aspects of human experiences: intellectual, physical, spiritual, emotional, social, and aesthetic (Singh and Sutton, 1996; Miller, 2004; Mahmoudi et al., 2012; Kaur, 2017). In fact, the concept of holistic development of learners has become an essential educational outcome and is embedded in many discourses on QE. For instance, even the Incheon Declaration (2015) concurs with this finding, by mentioning that schools should provide opportunities to learners to complete the secondary education cycle; and for acquiring literacy and numeracy skills, and other relevant learning outcomes including both cognitive and non-cognitive skills. In the Mauritian context also, schools are encouraged to provide all learners with learning experiences that foster holistic development (MOE, 2016). However, holistic education is very difficult to implement at PWSS or in a similar secondary school which is largely dominated by important examinations such as NCE in Grade 9, SC in Grade 11, and HSC in Grade 13. Nonetheless, schools or educational systems are too examination-oriented and therefore cannot support the holistic education programme. Schools would rather mutilate holistic development in the learners, their structures and resources being aligned more towards the promotion of academic development (Amukowa, 2013; Wachiuri et al, 2017)). At PWSS, of the 45 periods (lessons) only four are dedicated to holistic development. For example, learners at PWSS have two lessons of physical education weekly. Observation notes showed that almost one-third of the lesson is devoted to instruction. It was also observed that not all students were involved in sporting activities such as football, volleyball, and basketball. Hence, some students were left on their own or simply prefer to watch others playing. This finding highlights a limitation in the theoretical framework of Tikly &Barrett (2011) which views QE at the point of intersection of policy, school, and home environments; and not exactly at the point at which QE is supposed to be received and at the place where learners are engaged in learning. According to Tikly & Barrett (2011), there are other places where learners can avail themselves of such facilities to bring out these non-cognitive developments.

8.1.1.3 Values and discipline for developing citizenship and conformist attitudes

Other desired educational outcomes expressed by the school community were values and discipline. Parents and teachers believed that a school is a place for learners to be disciplined,

and where values are acquired. While one teacher participant mentioned in the interview that it is imperative for young people to learn how to live harmoniously together; another teacher emphasized the importance of favouring social interactions that are based on values. This finding agreed accurately with the opinion of Stephens (2007). Teachers also believed that without values and discipline, the school would be chaotic, and teaching and learning would be severely compromised. Values and discipline are known to play a key role in improving students' academic performance. This finding corroborates many studies in Africa and elsewhere (Dawo & Simatwa, 2010; Gitome et al., 2013; Sureiman, 2010; Tikoko & Bomett, 2011) in other African countries (Ehiane, 2014; Keating & Rossouw ,2009; Bodovski, Nahum-Shani, & Walsh, 2013; Duckworth & Seligman, 2006; Ning, Van-Dammme, Yang, & Gielen, 2013; Pasternak, 2013; Whisman & Hammer, 2014; Zhao & Kuo, 2015). In the current study, discipline encompasses personal attributes associated with obedience, politeness, orderliness, social behaviour (i.e., ability to interact with other people), and academic competence (completing academic tasks). Teachers and the rector believed that without proper discipline at school the learners would be distracted and would not be able to concentrate on other important educational outcomes. These participants further asserted that values inculcated in learners, such as hard work, honesty, integrity, and respect for others, would keep them on track as they followed their educational goals. This concurs with the ideas of Gitome (2013). The practice of instilling values and discipline at the school is decided on and planned, as cited in Rahimi and Karkami (2015) who stated that disciplined students in whom values are ingrained are more likely to focus their attention on academic work. This is supported by the behaviourist approach to QE which shows more concern for human development and social change (Barrett, 2006). This practice seems to contradict the humanist approach, which argues that learners should have the free will to develop traits and personalities they are predisposed to (Goodwin, 2008). It became apparent that teachers were using discipline and values as operant conditioning in facilitating teaching and learning in the classroom. Learners' behaviour is shaped and controlled by a stimulus; this could be either a reward or a punishment (Duchesne & McMaugh, 2016; Crain, 2015; Khatib, 2013). The school, PWSS, endeavours to motivate learners and to boost their confidence to work hard even through persistent difficulties, thus achieving high academic performance, as mentioned above in this chapter (Singh, 2011). Moreover, learners who display values and discipline are more appreciated by teachers, the rector, peers, parents and relatives, and society in general. This is viewed as a social return on investment, the school acting as an agency which moulds learners as expected by society

(Barbosa & Pessoa, 2010). The discipline and values seem to be dichotomous in a school system promoting QE. These features serve both the purpose of achieving quality outcomes and at the same time representing quality outcomes of QE. Values and discipline also seem to be more related to the development of social behaviour that attempts to conform; such behaviour can lead to good citizenship. A good example is illustrated by students offering school prayers and singing the national anthem respectfully and under rigid control.

8.1.2 High academic performance obfuscating other outcomes

Based on the first level analysis, in Chapter 5 high academic performance was identified as one of the most desired educational outcomes by the school community. This finding concurs with the findings of Gichohi (2015), who argued that academic performance is a purposeful endeavour of the school community. Along the same line of thought, Moloko Mphale (2014) asserted that the high academic performance of learners counts most for the parents, the learners, and the school community in general because it projects a good image of the school to the community. Tentama & Abdillah (2019) contended that high academic achievement gives a competitive advantage over low performers when it comes to employability, and this explains why it has become a current practice among school communities to consider high academic achievement as the most imperative educational outcome. As the analysis of data is unfolded in Chapter 5 of this research, it becomes ever more evident that the school community is more inclined towards making 'high academic achievements' a valuable element of QE. In fact, it is the most desirable academic outcome, as advocated in Dhaqane (2016), who agreed that there is a strong link between high academic achievement and satisfaction of the whole school. High academic performance at the secondary education level is viewed as a key achievement: this feature gives learners an edge in the job market as well as in obtaining a seat at the university, as suggested by Pan & Lee (2011). These researchers also asserted that high achievement would raise confidence to face daily life issues. In accordance with this, Mckinney et al. (2003) reflected that low academic performers had fewer choices of employment and earned a lower salary. Naturally, therefore, strong competition is set up among secondary schools to raise enrolment Pinto & Ramalheira (2017). Parental choice and the reputation of a school in the public gaze are largely influenced by academic performance (Allen & Burgess, 2010). Similarly, a good academic performance in the secondary education cycle permits an easier transition of students to the tertiary education cycle, including universities. The number of seats in universities is limited, which makes the competition more robust (Sulphey et al.,

2018). In addition, Ma et al. (2018) opined that society tends to use high academic achievement as a criterion by which to judge parenting. Students are compelled to strive harder for better academic performance, hence making academic performance the most desired education outcome. This mentality is ingrained in all children at a very early age.

Today in Mauritius, this belief has become systemic. Everybody, including parents, teachers, learners, sponsors, policymakers, and members of society understands high academic performance as the most important educational outcome, whilst the other outcomes of schools are relegated to some less important positions. The same condition applies three years later at the end of the lower secondary education cycle. Learners will secure a place in the best schools (known as academies) based on their academic performance at the NCE examination pitched at the level in the NQF (Mauritius). Similarly, the criteria for promotion from Grade 11 to Grade 12 and from Grade 13 to post-secondary institutions depend very much on academic achievements. In this way, ‘ high academic performance’ as a QE outcome has, to a large extent, influenced school activities and processes, including school timetable, school life, school infrastructure, duration of lessons, assessment, and evaluation, and the school curriculum in general. In a certain way, people are compelled to operate within a construct that promotes high academic performance as the main purpose of schooling. Therefore a synthesis of all the findings regarding educational outcomes would read: In QE, all aspects of education will gain the same attention and will be given the same importance.

8.1.3 21st-century skills educational outcomes

Given rapid social, scientific, and technological changes, the U.S. is continuing its shift from an industrial- to an information-based economy. As such, in addition to technical and subject-
matter expertise, the majority of jobs being created require an increasingly broad skill set to deal
with the demands of technological advances and a globalized workforce (Hart Research Associates, 2015; Kirsch, Braun, Yamamoto, & Sum, 2007).

The rapid shift from an industrial to a technology-based economy demands a workforce that has a broad set of skills (Kirsch et al., 2007). Based on Duckworth & Yeager (2015) and Pellegrino & Hilton (2012), these required skills are referred to as 21st-century skills which include a combination of interpersonal, intrapersonal, cognitive, and ICT skills that are malleable and relatively stable over time. This research offered findings that relate quality

education to the development of 21st-century skills. The findings of this research reveal that the school community shares a belief that a school under the purview of quality education should ensure the development of 21st-century skills. Skills such as those used in ICT and communication would make the learners both employable and eligible for further education. Suarta et al. (2017) posited that the 21st-century labour market requires individuals with employability skills such as communication skills, decision-making skills, problem-solving skills, social skills, etc. However, Sparber & Fan (2012) and Hwang (2017) contended that traditional school curricula do not cater to the development of these 21st-century skills; and that this is at the root of unemployment. Unsurprisingly, there is no argument in the theoretical framework of Tikly & Barrett (2011) matching this research finding because the need to do so was not yet felt; and the focus was mainly on EFA goals and MDGs.

8.1.4 Quality teaching and learning

8.1.4.1 Appropriateness of school curriculum

These research findings reveal the importance given by the school community to the appropriateness of the school curriculum in its quest for QE. The school community believed that a well-developed school curriculum would give learners a sense of purpose and responsibility. The community also expressed their confidence that learners could become, with an appropriate curriculum, both employable and fit for developing society, at the same keeping traditions and culture. Learners agreed that schools are responsible for the development of their employability skills. This finding concurs with the ideas of Rehman and Mehmood (2014) who commented that employability skills are essential for securing a job or even for navigating a career. It is also mentioned that employability skills constitute, indeed, a competitive advantage in the job market. According to Collins (2018), employability skills include soft skills such as communications skills, interpersonal skills, use of ICT, attitudes, and managing emotions, inter alia. It is also noted by Hadad et al. (2014) that it would be beneficial for learners to acquire those skills earlier in school. However, in order to achieve these required skills, curriculum developers should include these learning outcomes that would lead to the development of these skills (Drew & Priestley, 2014). It is further argued in the literature that many of the recent graduates from schools seem not to have these skills. Priestley (2016) believed that, under the purview of QE, the curriculum should be suitably designed to equip learners with the right attitudes, skills, and knowledge so as to be competitive in this world. This shows that appropriate curriculum design and development are linked with the desired educational outcome, and eventually linked to QE.

Another finding of this research highlights that the school curriculum should be designed to enable learners to develop their abilities for restoring or maintaining traditions, values, and customs of society. Both Yazdani et al. (2017) and Bhardwaj, Tyagi & Ameta (2015) reported in their respective literature that a school curriculum should be designed to facilitate learners to acquire learning experiences that help them to build a society-driven value system. In this process, all conditions: home, policy, and school environments, are aligned, so that learners can develop an understanding of this value-based system when having to make judicious decisions. Along this line of thought, schools should be encouraged to develop their own curricula. In so doing, they can integrate programmes such as environmental education, civic education, and climate change. As foregrounded by this research, learners should gain knowledge and skills so as to cope with the realities of the countries. Nevertheless, the school curriculum should be well designed to cater to the development of the self: physically, emotionally, and socially; and to teach learners to live in harmony with the environment. It is the duty of the school community to think and make the best decisions for the overall development of their students by structuring the curriculum as more meaningful and relevant (Dolapa, 2013; Conde and Sanchez, 2010).

These findings promote the framework for the QE of Tikly & Barett (2011), who argued that a relevant and inclusive curriculum constitutes quality inputs for QE. However, again, this research contended that quality content or quality curriculum is not an enabler of QE, but rather, it forms an integral part of QE. According to Education Statistics (2018), in Mauritius, about 30% of the learners enter the job market after completion of the secondary education cycle. Thus, secondary schools such as PWSS should prepare their learners to become employable by equipping them with the necessary employability and life skills. Curriculum development should become an essential school endeavour. We are a multiethnic country: such considerations should be extended while drafting or designing the curriculum. The school curriculum is, first and foremost, designed to produce useful and meaningful educational outcomes; and also to realize various demands of society and government in terms of policy (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Similarly, the school curriculum has a functional role in purpose, aims, content, and process to address issues pertaining to politics, economics, society, and culture (Watkins & Kritsonis. 2008).

8.1.4.2 Understanding the caring pedagogy approach

This research finding highlights the importance given to the pedagogical approach by the school community for QE. The school community believed that a good pedagogical approach

that places the interests of all the students at its heart would promote QE. For instance, it was expressed that there is some dissatisfaction with the pedagogy; and it was also indicated that learners' learning difficulties had not been taken seriously. As for teachers, they mentioned that the finding corroborates those of Jacob et al. (2017) who argued that the role of a suitable pedagogy in raising the interest of learners is of vital importance. Teachers asserted that there is a direct link between pedagogy and learning outcomes. Okyere (2018) conveyed that in the quest for knowledge under the purview of QE, a suitable pedagogy that enhances the learning experiences of learners is valued by both teachers and learners. The school community equates a caring pedagogy to quality education. This supports the ideas of Magrini (2015), Okyere (2018), and Aoki (2004) that a caring pedagogical approach would place the learners and their learning interests and needs at the very core of teaching. Teaching should not be equated to reading a book aloud to the learners; rather, it should enrich the students' learning experience by showing the right attitude of caring, while also motivating learners to become more curious (Sasson Kalir & Malkinson, 2020). This finding agrees with the provisions of the theoretical framework of Tikly & Barrett (2011). In the framework, the need for caring is aligned with the social and emotional situation of the learners. However, this research shows that the caring attitude of the teachers should arise naturally from the teaching; and it should be expressed to all learners.

8.1.5 Understanding 'quality teaching context'

Another finding of this study is that the context in which teaching takes place at PWSS, according to the school community, forms an important constitutional element of QE. Based on Richards & Farrell's (2011) views, the teaching context is indeed very complex in itself. The context relates to all the conditions for the development of teachers, including the training of a teacher, the respect and status of a teacher, and the working conditions of a teacher, amongst other aspects. In this research, the school community refers to the teaching context mostly as the teachers' working conditions, school infrastructure, and the use of ICT. This research revealed that the school community of PWSS considered the teaching context the quintessential arena of QE. For example, teachers (participants) believed that QE cannot be dispensed at a school at which teachers' working conditions are not taken seriously or are not given due consideration This finding aligns with the thoughts of Kofi et al. (2013) who insisted that teachers who work in pleasant conditions that boost their motivational level are most likely to create a greater impact on their delivery and students' learning. Giertz (2016), and Iliya and Ifeoma (2015) also share the same views that teacher motivations, both intrinsic and extrinsic,

would enhance both teaching and learning; and would eventually contribute to the achievement of QE. However, these researchers also listed eight threats to teacher motivations that were considered a negative impact on QE. Such included a heavy workload, low salary, no recognition, no teacher accountability, no proper career development, poor infrastructure, unheeded teachers' 'voices', and lack of resources. Similarly, Ohide & Mbogo (2017) stressed that teachers seek pleasant working conditions such as a clean workplace with adequate facilities and a reasonable workload and class size; otherwise, they feel demotivated and frustrated. The above-mentioned researchers added that frustrated and demotivated teachers have a strongly negative return on QE. Their findings also revealed that the school community is aware that contract teachers, commonly known as supply teachers, do not work for a protracted period; and as a result, they do not develop a sense of belonging to the school and its culture. Under such conditions, Fyfe (2007) purported that contract teachers do not commit themselves to teaching; and this causes a significant dilution of QE. Also, teacher commitment (Collie et al., 2011) has a positive bearing on teacher efficacy (Savolainen et al., 2020; Green et al., 2018).

Pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) is another aspect of the teaching context that was revealed in this research as a determinant of quality teaching. Quality teaching is directly linked to QE (Gauthier & Dembélé, 2022; Haseena et al., 2015). One teacher, Mrs Nazreen, asserted that classes with a high PTR are very difficult to manage and have a negative impact on the quality of teaching. This argument is supported by Kalemba and Mulauzi (2020), who considered that a high PTR in a class would have a negative influence on teaching styles, student participation, and student discipline, which would ultimately spill over to student performance and QE in general. While focusing on one aspect of quality education − expanding access to education − another aspect such as teaching context is negatively impacted (Moluayonge & Park, 2017).

Another finding of this research is that infrastructure as a component of the teaching and learning context is central to improving quality education. This research reveals that the school community of PWSS views school infrastructure as a crucial part of QE. This finding corroborates the findings of Kapur (2019) who emphasized that an appropriate infrastructure would boost the motivation of individuals to carry out their duties more efficiently and effectively. Kapur (2019) posited that infrastructure development is an important feature in improving QE. However, this researcher continued that infrastructure is comprehensive.

Infrastructure includes classrooms, buildings, library facilities, computer rooms, laboratories, technology, and equipment, conference room, staffroom, and so forth. In the same vein, Adede (2012) asserted that a proper infrastructure at school would fortify the environment for improving teaching and learning. Mngare (2011) and Mwanngi, (2011) agreed that infrastructure, for instance, a classroom with adequate resources such as good ventilation, lighting, whiteboards, and well-painted walls would collectively enhance the learning experience of students. In fact, the consideration of adequate infrastructure as the baseline of QE is cited in much research (Mngare, 2011; Mwanngi, 2011; Okeno, 2011; Adede, 2012). Undeniably, all aspects of school infrastructure do matter for QE. Schools nowadays require staff, both teaching and non-teaching and learners, to remain at least six to seven hours at school. Therefore the school environment, as much as the teaching context, should provide little to no stress (Bhunia et al., 2012) for all concerned. In Mauritius, as at PWSS, the schools are equipped with almost all the required infrastructure. A school will only be allowed to operate if it has an approved school-readiness clearance (SMM, 2009). Little is known about whether, in reality, the mentioned infrastructure or facilities do serve their purpose. For example, the 35 minutes per week of library time seems totally inadequate for improving QE, as indicated by O'Connell (2017). While Tikly and Barrett (2011) highlighted the importance of library classes in enhancing literacy, these authors did not emphasize sufficient functional modalities of libraries in their framework for QE. This research stresses not only access to the library in the school, but also the improving of its facilities to meet the learning needs of both learners and teachers.

8.1.6 Leadership as a component of QE

This research offered a finding that places distributive leadership within the structure of QE rather than in conjunction with it. The school community of PWSS believed that distributive leadership is essential for quality education. They believed that distributive leadership at school would foster collaboration among school community members and would empower staff and

parents to make decisions for school activities and processes related to their expert areas. As a result, this would bring more benefits to the whole school and would most certainly improve desired educational outcomes. This finding supports that of Dampson et al. (2018) who reflected that, if well harnessed, distributive leadership could yield better students achievement, but would surely contribute to upholding a positive learning environment at school, thus knitting the fabric of school life. However, in the Mauritian context, rectors are almost compelled by the MOE to make use of instructional leadership when it comes to managing public schools (SMM, 2009). Deference to the MOE is a requirement in the scheme of service for rectors of state secondary schools (PSC, 2020). The education system in Mauritius is currently undergoing an enormous reform; and heads of schools are requested to perform top-down instructional leadership to have better control of school processes, as suggested by Ng et al. (2015). This author believed that, in phases of change, instructional leadership would play out best − this style would allow better control over staff and students in accustoming them to the change. Hallinger and Murphy (1986) cited in Ng (2019) insisted that instructional leadership would demand that educational leaders assume leadership functions. Such would be simply to improve student attainment and discipline by setting school goals, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring students' progress, chairing committees, and suchlike. However, Hassan, Ahmad & Boon (2018) contended that the return on investment in instructional leadership is insufficient. These authors added that the team spirit and the sense of belonging among the staff could be jeopardized. By contrast, a distributed leadership, as suggested by the school community, might be more appropriate for secondary schools dispensing QE, as there would be more collegiality and collaboration (Rosenholtz, 1989; Nias et al., 1989; Day & Sammons, 2016). In the same vein, Spillane et al. (2001) proposed that distributed leadership would work best in a school setting in which staff, including teachers and rectors, were scrupulously chosen, and were experts in their subjects. These authors were meaning that, in schools where distributed leadership is practised, the whole school seemed to work together for achieving the desired outcomes. Such reflects cooperation, collaboration, delegation, and empowerment (Spillane et al., 2001) and it does not depict a one-man show. Such a stance will contribute to the improvement of school life which is an integral part of QE; and will also have a positive bearing on other school outcomes such as student attainment. In Mauritius at all secondary schools, including PWSS, the staff members are recruited based on their qualifications and merits. All teachers have at least a first degree in the subject they teach; and the rector has at least a post-graduate degree in the field of education and educational leadership

and management. Moreover, there is an element of trust among the staff who have bonded, as they have worked together for at least 5 to 9 years. Hence, under such conditions, leadership can be distributed through committees and staff.

Another element of distributed leadership that arose from this research is shared vision. Teachers, parents, and learners articulated that the leader of an organization should share his or her vision with the school community. This finding aligns with that of Fenner (2013), and Sinay and Thomas (2016) that a shared vision contributes to the development of a sense of direction; and fosters positive school culture that is loaded with core values of the school community. The school community expressed its belief that the school should communicate clearly and explicitly its vision. Taking a very supportive stance, Mombourquette (2017) asserted that, to avoid confusion and wastage of effort, the vision of the leader has to be explained and shared among the staff. According to Day & Sammons (2014), in both instructional and distributed constructs, sharing and communicating the vision to staff is central to improvement. However, these researchers argued that, under a distributed regime, the vision is built with the school community; or it is explained so that everybody in the school community can develop the same understanding of the vision. In this manner, all the school activities and processes are aligned in the interests of achieving common goals. Despite there being many discourses on educational leadership, the framework for QE as in Tikly & Barrett (2011) does not set out officially the type of educational leadership style that will suit a particular school. The main objective of the framework was to give access to education to all children Tikly & Barrett (2011). This research does not reject the idea of giving access to all children. However, the research does show concern about the leadership style in a bid to give access to education in the fairest way to learners.

8.1.7 Policy at the centre of QE

Findings of this research indicate that the school community tends to relate school policy to QE. The school community believed that a school dispensing QE would operate within a policy context that supports inclusion and accountability. This finding aligns with that of Tiwari (2019). At PWSS, as in many schools, a great number of policies have been formulated to guide the running of schools so as to achieve the goals set by the sponsors or government. These include the behaviour-management policy, the attendance policy, the inclusion policy, the promotion criteria policy, the free transport policy, the free education policy, and the performance management policy, amongst others. The school community indicated that, with the advent of QE in school, they would expect policymakers to formulate policies that would

democratize access to school for all learners and facilitate the achievement of all educational outcomes. This is in line with Kanyongo (2005) and Singh (2019) who assured that quality education is firstly about expanding 'accessibility' for all categories of learners; thereafter this extends to 'adaptability' for disadvantaged groups, 'acceptability' to suitable curriculum, and 'availability' of resources and facilities. However, the school community of PWSS highlighted that a school should consider inclusion policy as at the heart of QE, which was referred to as a system that is more inclusive, in that all learners are treated equally and fairly, irrespective of gender, caste, race, colour, and religion. This idea equates inclusion to QE (Mpofu, 2004; Mpofu et al., 2006; Tiwari, 2019). This finding has a series of policy implications. One implication would be that the school should provide all facilities, such as a ramp, lift, handrails, and special toilet facilities to enable students with mild physical disabilities. However, the structure of the PWSS as it is currently cannot admit students with severe disabilities. The school infrastructure can only serve the interests of the majority of learners, as suggested by McLaughlin & Jordan (2005). For example, most of the 'specialist rooms', such as science laboratories, computer laboratories, and libraries are found on the first floor. Learners with severe physical disabilities would not easily be able to access these classes or laboratories, there being no ramps. This finding supports the arguments of the social model that offers these conditions only being given to mainstream learners (Booth et al., 2000). Thus, based on the current infrastructure of PWSS, the inclusion policy can cover only learners with light intellectual ability differences, social inclusion, and learners with slight vision and slight hearing impairment (Dreyer, 2017). The policy of inclusive education seems to emerge from the intersection of the humanistic and economic perspectives of QE (Dreyer, 2017). The school community indicated that they view QE as the transformation of the school to accommodate students from all backgrounds and of all differences. This model of quality education clashes with the framework for QE proposed by Tikly and Barrett (2011); and argues that the framework is inadequate for analysing QE in a school. The framework tends to view QE from a larger perspective. This means that certain facilities can be located outside the school. However, this research tends to situate it in the school, a place where it is gratefully received.

8.1.8 Understanding the multidimensional nature of QE

The various groups of participants, including teachers, parents, learners, and rectors expressed in different ways their understanding of QE. They articulated that QE is not only about educational outcomes such as academic and non-academic results; it also includes the quality of conditions established at school to facilitate processes that favour its occurrence. This

research presented a finding that further adds to the complexity of QE. The research tends to describe the complexity of QE in terms of the interaction of the interwoven layers that extend in various dimensions. This multidimensionality feature is attributed to the varied nature of school aspects, such as giving access to the school, the conduciveness and relevance of facilities and provisions, and the expectedly favourable educational outcomes. This concurs well with what Tikly (2010) advocated in the framework for enhancing the understanding of QE. However, in this study, the intricacy that arose from the multidimensionality of QE is found to result from the nonlinear relationship among inputs, processes, and products. For example, the complexities surrounding the inputs in school are due to both human and non-human factors. In secondary school, the matter is more intriguing because it concerns children, adolescents, and young adults, along with their need for development and transitioning from one phase of development to another. Similarly, Frink (2012) commented that QE mainly comprises four different components − content, context, process, and outcomes. In that literature, 'content' is described as being the goals, of the approaches of teaching and learning; 'context' refers to the environment in which teaching and learning occur; 'process' involves all the facilities and procedures for unfolding the content in that context; and 'outcomes' are described as what is produced by the education system, including value-added outcomes and sustainability. This research found that these components of QE as mentioned were not all given the same importance. In fact, disproportionate attention is given to outcomes only. Furthermore, in this study, many layers of these components were uncovered. This implies that all types of learners should be taken on board: learners of different learning abilities, learners with impairments, learners from different social backgrounds, learners of all genders, inter alia. For this reason throughout the research inputs are referred to as quality inputs; the process is referred to as a quality process; and outcomes as quality outcomes. Here, emphasis is laid on the sub-layers of those components. For example, classrooms and school libraries form part of the conditions and process of QE. In the first instance, having the classrooms and library in a school is an indication of QE. Learner participants mentioned in their interviews that they do not have enough access to the library. It was indicated that they have only one period of thirty-five minutes per week. This finding corroborates that of Eze (2009), who articulated that QE outcomes, as much desired by the school community, would not be achieved without giving proper attention to the conditions, facilities, and provisions that enable such to occur. Thus, the combination of the diverse processes in constantly improved conditions, facilities, provisions, and inputs render the concept of QE very complicated and multidimensional. The findings of

this research indicated that in a secondary school, there are a variety of interrelated inputs. For instance, learners enrolled are of different social backgrounds, different age groups, different cultures, different values, different aspirations, and different learning abilities. All learners have different developmental needs that demand attention. Furthermore, the educational outcomes are also many high-quality academic outcomes, holistic development, values-loaded and producing discipline, high skills in using technology, and high transition to tertiary education. However, the school processes towards harnessing the enablers of QE are still more complicated and numerous.

8.1.9 Understanding QE outcomes

It is reflected from the data analysis that the school community has expressed that QE is related to the achievement of education outcomes of excellence. Also, this research indicates that quality educational outcomes are essentially three-fold: high academic achievement, holistic development, and values and discipline. Findings of this research also showed that the importance of these non-academic outcomes was subverted due to the critical absence of proper instruments at PWSS for measuring the level of their attainment. There are insufficient methods of assessing the attainment of these developments, not simply equating attainment to the participation rate in extra-curricular activities (Al-Ansari, 2016). Also, too much attention is given to academic performance, despite research in the field showing the importance of all the other educational outcomes. This corroborates well with McDonnell (2014) who insisted that all educational outcomes be given equal weight of importance if the required workforce were to be produced. Despite students being at school almost the whole day, there is not enough evidence supporting that the role of secondary schools is to supply all their developmental needs, including those physical, cognitive, social, cultural, and emotional (Sedlacek, 2004; Garcia 2014). However, discourses on QE are constantly highlighting the importance of including holistic development in the school curriculum and recognizing it as an integral part of educational outcomes. By contrast, Patrinos (2016) argued that schools were built with the precise objective of improving the academic performance of the learner and helping the development of some non-academic skills. This refers to aspects such as communication skills that will help the learner to perform better at work both individually and collectively. Patrinos (2016) also reminded us that the time spent at school is based on a Mincerian approach to education; this states that the longer a learner remains at school the more he or she would contribute to the economy of the country. The curriculum at PWSS seems to have been pegged to favour the enhancement of academic performance. However, the tendency to fill the gap

between rhetoric and realities is noticeable, although only closing incrementally. The international and national discourses on QE are shaping and framing people's understanding of educational outcomes. In Chapter 3, I presented a framework for QE, namely, that of Tikly and Barrett's (2011), who posited that national debates will eventually enhance perspectives on QE. It was suggested that, following those discussions, people would be informed of the importance of QE and the provisions to be set at school for QE. Therefore engaging the perspectives and experiences of educational professionals in decision-making is particularly important in closing the implementation gap, because of the role of such professionals as change agents in schools. Subrun & Subrun (2015) reported that the MOE has put in place a quality assurance division to work together with the head of school for enhancing learning achievement and ensuring the overall development of learners. There is a visible upgrading of the school structures to support holistic development. A small corner in the school gymnasium is dedicated to students practising physical activities such as bodybuilding. The whole set of equipment is bought by the PTA. Yearly petty cash is given to the departments of physical education and music by the PTA to support strategies that lead to the overall development of learners. It is due to the pressure of the school community, parents, teachers, and head of school that some facilities are provided to students so as to help, at least to some extent, holistic development of learners become a reality. Presently, the curriculum is accommodating changes for the benefit of the learners' development. The upper classes are allowed four additional activity periods dedicated to non-cognitive development, including social, emotional, and physical. The lower classes are being given additional subjects such as life skills and values, and social and emotional well-being which are incorporated into the taught curriculum.

8.1.10 An attempt at levelling educational outcomes

Much research into the field of education has shown that education has many roles to play in society. One is to cater to the development of an individual, including socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and financially. Educational outcomes are many and are supposed to suit the demands of providers, sponsors, and learners. In this research context, the focus is on formal education which is accessed by school participation. The educational outcomes vary across the different sections, including pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education, and tertiary education. This research focuses on the concerns of secondary education. Increasing employment potential and earning potential, improving health conditions, the happiness of learners, and improving the economic stability of a country, are top among the various educational outcomes (UNESCO, 2015a). The following were

identified, as described in Chapter 5 as constituting elements of educational outcomes which are now referred to as quality educational outcomes: high academic performance, holistic development, and values and discipline. QE is indeed mentioned quite profusely in many educational discourses. For example, Sustainable Development Goal 4 is all about QE. Unsurprisingly, QE has a flexible meaning, owing to the varied nature of interests and agendas of the stakeholders. For instance, there was an attempt to define QE during the world conferences on education held in 1990; the definition was based mostly on the agendas of that day. Very often these agendas have stemmed from the issues and challenges faced by countries to achieve a particular standard of education as per the ideas and opinions of some experts in the field of education. For example, in World Declaration on Education UNESCO (1990), access to primary education was equated to a move toward QE, it being a priority at that time. I can say in all confidence that the meaning of QE took its shape and form right there. Also, QE gains hues and shades from the expectations, intentions, and motives of the users and sponsors. QE, to some extent, can be explained as the degree to which one can match the expected educational outcomes of the users, intermediaries, and sponsors with the actual outcomes. I am sure that this is not the last time; it will repeatedly be subject to such a theorizing process. Hence, whatever has been presented or researched so far on 'QE' might not necessarily reflect the realities of all people. One finding of this research referred to QE as a complex phenomenon that stemmed from its dynamic and fluid nature.

8.2 Answering Research Question 2

The first section of this chapter is dedicated to the theorization of the themes that emerged from Chapter 5 as a consequence of a rigorous first-level data analysis. It provides answers to the first critical question and thereby offers more insight into the notion of QE as espoused by the school community. Indeed QE, as per the findings of this research is all about quality inputs, quality provisions, and quality outcomes.

However, in this section, the same process of further analysis is conducted; this time, on the way these imperatives of QE are enacted at school. The enactment of the imperatives of QE is referred to as the enabling of QE. The enablers were identified from the findings presented in Chapter Six after once more undergoing a rigorous first-level analysis. In addition, here the findings are further discussed and theorized to shed more light on the reasons for the school community enacting QE the way they do.

8.2. 1 Understanding learners and the learning environment

In the previous chapters, more precisely in Chapters 5 and 6, QE has been described in a series of themes and subthemes. For example, the theme 'quality outcomes' is linked to a few subthemes: 'high academic performance', 'holistic development, 'discipline and values', and 21st-century skills. In this section, the focus is on the enablers that are put in place at the level of the school to achieve those subthemes. The learners are the key actors in schools who experience and endure, whether directly or indirectly, all the flavours, colours, and shades of the enabling school processes and school activities. The secondary school learners are children, adolescents, and young adults of ages ranging from 11 to 20 years old. The Action for the Rights of Children (2001) stipulates that neither children nor adolescents should be treated as small adults, as they are not qualitatively the same. It is also mentioned in the same literature that learners' physical, psychological, and social development requires various levels of support. Borg-Laufs (2013) identified that the success rate of adulthood depends largely on how learners' developmental needs were taken care of by their parents, teachers, family, community, and society. It is also mentioned that children are unique, as are their developmental needs. Therefore, no group of children or adolescents is homogeneous. Higgins et al. (2005) asserted that learners' and teachers' behaviour cannot be viewed from the same perspective, but are also affected by the school environment. One finding of this research is that learners at PWSS are always seeking further opportunities for sporting activities, outdoor activities, and out-of-school excursions. Observations revealed that students tend to come out of classes very quickly at bell times during both recess and short breaks; by contrast, the exact opposite was observed at bell times for classes. This finding backs up the ideas of Saloviita (2013) who remarked that this practice is common in many schools. Similarly, Jones & Jones (2007) commented that the starting times for classes were typically difficult moments for teachers who try then to attract the attention of students. The findings under analysis suggest that it is a natural school behaviour for learners to enjoy moments of play with their same-age mates and peers. Pellis & Pellis (2009) reminded us that mammals seek to improve their social competence through the experience gathered during play fighting. Brussoni et al. (2015) convinced that there is a positive connection between enhanced levels of social competence through rough-and-tumble play. While learning is thought to be a natural predisposition in a child, academic learning as established in school is not necessarily what learners wish to have, and therefore requires school adjustment (Lakhani, Jain & Chandel, 2017). Furthermore, it is also argued in the same literature that at school, children find themselves somewhat out of

place, as they meet new people of different social backgrounds, cultures, and of different development needs. Thus, they have to navigate through social adjustment, academic adjustment, and eventually the construction of a new identity (Fisher, 2017). The finding shows that academic adjustment is favoured over social adjustment. Learners spend most of their time 'for' school, 'at' school, and 'back' from school. In the mornings they prepare for school; then they spend almost seven hours at school; and in the afternoons they do their homework. Topping (2011) indicated that in such a situation, where teachers, parents, and the rector are stressing more academic adjustment, the life of the learner seemed to be conflicted. Topping (2011) also explained that very often conflict occurs because of the mismatch of thought between teachers and learners. Teachers are thinking about the long-term consequences of academic performance; whereas learners are thinking about the present time as the time to play and socialize with their peers.

8.2.2 Understanding assessments and 'wall of fame' as enablers of high academic performance

Learning is in itself an epistemological issue due to its complexity; therefore learning cannot be described or represented by a single variable. At present, attempting to understand learning in a school context is not a simple task (Guney, 2012). In Chapter 6 of this research, some school processes were identified as enabling sub-themes of QE. (See Table 6.1). For example, the sub-theme of high academic performance is closely linked to assessment and evaluations. One finding of this research is that the school community believed that assessments and evaluations are school activities put in place to raise the motivation of learners to achieve high academic performance. This finding supports that of Onuka (2006) who assured that the assessment and evaluation exercises conducted at schools during the year do have a positive impact on the final academic results. The 'assessment policy' at PWSS that requires teachers to perform at least three assessments per term demonstrates the commitment of the school community to achieving high academic standards in terms of performance. This concurs well with Ross (2011), who reported that schools should put in more effort to help students to focus their attention on their learning experiences of assessments and QE. Spirovska (2015) also asserted that giving learners a combination of summative and formative assessments would have a positive impact on their learning outcomes. However, this does not necessarily please all the learners as it tends to favour the navigation towards academic adjustment (Lakhani et al., 2017). As a consequence, learners may become hostile and show resistance to other school processes (Topping, 2011). Therefore learners are given a stimulus to motivate them to

navigate their way toward the achievement of high academic performance. A wall of fame is placed in the lobby of the school to inspire and motivate learners to aim higher in their academic endeavours. Gbollie (2017) commented that motivation plays a fundamental role in achieving success. It stimulates the desire in people to work harder to achieve their goals. Motivation raises the interest of individuals and commits them to the tasks and their roles to reach their objectives. Similarly, assessment and examination are believed to be among the most impactful school processes that could lead to high academic performance (O'Cala, 2010).

8.2.3 Extracurricular activities as enablers of developmental needs other than academic

This research reveals that the school community of PWSS demonstrated important consideration for the holistic development of the learners. In this regard, a series of activity periods were integrated into the school timetable. Whitebread et al. (2017) shared the same opinion. They argued that extra-curricular activities would have a positive impact on the physical, social, and emotional development of the learners; and would also influence their learning behaviour positively. Apart from the two slots of thirty-five minutes of physical education (physical activities), the students of upper grades have four additional slots of thirty-five minutes of extra-curricular activities. The students of lower grades, Grades 7 to 9, have two periods of life skills and two periods of music in addition to their two slots of PE. The school community indicated that the number of periods devoted to holistic development is insufficient. In this regard, Yang (2014) articulated that a school curriculum overloaded with academic tasks, and not giving sufficient allowance for extracurricular activities, is most likely to overstress the learners. It may demotivate learners to such a degree that the law of diminishing returns may set in. Furthermore, observations also reveal that the extracurricular activities are not well structured. Some students mentioned that the activity periods very often appear to be futile and useless; some teachers do not know what to do during these periods. Regarding this finding, Ezeonwumelu (2020) explained that very often learners felt deceived by the school. When learners do not attain what has been promised to them, for instance, a football tournament, or excursions, they tend to lose interest in the education system and other institutions. Duchesneet et al. (2012) denounced practices that are too academic-performance oriented which tend to promote competitive learning. Furthermore, ability comparison is often linked to depressive symptoms, the feeling of anxiety, and negative self-worth.

8.2.4 Understanding rules and regulations as enablers of discipline and values

At PWSS, the rules and regulations are presented in the school journal which is a mandatory document for all learners. This is one of the most commonly used communication channels

between home and school as it bears records of all classwork, homework, academic progress, as well as the misbehaviour of learners. This research found that the school community of PWSS considered discipline a quality learning outcome; and believed that it could be achieved through rigorous implementation of a discipline plan based on a set of rules and regulations. This finding corroborates that of Fekadu (2019), who argued that rules and regulations would help to maintain discipline at school and have a positive influence on the school climate. Fekadu (2019) also found that well-behaved students are more likely to perform better academically. Similarly, Silva et al. (2017) highlighted that student discipline is a key factor in instilling a positive culture that would improve QE. They further argued in the same literature that by creating a conducive environment at school, students' academic, emotional, social, and physical development would also improve. While there is a tendency to negatively perceive rules and regulations as punishment and chastisement (Fekadu, 2019), there is also a greater majority of learners who believe that without rules and regulations, schools will not be secure places in which to learn; more cases of bullying and violence would result (Mafabi, 2009). As a consequence of a good school climate, students' attendance has improved (Daily et al., 2020). After a thorough examination of this research finding, it was revealed that the school community believed that, as a result of discipline at school, learners would also behave in conformity with societal rules and values. This argument aligns with that of Fekadu (2015) who argued that without proper rules and regulations, the school would not be a pleasant place to learn or at which to socialize. In addition, the literature described rules and regulations as civic and ethical education which instils in students core values such as integrity, honesty, and respect. It is worth noting that the research finding naming 'discipline' as an integral part of QE discipline is confusingly dichotomous. This confusion arises because 'discipline' is simultaneously referred to as quality educational outcomes and an enabler of high academic performance. The school, therefore, has two more reasons to maintain discipline at school. At PWSS there is a series of sanctions provisioned to address the problem of indiscipline at school. The level of severity of a sanction depends on the nature of the misdemeanour. The following sanctions are authorized at PWSS: 'informing parents through school journal', 'calling parent at school', 'recess detention', 'afternoon detention', 'Saturday detention', 'rustication', 'special reports', 'expulsion', and 'suspension of school privilege'. Silva et al. (2017) also argued that the strategy of sanctioning students for their misbehaviour proves to be effective in curbing indiscipline at school, and also has a positive impact on academic achievement. However, the researcher criticised the strategy as not a hundred per cent effective: it may cause

a few cases of maladaptive responses such as dislike of school, frustration, and drop out. A less intrusive measure for curbing indiscipline at school is comments dropping in the school journal or calling the parents to school. By contrast, Anderman et al. (2002) contended that giving rewards for good behaviour could have helped to reduce indiscipline, and at the same time, unlike the sanctions-giving strategy, it could have prevented maladaptive responses. Moreover, during afternoon detentions, recess detentions, and Saturday detention, students are given academic tasks to perform with the purpose of improving academic performance. However, the relationship between rules and regulations and student performance is more complex and even doubtful (Gakure et al., 2013; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2014). Differing contexts seem to have their own realities; nevertheless, conforming to the rules and regulations system has a positive impact on academic performance (Ehiane, 2014). A combination of strategy, conforming to rules and regulations, sanctions, and rewards could be used to improve academic performance while promoting discipline at school (Yang, & Gielen, 2013; Pasternak, 2013; Whisman & Hammer, 2014; Zhao & Kuo, 2015).

8.2.5 Curriculum design and interest

It was mentioned in Chapter 6 that quality teaching and learning form the very baseline of QE dispensed at PWSS. It was also indicated in the chapter that quality teaching and learning is actually enabled by the curriculum design and the way in which it is implemented. In Mauritius, in general, the school curriculum is influenced largely by the British education system that was inherited during colonial times. Findings of this research reveal that the school community of PWSS derives much pride from its educational achievement, more precisely in the upper secondary education cycle because the curriculum followed has international recognition. However, the school community showed their wish to have the curriculum readapted to better suit the interests of the learners. This finding concurs with Mohanasundaram (2018), who elaborated that educational needs are not the same everywhere; therefore the curriculum should be planned and designed by the teachers, school leaders, and stakeholders of the schools in the locality. Observations revealed that the lower secondary curriculum of PWSS as well as in other secondary schools is prescribed by the National Curriculum Framework. It was observed at PWSS that many students of Grade 9 and Grade 11 are called to make their choice of subjects they wanted to study at school. The choices are somewhat limited, as the options have already been set. Very often, the choices are declined if they do not meet the criteria imposed by the MOE. For example, to supply an ‘option’ − also known as ‘subject combination’ − there must

be at least ten students. This criterion has been the main cause of transfer and sometimes dropout. Data analysis in Chapter 6 has revealed that the school community of PWSS is not satisfied with this national policy. Day (2019) noted with concern that policy decisions regarding curriculum are very often taken without the involvement of the school. This research finding relates more to the dissatisfaction with the limited nature of subject combinations available at PWSS, and this is an issue resulting from the mechanism of organization and implementation of the curriculum in secondary education. Amadio, Opertti & Tedesco (2015) expressed that the organization and implementation of the curriculum reflect the political and social intentions of the government. Aoki (2004) agreed that sometimes the learners become marketable products under a human capital approach to education. QE seems contrived to serve the interests of the country over the interests of the learners. It is obvious from the discourse NCF (2015) that what needs to be, how to be, and when to be taught and learned has already been charted. However, Parsson (2016) enlightened that curriculum organization and implementation involve complex mechanisms, nevertheless should include consultation of stakeholders for their input. This finding seems to contradict the framework for QE, in Tikly & Barrett (2011). It represents a gap that could prevent the fostering of QE unless there is proper consultation among stakeholders. Tikly and Barrett (2011) outlined that empowering school leaders to take a curriculum decision is central to improving student outcomes. However, based on the requirements of the theoretical framework for QE, there is no such practice or provision for such practice at PWSS. Also, the framework suggests that more teacher engagement and empowerment could offer some solutions.

8.2.6 Caring pedagogy approach for unfolding the curriculum

Another aspect that is mentioned in the findings of this research is the dynamic link between QE and pedagogy. According to Hall et al. (2008), pedagogy is about the ways and means by which the curriculum is unfolded in the class. Usually, the unfolding of the curriculum is interpreted in three steps. The first step is linked to the lived experience of the learners and teachers while unfolding the curriculum; the second step is the way in which the learners are informed about their learning; and the third step is the way in which the learning needs are addressed in the learning process (Aoki, 2004). In this study, it is revealed that the school community at PWSS, excluding some teachers, is not satisfied with the way in which the remedial classes are conducted. It is argued by Schwartz (2012) that in many schools remedial classes are presented ineffectively because teachers are not aware of how best to conduct this work, or have not been properly trained. Rai and Penjor (2020) considered that in many schools

remedial lessons would not be beneficial should teachers not be adequately trained. This could be the case at PWSS because teachers mentioned that they do not have real opportunities for professional development and capability building. Similarly, Trivino (2016) contended that remedial classes could be a failure and detrimental to low-performers should teachers not be properly trained to identify the needs of learners and to plan remedial activities. Tilley and Tailor (2013) suggested that teachers be capacitated to take on charge of the learning difficulties of students. Teachers should be able to take a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning. The above-mentioned authors also understood that the teacher should take into consideration that learners do have different learning styles; teachers should be able to align necessary resources to enhance the learning experiences in the class. In agreement with this, Aoki (2004) reminded that teachers should be empowered by school and policy to attune and reattune the curriculum, so that learners may experience learning as a continuous heuristic process. An attempt to synthesize the arguments of Tilley and Tailor (2013) and Aoki (2004) may produce a more suitable remedial class − what I would term 'caring pedagogy'. However, observations at PWSS reveal that although they showed their intentions in the SDP, the school community was unable to provide proper remedial classes to learners because of significant time constraints. Observations showed that it is challenging to include remedial classes, as desired, in the current form of the school timetable. This argument agrees well with that of Musongole (2021), who maintained that the timetable of many schools is so rigid and overloaded that there is no opportunity for proper remedial and extracurricular activities.

8.2.7 Enabling dialogue to enhance feedback − response to learning for a better QE.

This research finding reveals that the school community believed that giving feedback to learners is a good indicator of QE as it enhances students' achievement. The feedback-giving strategy is viewed as a dialogue between school and home. At PWSS, the provision for giving feedback is twofold. The first provision is about giving feedback to learners directly, in class, on a particular task, or after an assessment. The second provision focuses on giving feedback to parents at the end of each term. It is worth noting that parents or responsible parties of learners are invited to school at least three times a year to gain feedback on the progress of their wards. Binu (2020) upheld that giving feedback to learners in front of their parents or responsible party on their behaviour at school, and also about their academic performance, would serve as a good reinforcer of teaching and learning as well as the learning environment. Also, McNeal (2014) considered that parental involvement in any school process including feedback giving has a strong impact on the improvement of the quality of educational

outcomes, both academic and non-academic achievements. Therefore the strategy of calling parents of PWSS for feedback enables the maintenance of discipline at school; and helps to make the school environment more conducive to achieving high academic performance (Panhoon & Wongwanich, 2014). It was also mentioned that, in a bid to encourage giving feedback to parents, the rector usually supplies a good rating in the teacher appraisal of the PMS to teachers who put in efforts to meet parents and report misbehaviours, and to discuss academic progress. With regard to the second provision, teachers are encouraged to give corrective feedback to learners on their academic tasks as promptly as possible. It is argued by Marzano (2010) that giving feedback to students during class instruction has a very good effect on their enthusiasm to achieve more. At the same time, not giving adequate feedback will send a wrong signal to learners, as they might think that teachers are not sufficiently caring (Hattie &Timperley, 2007). Furthermore, as per Roebianto et al. (2021), verbal feedback from teachers would have a greater bearing than non-verbal feedback, including gestures and facial expressions. It is also iterated by Hattie and Timperley (2007) that the feedback given to learners should be timely and positive; a negative comment on their learning, on the other hand, may hurt the self-esteem of the learner in such a way that he or she may lose interest in the subject as well as the school. Also, Mamoon-Al-Bashir et al. (2016) and Yorke (2003) contended that feedback dialogue with the learners may inform teachers of any adjustment that must be made to their teaching practice.

8.2.8 Understanding school as a teaching environment

The concept of teaching context is borrowed from that of Talbert and McLaughlin (1999), cited in Bascia (2014). School context refers to the site that influences teaching and learning and encompasses all the school processes, administration practices, teaching condition, school infrastructure, classroom conditions, furniture, timetable, school norms, and culture (Richard & Farell, 2011). Findings of this research reveal that the school community believed that the teaching context forms part of the enablers of QE. Hence, a highly conducive teaching context would be a better version of the teaching context with elements performing at their best and being adequate in both quality and quantity. Most importantly, these elements should serve their purpose to the maximum (Deakin et al., 2013). Kara (2013) understood that QE takes place only in a quality teaching context in which quality teaching occurs and students' attainment is at its highest.

8.2.8.1 Staffroom as an enabler of quality teaching.

While the teaching context is considered an element of the teaching context (Richard & Farell, 2011), this research finding reveals that teachers at PWSS are more or less demotivated by the conditions of the school staffroom. Despite that literature has shown the importance of a staffroom in a school and how it contributes to the welfare of teachers (Comighud et al. 2020; Richardson & Watt, 2006), teachers at PWSS expressed that they do not have access to the necessary resources to do their work well. For instance, they found that the staffroom is overcrowded and there is an insufficient number of fans to alleviate the heat of summer; there is no internet access, and there are no computer facilities. However, observation notes showed that there is a corner for a wash basin, an electric kettle, a microwave, cupboards, 4 fans (one not working), chairs and tables for all teachers, toilet facilities, a notice board, and a whiteboard; there is an internet facility which is often very slow. The concept of a staffroom is relative and little is known about the staff room and its functionalities in a school due to a paucity of research on the subject (Pitt & Kirkwood, 2009). However, the school is considered a workplace that has to sustain these dynamics differently (Comighud et al.,2020). In the same literature, the staffroom in a school is defined as an important spatial arrangement where teachers meet and work; and it was also argued that the staffroom has a significant influence on curriculum implementation. Hunter et al. (2011) highlighted the complicated interrelationship between the workplace, physical space, power, subjectivity, and status. At PWSS, it was observed that most teachers come to school in cars – branded and quite new. Teachers are well educated: all of them have a first degree and almost 50% of them have a post-graduate degree. They have their salary point pitched around 92 on a master salary scale ranging from 1 − the lowest to 106 − the highest (PRB Report, 2021). Therefore teaching in a secondary school is a well-paid job that commands respect on the basis of status. However, little is known about whether the facilities such as furniture in the staffroom match their status (Louis & Kruse, 1995; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). Bourdieu (1985) highlighted that space may be viewed as a concept; how it is constituted by and constituting of groups and individuals; and also how the groups are constituted. In the same vein, space was also conceptualized by Lefebvre (1991), who argued that space is viewed as being physical/material, representational, and represented. For example, in a school, a staffroom is a physical or material entity placed at the disposal of teachers that consists of chairs, tables, and furniture in general. However, the staffroom at the same time is representational of the status of teachers, as in the quality of the furniture, air conditioner, computers, executive chairs, and suchlike. Finally, this space

represents a place of work in which teachers prepare their lessons, inter alia. Teachers are signalling that the facilities and condition of the staffroom do not match their status; and as a result, they feel demotivated. This may seriously compromise teaching and QE. Hunter et al. (2011) submitted that the conditions of a staffroom can act as a barometer indicating the professional self-esteem of the teachers. They argued that the conditions of the staffroom are relative and should not be compared. Barbieri et al., (2017) countered that improvement in academic achievement could be realized through the agency of motivated teachers; otherwise, it would be more challenging.

8.2.8.2 Understanding teacher recruitment and supply teachers

This study reveals that teachers of PWSS are not recruited directly by the school; and whenever there is a shortage, they could be availed of the service of supply teachers. This is a common practice in Mauritius (Suburun, 2015). In fact, teachers at PWSS were recruited by the PSC – a public body on which power is devolved for the recruitment of public personnel. Also, every year there is a transfer or redeployment exercise of the teaching personnel in the state schools. At the time I was carrying out the research at the school, 11 supply teachers were teaching in various departments of the school. While some were replacing teachers who were on long leave (19 days to six months), others were working normally as teachers in some scarce subject areas such as biology, design and technology, and French, amongst others. It was revealed in this study that the school community believed that the practice of recruiting ST is in a way compromising QE at PWSS. In the move towards increasing access to education, many developing countries have to recruit contract teachers − this practice has now become the predominant practice in many education systems (Miller et al., 2019). It is also considered deplorable that the educational outcomes of schools that employ contract teachers tend to be unsatisfactory. The school community of PWSS believed that STs at PWSS are the main cause of indiscipline because STs seem not to have adequate experience in both teaching and managing their classes. This finding corroborates those of Kingdon & Sipahimalani-Rao (2010) who said that these issues of indiscipline cropped up due to insufficient training. However, these researchers believed that the hiring of these STs has addressed the problem of both teacher absenteeism and student attendance. Furthermore, regular teachers and the rector of PWSS indicated that STs tend to display a carefree attitude toward the school vision and lack a sense of belonging to the school. While Miller et al. (2019) and Kingdon & Sipahimalani-Rao (2010) tend to agree with the finding that the hiring of STs can eventually impact negatively on QE, they also argue that STs also can do as well as regular teachers if they are

given adequate training. The framework for QE of Tikly and Barrett (2011) has positioned quality teachers and quality teaching context at the heart of the intersectional area of the two environments: policy and school. Very little can be done at the level of the school in terms of quality teachers unless schools are independently empowered to recruit teachers.

8.2.9 Understanding school infrastructure as an enactment of QE

This research finding reveals that the school community of PWSS believed that infrastructure has an important role to play in the provision of QE. The participants indicated that the school's infrastructure is good but insufficient. The participants signalled that, while education is functional in the school, it is not adequate for QE. The school, through the agency of the MOE, has put the necessary infrastructure at the disposal of the community for the education of the children. Education is so dynamic that its roles and functions keep on changing to meet the demands and exigencies of society, the individuals, the markets, and the economy. Cuyvers and Weerd (2011) concurred with the research finding that school infrastructure matters vitally in the pursuit of QE. The literature also highlights that students' satisfaction level is much higher in schools having good school infrastructure. In the same vein, Felia, Sowiyah & Mutiara (2021) determined that QE ultimately depends on school infrastructure. These authors asserted that a school with poor infrastructure is most unlikely to provide QE as the learners and staff, including teachers of the school, would not be motivated. According to McLeod (2019), in any system organization, including schools, both humans and non-humans interact for a common purpose. However, in school, the processes and activities are so intricately connected that they sometimes become complex and messy. It is also argued in the same literature that they (humans and non-humans) should share a symmetry of roles for achieving the purpose or function of the organization. These non-animated and non-human resources, which Latour (1996) and Law (2007) described as 'actants' in the actor-network theory, include tools, curriculum infrastructure objects such as desks, tables, whiteboards, classrooms, internet connections, chairs, and more. This study finds that there are situations of conflict, tension, and hazards between the staff and the infrastructure. The wholeness of the school as an organization will be contrived if the infrastructure is not timeously upgraded to serve the common purpose. Observations reveal that the school enacts this provision for QE by setting committees for maintenance which involve the rector, teachers, and parents. However, Soleimanipirmorad (2018) conveyed that many schools provide only the basic requirements for teaching and learning to occur. Poor infrastructure and poor conditions of classrooms are still typical, because of the poor quality of the buildings, and the poor lighting and ventilation in the

classrooms. In some classrooms, the whiteboards were in a such inferior condition that writing on them or reading from them was next to impossible. Soleimanipirmorad (2018) also ventured that inappropriate lighting systems, poor indoor air quality, and dull walls of classrooms may lead to sick building syndrome which would adversely affect the concentration of learners. It was evident that these facilities had once been in good condition; however, the maintenance had been neglected. According to Tikly and Barrett (2011), having a place under a roof available to fulfil the purpose of teaching and learning is already enough for formal education to take place. The focus is on how the resources available are aligned to achieve the goal. The notion of QE is understandably relative and flexible. In different contexts, QE would be differently manifested, as the external forces, the internal forces, and the goal may be all different. This study explains how QE at PWSSS is expressed under the current specific conditions with the resources available, both human and non-human.

8.2.10 Understanding school facilities

This finding of the research shows how school facilities such as classrooms, libraries, toilets, the gymnasium, etc., have been harnessed to achieve desired outcomes. Adebayor (2017) highlighted that no meaningful teaching and learning would be complete in any classroom situation without there being sufficient material resources.

Curriculum implementation is one of the core activities of a school (Amadio et al., 2015.) and no school would be effective and interesting without a proper library (Adebayor, 2017). At PWSS, a committee of both teachers and the library officer was set up to engage in a dialogue for action, for instance, on the alignment of material resources – books, magazines, press articles, projectors, and other teaching aids. Despite having a well-equipped library at their disposal, learners complained that they do not have sufficient time to use the facilities. Their timetable is so tightly scheduled that they can afford only one period of 35 minutes of library per week. Furthermore, it was noted that the library officer, despite being qualified, does not show much interest in helping students to acquire reading skills. She is more involved in the library administration duties − procurement of books, circulation, and cataloguing. While Yang (2011) observed that QE is closely linked with libraries, at PWSS library classes are considered simply a replacement period. The school showed a weakness in this, as learners should all be free to exploit all the benefits of the library. If the school intends to optimize QE, the school community has to consider a library as a source of comprehensive knowledge and information (Usoro & Usanga, 2007) both for teachers and students. Adebayor (2017) affirmed that a school library would function properly, as it should, and would also help in the implementation of the

curriculum were a competent teacher-librarian called on to manage the library's resources. QE would be incomplete were libraries incorrectly used and not innovative enough to attend to the continuously changing needs of both teachers and learners (Bastos & Matias, 2021).

At PWSS, the toilet facilities are serviced partly by external contractors and by internal general workers employed by the MOE. This research reveals that the school community is not satisfied with the way the toilets are serviced. The community expressed that the toilets are not well cleaned as required. Their complaints are mostly about the availability of liquid soap and even water, the condition of the taps, and the inferior nature of the flushing tanks. Observations reveal that the conditions of some of the toilets are simply appalling − no water runs in the taps and a putrid stench constantly fills the air. The school community tends to link the conditions of the toilets to student absenteeism. Research has shown that student absenteeism is recorded more in schools where the ratio of inferior toilet facilities to learners is high (Sharma, 2011; Pillitteri, 2012). More importantly, good toilets have a positive impact on achieving the other non-academic outcomes of QE (Jasper et al, 2012). It is argued that well-serviced toilets can help to instil a culture of cleanliness and good sanitary practice among students (Agbo et al., 2012).

The study also highlights that sporting activities are the favourite school activities of the students of PWSS. Despite all classes having two periods of PE every week, the students still ask for more. The school seems to undertake much effort to assure good physical development of students. The PE department organizes many sporting activities and tournaments to attend to the needs and demands of students. Siedentop (2004) reminded us that sport plays an important role in the school culture and the socialization process. It is also indicated in the same literature that sporting activities help students to understand the responsibility of their actions towards others, and also help to foster collaboration among themselves. What seems to be missing in their provision for enabling sports to fully operate at school is the sensitization of parents and students to the benefit of sports for their personality building. Equally, Donaldson and Ronan (2006) emphasized the contribution of sports to the well-being of students as well as to the enhancement of their emotional and behavioural management. There is substantive evidence to support that there is much to gain in terms of psychological and social health when children, adolescents, and adults are involved in physical activities. This happens as a result of the social nature of team sports (Rochelle et al., 2013). However, the degree of involvement required for such benefits was not outlined. This could be an explanation for team sports being promoted at school.

While Tikly and Barrett (2011) insisted that QE would be pointless were schools not equipped with adequate enabling facilities, including classrooms, proper lighting, fans, clean and hygienic toilets, accessible drinking water, playground, laboratories, library, workshops, necessary technology, etc., this research presented findings that consider school facilities an integral part of QE.

8.2.10 Understanding ICT: An enabler of outcomes of QE

The findings of this study were that the school community believed that the use of ICT at school can help to optimize QE. Analysis of data suggests that ICT is viewed as an enabling tool of QE at PWSS. Observational notes reveal that only specialist rooms, such as laboratories, are provided with a laptop and a projector. However, other teachers have to use the conference room to avail themselves of the ICT facilities. Also, laptops and projectors are available on loan at the school administration so that teachers can transform their normal classrooms into a technologically accessible environment. As for students, the school requests teachers to encourage students to deploy technological support for learning. Kumar (2008) concurred that the use of ICT in school is recognized as an enabling tool for the enhancement of educational outcomes. Also, the use of ICT can play a major role in the improvement of the teaching and learning processes. There is a long list of ideas on ways in which ICT can contribute to QE, including the use of videos, simulations, animations, the printing of question papers, connecting learners, giving immediate feedback, etc. Moreover, teaching and learning have been made accessible anywhere, everywhere, and anytime through technology (Anu Sharma et al., 2011); and it is believed that the use of ICT can provide great support to students in their learning process (Jamieson-Procter et al., 2013; Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). Teachers at PWSS believed that ICT has become a must-use tool in teaching. Also, teachers at PWSS understood that ICT could enhance their teaching context, which is supported by Nakayima (2011) and Jamieson-Proctor et al. (2013). However, these researchers stressed that little is known about whether the use of ICT in teaching has a positive impact on the improvement of students' achievements. It is worth noting that observations revealed that many teachers do not use ICT tools to prepare schemes of work, lesson plans, and assessment questionnaires. Only a few teachers submit their lesson plan, weekly plan, and scheme of work electronically – in other words by email. It was also observed that computer facilities were not extended to teachers to prepare, type and print these documents. Moreover, it was revealed in the data analysis that the following are the reasons for teachers failing to use ICT for their administrative tasks − scheme of service, lesson plans, weekly plans, question papers, and reports, attached to teaching: (i)

not all teachers have adequate ICT skills, (ii) it is more time-consuming, (iii) no ICT facilities at school, (iv) digital copies of certain documents could not justify accountability. Teachers mentioned that pre-teaching activities are very time-consuming and tiresome. It would be easier and quicker to prepare should ICT facilities be extended to teachers. Teachers of PWSS deplored a lack of capability-building activities or professional development courses for upgrading their computer skills. Furthermore, they deprecated the insufficiency of computers and computer paraphernalia to enhance school processes. This concurs with Saxena et al. (2017) who indicated that ICT can play many roles in education.

8.2.11 Understanding school leadership

This study reveals that the rector as a school leader is easily accessible, and supports and shares his vision of the school. Data analysis revealed that he practices an open-door policy and empowers teachers to participate in the decision-making process. There are about 10 committees and 6 school clubs operating at the school. The committees and clubs are platforms that were set up at school to give a voice to staff and students, and also to help in the implementation of school policies. One period is dedicated every month to allow the sitting of the committees and clubs. Also, all the clubs, committees, and departments are given opportunities to participate in the preparation of the SDP. In this regard, Lasminah et al. (2021) supposed that school committees are set to foster cooperation among staff and with the school rector independently and professionally in the most democratic manner, at the same time with high accountability. They also revealed that the school committees had a very optimizing effect on quality education. At PWSS, teachers are requested to prepare and submit a developmental plan for their respective committees, clubs, and departments. The leadership style of school leaders matters to a large extent within the human capital framework for QE, as a leadership style can enhance many areas of concern for QE, such as accountability, equity, teaching and learning, and school climate (Muralidharan & Sundraraman, 2006; Hanushek & Woßmann, 2008). The rector of PWSS wears various leadership hats. His style of leadership displays a backbone of distributive leadership with the flesh of instructional leadership. This concurs to a large extent with the suggestions of Day and Sammons (2014) who advocated that a combination of different styles of leadership is more beneficial to improving QE in school. The rector distributes his leadership by inviting the participation of all stakeholders through committees and clubs; and at the same time offers pedagogical guidance through class visits and mobilization of pedagogical resources with a view to enhancing QE (Waluyo & Hadi, 2014). In addition, the rector shares his vision with the school and the outside community. The

large signboard spelling out the vision of the school, fixed at the top of the building and thus visible from various angles both inside and outside the school, demonstrates his leadership qualities to the people around him. The rector displays the school vision practically in places that will eventually catch the attention of people, on the front page of the school journal, on the letterhead of all correspondence, amongst others. However, the leadership of the rector is restricted to the autonomy devolved on him. The SMM guides the rector in his duties and also signals to him the limit of his leadership. Tikly and Barrett (2011) stressed the importance of school leadership style in the provision of QE. The researchers even argued that school leadership is a key factor in the improvement of QE. School leadership is referred to as the lynchpin securing the three enabling environments: home, school, and policy. However, the authors do not assert which type of leadership is most suitable, the main focus is on access to education in a context of social tension including social justice, immigrants, and occupation.

8.2.12 Understanding school policies

The study reveals that there are many policies implemented at the school for QE. For the scope of this study, only four policies are given concern. These policies include SDP, Social Register for Inclusive Education, Free Textbooks, and Payment of Examinations. My observation notes reveal that most policies are formulated by the Directorate of Secondary Education; and that the school has little autonomy to fine-tune the policies and adapt them to own needs and specificities without comprising their initial purpose. Three of the above-mentioned policies are connected to the policy 'no child left behind' and inclusive education. Policies are generally speaking a set of procedures to determine the best course of action for achieving the goal targeted. Policies are referred to as enabling conditions to achieve the goal of an organization (Benavot, 2012). At PWSS, it is observed that the rector has established a protocol for the analysis and implementation of a new policy. All new policies are studied with the collaboration of the SMT to provide a summary of the policy and a plan of action. The result is then communicated to the staff. For example, the preparation of the SDP involved the SMT, all staff, heads of departments, chairperson of committees, president of school clubs, rector, deputy rector, senior educator, the executive committee of the PTA, and the library officer. The role of the rector is to facilitate the implementation of the SDP through the mobilization of resources. In this regard, Gouëdard et al. (2020) alleged that a good policy implementation would help in the optimization of QE. The success of policy implementation in schools depends on the autonomy devolved on school leaders (Boudreaux, 2017). Despite having little autonomy over policy implementation (SIMM, 2009), the rector of PWSS showed a high

standard of leadership, as he managed to implement policies despite the minimum resources (Day & Sammons, 2016). The school has taken risks to walk the extra mile in servicing the initiative of the 'no child left behind' policy. According to the policy, all students who are on the pre-established list of Social Register Mauritius benefit from certain advantages in terms of free textbooks, and payment of examination fees (SRM, 2019). Nonetheless, the criteria do not allow all students of a similar situation to benefit from these facilities. For example, to be eligible for the scheme, the gross monthly income of the family should not exceed a ceiling amount. Therefore students whose family draws income slightly higher than the ceiling amount are not covered. Observations revealed that the PTA has extended the same facilities to that category of learners. Cited in OECD (2017), Weaver (2010) advanced that, during the implementation of a new policy, school leaders would have to face multiple challenges which include coordination issues, human resources, material resources communication, capacity, and compliance of policy operators and policy targets. At PWSS, much energy and tact are required to mobilize the necessary resources and manpower to implement, for example, the policy of examination fees. The school had to establish a series of activities: communicate to parents and students the eligibility criteria; prepare forms for data collection; scrutinize, verify, check, collect documents, record the number of absences; and report to MOE and MES. With regard to this, Honig (2006) reported that policy implementation is challenging − it requires much effort and is a long iterative process. However, if the policy is well implemented (Young & Lewis, 2015) the goal would surely be achieved. The enactment of any policy is far from being a stress-free exercise. Tikly & Barrett, 2011 indicated that in the case of public funded schools, all new policies that must be implemented are subject to the approval of the MOE through its structured agencies.

8.3 Answering Critical Question 3

In this section, the themes laid out in Chapter 7, as a result of first-level analysis, are subjected to theorization for a better insight into the phenomenon. This section represents the answer to the third critical question of the study: How does the school community experience QE? And most importantly, this section develops theoretical answers to the question: Why does the school community experience QE the way it does?

8.3.1 Pride as an experience of QE

The school community unanimously expressed that they felt very satisfied whenever they experienced QE at school. They added that they feel contented whenever the school achieved

something great. Photo 7.1 shows a moment when students of PWSS were celebrating their laureate in 2009. I still remember this: I was a teacher there at that time, and I was celebrating with them. It was an unforgettable moment. I can still feel the excitement and connectedness among all the staff, students, and parents. I can recall that many students who were absent on that day returned to school to experience that moment of pride. Despite the overall quality of results and the pass rate at HSC being almost the same as in the previous year, one student had made a huge difference by becoming a laureate. Quinn and Duckworth (2007) highlighted that students who had performed well academically tend to be happier on the day of the results. However, that particular day was phenomenal. That experience of exceptionally intense thrill demonstrated a very high level of satisfaction in the school as a whole with respect to all the school endeavours (Talebzadeh & Samkan, 2011). Such happiness can be associated with the experience of pride which is described as an achievement emotion felt (Pekrun et al., 2009) when a person has achieved a high-valued desired outcome that has exceeded normative standards (Kronengold, 2013). On that day, all the students were celebrating in a state of ecstasy, including students who had not obtained good results. Some students had even failed. This shows the degree to which high academic achievement is valued by the school community. Obtaining a laureate in Mauritius at the HSC level is indeed a very great prestige. It shows to the public the level of seriousness and commitment to their work and commands pride and respect. Schleicher (2018) theorised that such an achievement could become the new identity of the school and a pride-trigger in a highly competitive school setting. The school community of PWSS had revealed that they link high academic achievement to QE; and this finding that indicates pride as an experience of QE tends to confirm it. This pride is shown in many ways and places. For example, in the school lobby the wall of fame displays in golden letters all the names of the super best performers (laureates), giving recognition to achievers in the prize-giving ceremony, offering an extra holiday for celebrating laureates, inter alia. PWSS is a school of high expectations in the sense that it accords great value to students' attainment and student achievement, and tends to show pride in excellent performance. In addition, it is in the Mauritian culture to compare results and to furnish judgment on high academic achievement. For example, the names of the laureates of the current year cohort are published annually in the local newspaper and broadcast on TV and radio. Moreover, the laureates are announced by the Minister of Education; and the Prime Minister himself would organise a banquet at the official residence of the President of the Republic to honour the laureates. This is how highly

academic performance is esteemed in Mauritius. Therefore pride becomes a natural manifestation of the prevailing competition.

8.3.2 Understanding lived curriculum as an experience of QE

My observation notes revealed that both teachers and students share moments of happiness and satisfaction during well-organized and planned classes. Students expressed satisfaction when they were engaged in an organized learning process (Sembiring et al., 2017). Hyun, Ediger & Lee (2017) explained that the learning process should be enacted in a conducive environment that is pregnant with learning opportunities. For instance, the teacher who is supposed to be an expert in pedagogy should be able to unfold the curriculum in such a way that learning becomes a process of discovery and inquiry (Aoki, 2004). In the class of Mr Francois, it is observed that learning became meaningful and interesting when the learners are among peers. The teacher, Mr Francois, walked around the class to provide support to each learner. Despite that he obviously possessed the qualities of a good teacher in adopting a caring pedagogical approach, there are still some shortcomings in the making of a dynamic and natural environment, all necessary resources not having been aligned with the demands of the class situation (Mawell & Roofe, 2020). However, by moving amongst the learners, seeing to them one by one to provide individual support, Mr. Francois displayed that he understood that every child is unique, therefore they may have different learning needs. In order to make teaching and learning more effective, classes should be astutely organized by the teacher, and loaded with the necessary technology that can accommodate an active learning pedagogy (Aoki, 2004). /Mrs. Nazreen has a different teaching approach. She was friendlier with the students; and as a result, they were more relaxed and comfortable. That probably brought about the element of the natural in the class. It is worth noting that with both styles, students were happy and satisfied. This demonstrates the learners' approval of the pedagogy and that the learning has taken place satisfactorily (Maxwell & Roofe, 2020). In the same literature, it was argued that, should the same approach be used effectively to ensure the transferability of the curriculum, it would provide a great contribution to QE. Similarly, Hyunet al. (2017) clarified that in an active learning classroom where learners are engaged in learning activities, they are likely to experience more satisfaction than in the traditional classroom. However, in terms of this argument, happiness is associated with stress-free conditions of the learning process; whereas satisfaction as expressed earlier was associated with the achievement of desired learning outcomes. Aoki (2004) uniquely advanced the importance and benefits of the unfolding of the curriculum according to the realities of the class including the nature of learners, their abilities,

and their weaknesses. Different classes require different teaching methods and different resources. It is from this perspective that the difference between planned and lived curricula has emerged. In achieving QE, learners should be taught in a genuinely stress-free setting and not in a fake ideal class situation. Also, all the learners should be considered as a whole entity and not as parts. The learners have their own identity, family, physical body, beliefs, learning difficulties, social needs, emotional needs, health problems, and idiosyncrasies. Aoki (2004) declared that the curriculum should be unfolded taking into consideration all these factors. Oyere (2018) also imparted that, while unfolding the curriculum, teachers should not give consideration to the brain only, but rather should consider learners as whole human beings who have aspirations, ambitions, feelings, and who live in a society. Otherwise, the curriculum would be referred to as a 'thinking curriculum'. Eventually, for achieving QE, teachers would be required to make use of a caring pedagogy to unfold the curriculum as advocated by Aoki (2004) − a 'lived curriculum'.

8.3.3 School life as an experience of QE

According to Lomas (2007), QE would be experienced in a school setting in which all the processes and activities are regularly checked by the school leader to ascertain whether they are up to the standards and norms agreed upon. From such a perspective, QE is viewed as 'quality as excellence' (Weir, 2009; Van der Rest, 2012), as elucidated in the literature review, Chapter 2. Based on Lomas (2007), in a school that intends to dispense QE, the school community should not in any way experience any deception. All students, teachers, staff, and parents should experience satisfaction in school life, including with academic results. This research reveals that school life at PWSS is full of activities, including academic classes, extra-curricular activities, sports activities, and more. The school, in its pursuit of QE, has provisioned classrooms, laboratories, workshops, and specialist rooms for achieving the desired teaching and learning outcomes. For non-academic learning, there is a gymnasium, a football ground, a basketball pitch, a volleyball pitch, an endemic garden, a kitchen garden, a canteen area, and open space in front and beside the gymnasium. These spaces are shared by about 750 learners, excluding school staff. However, they are not adequate for the positive development of the untaught aspects of the curriculum in forging the identity of the individual, such as the sense of belonging and school culture (Fiske, 2014). There are also some 'naughty corners' at the back of the toilets and behind the gymnasium. A place that I have observed to be the favourite of PWSS students is the canteen area. The photo displayed in Figure 7.8 shows their inclination towards the place. The paintings and the graffiti on the walls say much. 'Nou

baz' is a Creole expression that means 'our favorite place'. Students are not supposed to be seen in that place except during breaks and recess or if authorized by a staff. However, students were observed to come and sit there at random times for some 10 minutes, offering many excuses: they were thirsty; they were not feeling well; they were hungry. This space certainly provides a break from learning. The canteen area is used for socializing, and also to touch base with friends in their own group of social cohesion. This agrees with Sa and Dias (2014), who highlighted that many socially cohesive groups are operating on school campuses. So far, no case of hazing has been recorded at school. When students do not engage in violence at their favourite base at school, this implies that the school culture is not toxic. The students could find that the base creates a sense of belonging to the school which is a component of the school identity (Roffey, 2012). Observations further revealed that the students come to take a brief pause from classes, to enjoy a brief moment of relaxation, such as drinking water or eating a piece of food. Roffey (2012) conveyed that a positive school life experience would further enhance the emotional and social development of the learners. A positive school life experience includes connectedness among students that fosters good relationships among the whole school community to ensure collaboration and commitment, and necessary resources and conditions for triggering a positive school life experience, such as a sense of belonging (Riede et al., 2020). When students, especially low-status and disadvantaged learners, feel at ease and at home, there is less of a chance of giving way to 'school dropout' syndrome. Students should not feel that they are strangers at the school (Everson & Millsap, 2005). The feeling of being secure and welcome would raise their level of interest in the school (Phongsavan et al., 2006) and would help better integration into the school culture (Warin, 2017). Eventually, a sense of belonging to the school would contribute to promoting a positive school culture that would enhance the school experience, and hence QE in general (St-Amand, Girard & Smith, 2017).

8.3.4 Community collaboration as an experience of QE

This research offered a finding that relates community collaboration to QE. In fact, the school community had expressed that they experienced QE through community engagement. Observation notes showed the enthusiasm of the students while they were playing games with the elders of the community. It was also indicated in the rector's interview that the school has a programme that engages learners in community collaboration. The rector believed that community service or community collaboration makes a positive contribution to the school's welfare and the enhancement of the school culture. Eventually, both the community and the school will benefit from a partnership between the school and the community (Zachariou &

Symeou, 2008). Observations further reveal that members of the community are used to conducting a sensitization campaign against illicit drugs and substance abuse. A school cannot exist in isolation; it derives most of its required resources from the locality; and interestingly, the future of the community is found in the school (Okorie et al., 2009; Nath & Ogbonna, 2012). The school-community collaboration plays many roles. One of them would be to ensure that the values of the community are transmitted to learners. Lambrechts (2014) revealed that many educational outcomes such as responsibility, identity construction, citizenship, discipline, and values are enhanced by school-community collaboration. Cadwell (2017) and Corey (2016) further verbalized that, when learners become involved in activities that extend care to elderly persons, or simply by spending time with them − playing games with them and serving them food − the learners develop attributes such as kindness. Passmore and Oades (2015) referred to the action of caring for others as a reasoned action and argued that it benefits both the giver and the recipient. Billing and Furco (2002), cited in Lambrechs (2014), explained that engaging learners in community service which they termed experiential learning pedagogy, would provide contextualized learning experiences. The outcomes would be more beneficial, and learners would experience better social and emotional growth as they would directly engage in authentic and real-time situations within their communities.

8.3.5 Reputation as an experience of QE

One finding of this research reveals that the whole school community rejoices in the experience of QE whenever the school excels in any curricular, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activities because the school will enhance its reputation in the public gaze − it does not matter whether it is a third prize. Also, in Chapter 7, there is a brief description of how enthusiastically and with how much pride the students were celebrating their laureates. Winning trophies in competition, in both curricular and extracurricular activities, are moments of glory for the school community − most importantly the students. And these activities have good media coverage − the news would be broadcast on TV, on the radio, and in the local newspaper. In Mauritius, people have a tendency to judge schools according to their performance – in any of the co- or extra-curricular activities. Reputation is built on the external image projected by the school and forms part of the organization (Demir, 2010). Reputation reflects the credibility of the school and the QE being dispensed at the school (Oktar and Carikci, 2012). Earning a good reputation in the public domain goes to what those outsiders write appreciatively about the school, thereby creating either customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Sarikaya & Oruc, 2010; Esen, 2011). The customers of a school are mainly parents and students. A school that has a

good reputation will gain public esteem and consequently, people will start displaying positive attitudes, behaviour, and respect towards the school. Also, schools that have a good reputation have a positive influence on parental choice and would also attract the interest of teachers to work at the school. (Sağir et al., 2014). Schools that have earned a good reputation are generally believed to be successful, as this signifies the achievement of organizational goals. However, the school community has to work harder to maintain this reputation; any slight deviation may cause huge harm to the reputation of the school (Sağir et al., 2014). Oplatka (2012) presumed that the school community would experience a feeling of accomplishment when their school earned a good reputation. The school community would gain a great deal of respect from society by acquiring a good reputation − such a reputation is synonymous with QE (Demir, 2010; Womg et al., 2016)).

8.4 Concluding thought

The current chapter has shown that the themes and subthemes emerging from the first-level analysis were interrelated. It also showed how the findings had been further examined, by comparing the findings with the literature and the theoretical framework. These themes and sub-themes could be summed up to explain firstly, how the school community of PWSS makes meaning of the notion of quality education. Secondly, it would indicate how the notion of quality education is enacted in the school; and thirdly, how quality education is experienced at the school. Below is a diagrammatical representation of the findings of this study.

A diagrammatic representation of findings

The diagram represents how the researcher views the interplay of data: inputs, process and outcomes.

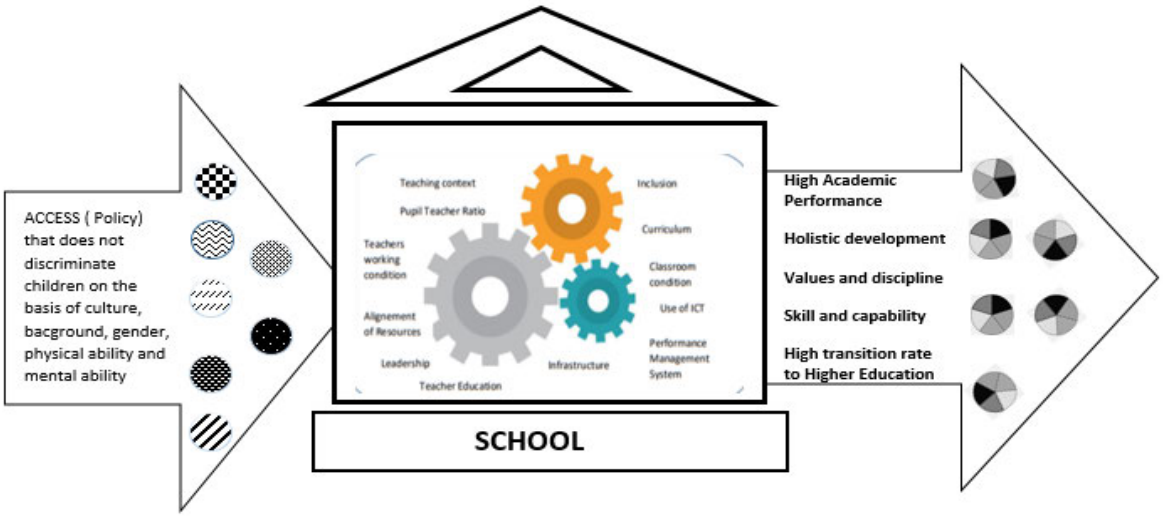

Figure 15: Quality education in a secondary school (PWSS)

Figure 15 represents the notion of quality education in a secondary school, such as PWSS. The notion of quality education as per the analysis of this thesis is threefold: the access, the school, and the educational outcomes. In a model of quality education, policy should be formulated to improve access to education without discrimination by allowing children of any gender, regardless of their family and cultural background, physical and mental ability, and language to attend school. In turn, the school community should put in place, organize, and align all required resources to enact quality education so as to yield educational outcomes that suit all components of the school community, the wider society in general, and ultimately, the country. The educational outcomes should promote the interests of the child, the parents, the society, the public sector, the private sector and the country. Quality education could thus be equated to quality access to school, quality school provisions and quality educational outcomes such as high academic performance, values and discipline, 21st century skills, holistic development and continuity of learning.

Schema of Quality Education at PWSS as viewed by the research

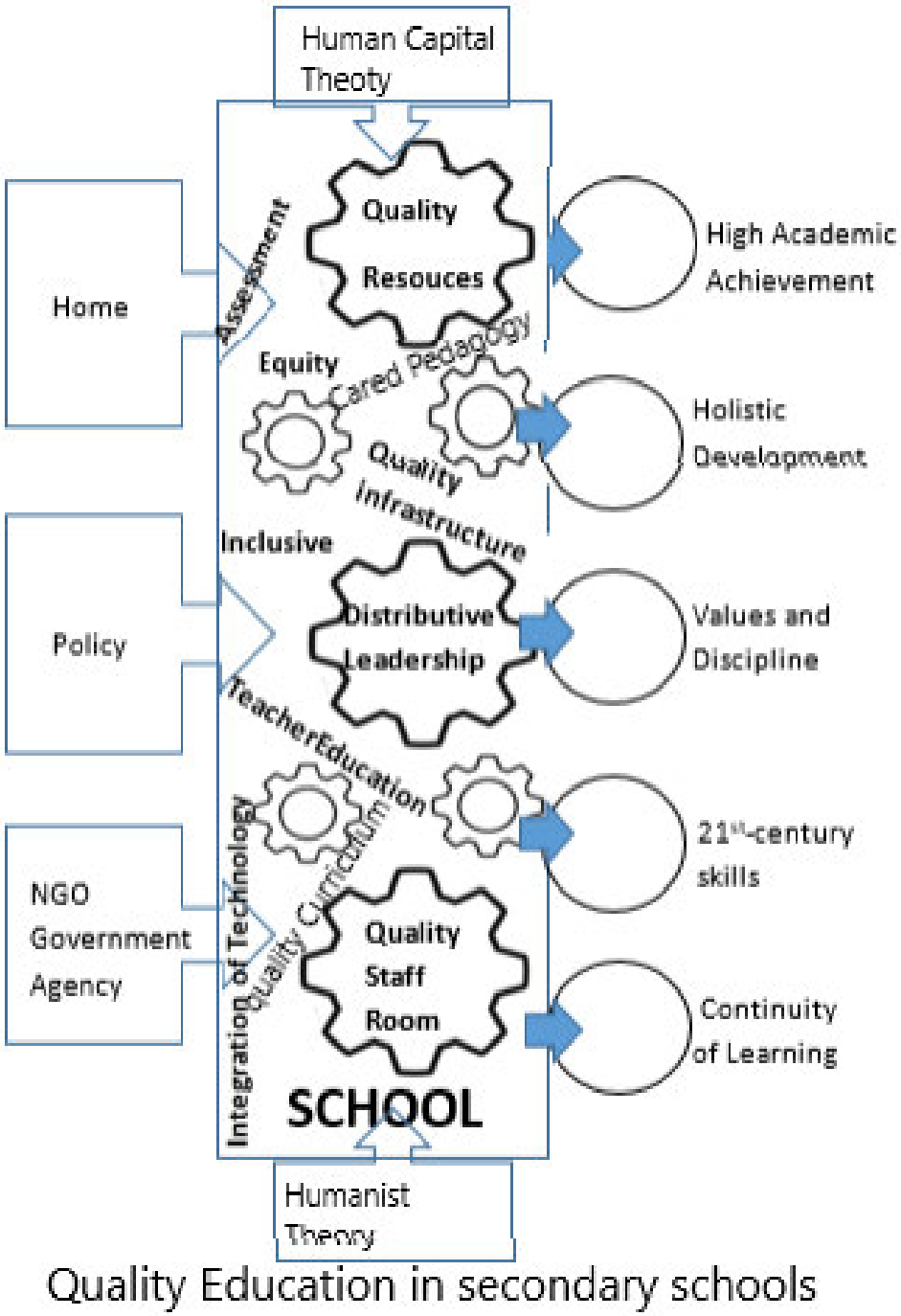

Figure 16 A schema of quality education in PWSS

CHAPTER 9: DEVELOPING THE THESIS

9.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the key findings of this research were lengthily discussed with regard to existing literature. The chapter demonstrates how the findings of this research either agree or disagree with existing literature.

This chapter is divided into six sections: an introduction, the research in a nutshell, a dialogue with the framework, a summary of the key findings, limitations of the study, recommendations for further research, and a conclusion.

Section 9.1 provides an outline of how the research was conducted to answer the critical questions. The research methods used by the researcher to produce data from the site of research are discussed; also, how the data were analysed at different levels to produce the key findings.

Section 9.2 presents a dialogue with the framework, showing how the findings of this research either agree or disagree with the provisions of the framework. Also, the researcher demonstrates the gaps in the framework in light of the findings of the research.

Section 9.3 provides a summary of the 13 key findings of the research. Each key finding is described briefly in relation to the notion of QE. The section shows how these key findings are either promoting or compromising the concept of QE.

Section 9.4 presents the limitations of the study. Research has its own boundaries. It cannot continue ad infinitum. This section discusses the boundaries of space and the limits of the research design.

Section 9.5 is dedicated to the recommendations for future research. Based on the insight gained from this research, this section outlines what the researcher can recommend to other researchers for further expansion of perspectives on QE.

Section 9.6 provides the concluding thought.

9.1 Research in a nutshell: what was done?

I have reviewed the literature on QE in many educational systems, more specifically in schools. I have noted that the discourse on QE has been constantly subjected to change. In the 1990s, access to education was considered a pursuit of QE. The education system, as in any of its units such as a school, functions as a modality that includes input, process, and output. In the education field, the word outcome is preferred to output as people are more interested in the long-term effect of the outputs. During the 90s, education gained more attention in developing countries, and in situations prone to social injustice. In some places, girls, refugees, and immigrants were denied access to education. Even now, in some places, social injustice is still felt. From 1990 to 2015, democratizing access to elementary education was on the main agenda and this has influenced the meaning of QE. Until now, the promise of 'education for all' has not been fulfilled; many countries are still striving to achieve basic education for all. Since 2015, the discourse on QE has shifted to inclusion, relevance, and participation. Based on a shifting discourse on QE, I set out to know more about QE and the way it is implemented in our schools. I have concentrated more on how people make meaning around QE.

The literature reviewed shows that QE is a very elusive term, conveying different meanings to different people. The literature and the framework present QE as a driver of change that is rebranding the education system. Literature also suggests that QE is shaped by the two famous education approaches, namely, the human capital theory and the human rights theory or even a combination of the two. Previous research was conducted on QE with regard to the various education systems in the world. Basically, there are four main cycles in any education system, namely, pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary. This research has focused on QE in the secondary education cycle, and more precisely in a secondary school.

1. What notions of QE does the school community espouse?
2. How is the notion of QE provisioned and enacted in the school?
3. How does the school community experience quality in the school?

In order to answer the critical research questions, it was necessary to use a theoretical framework that could guide our understanding of the phenomenon of QE. The theoretical framework used for this study was established by Tikly and Barrett (2011) who attempted to explain the complexities around QE from a perspective of social justice and in the context of low-income countries. It is stipulated in the framework that good QE would arise at the intersection of three interrelated enabling environments, namely, school, policy, and home. The good QE described by the framework would be about raising the capabilities of all learners so

that they become economically productive, and culturally, emotionally, and socially enriched individuals. The framework seeks to redistribute resources in such a way that underprivileged learners would have fair opportunities to participate in school activities and to be on a par with mainstream learners. It is worth noting that the framework for QE refers to the underprivileged learners as immigrants, refugees, and religious beliefs. By contrast, in this research, the concept of social justice is replaced by mainstream learners regardless of their differences. The framework of Tikly & Barrett (2011) shows concerns about learners who are marginalized in a mainstream context. However, this study has focused all attention on mainstream learners navigating for QE in a mainstream context. The study was carried out within the realm of the research methodology of ethnographic inquiry. Data was then produced from a sample of the school community members, including learners, teachers, parents, and the rector, through a combination of research methods as preconized by the research traditions of ethnography. The main methods for producing data were interviews, questionnaires, observations, focus-group discussions, and school documents. The data were analysed and were thematically sorted out through the rigour of qualitative analysis described in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. The findings of the research were lengthily discussed in chapter 8.

9.2 An Analytical Dialogue with the Conceptual Framework for understanding QE - Tikly and Barrett (2011)

Before presenting the summary of the findings, I present the discussion between the findings of this study wile applying the conceptual framework used in Chapter 3. A dialogue with the framework would expand the perspective of QE and provide further support to the rationale set before the study.

The framework tends to associate QE first and foremost with the raising of capabilities of learners to participate in the socio-economic development of the country. This consequence of QE as revealed in the findings allows all stakeholders to enjoy a good return on investment in education. This finding accords well with the human capital tradition. In the framework, the desired outcomes are geared more towards the development of numeracy and literacy; however, in this research, the desired outcomes are more diverse. There has been a paradigm shift in the way we see ourselves as human beings. We have diverse ways of proving our existence on this planet. To some people, the purpose of education is to help us keep pace with economic progress; and to others, education may serve to help develop qualities as per the cultural demands of their community or society. This research emerges to establish that the

school PWSS seeks to develop high academic outcomes, holistic development, citizenship, discipline and ICT skills as the most desired outcomes. For the school community, any effort made to achieve these outcomes would be a testament to quality education.

The framework argues that QE would be dispensed in any education system that has strong and appropriate policy inputs that would favour inclusion, relevance, and participation. All learners should be given access to education irrespective of their cultural, gender, ethnic, social, and financial differences. Accommodating learners with these differences in a school is a serious challenge as it requires resources and strong policies. Examples of policy inputs could include national debate policies. Such policies would encourage parents of underprivileged learners to participate in national debates on QE, so that resources are aligned for the achievement of outcomes wished for. Secondly, in the pursuit of QE, all learners should be treated as on the same footing. If not, even the slightest difference made could hamper the academic progress of underprivileged learners. All learners having textbooks at hand would be somewhat of an assurance of the continuity of learning. Policies should also be formulated to provide school materials such as textbooks to learners. Thirdly, another policy input for promoting QE would be providing targeted financial support to schools so that they could address specific issues that were a hindrance to those underprivileged learners at school. Such issues could include the building of separate toilets for girls and boys, serving free meals at school, supplying electricity in class, having access to drinking water, etc.

This research also links QE to the three dimensions of the school curriculum: inclusion, relevance, and participation, but more up-to-date to the current norms and demands of society and within the purview of than inclined to the humanist tradition. At the school level, the voices of learners, teachers, and parents are heard through committees and clubs. This research suggests that parity of participation at the school level could be achieved through committees and school clubs. Also, the school is prepared to accommodate learners with mild physical disabilities and impairments. Despite the school not having ramps, there is the provision of handrails to assist learners with mild physical impairments to climb the stairs. This research does draw a line of separation between severe and not severe, having and not having. Things and beings do not exist in dipoles but rather in a continuum. Learners may have mild physical impairments, visual impairments and hearing impairments. They also struggle at school for quality education. The voices of these learners could be heard on various platforms such as clubs, committees, and other forms of representation. Concerning the relevance of the curriculum, this study suggests that the school offer a wide range of subjects for study.

However, this would not be enough to satisfy the demands of the learners. To some degree, learners would continue to strive for access to opportunities for developing their capabilities as desired. This research also highlights the importance of policy inputs such as targeted finance and free textbook distribution as an element of QE. However, the modality and rationality are not the same as the realities of school which are under a flux of change. The targeted financial support is still needed for other new projects such as purified drinking water, a conference room, laboratories, and more. At present, regarding textbooks, in Mauritius all students of Grades 7 to 9 receive free textbooks. Another policy input for QE would be having free and high-speed internet at school.

It was also argued in the framework that school inputs such as conducting in-house capability-building exercises for teachers, encouraging a learning-centred approach, providing adequate infrastructure and resources, and conducting school self-evaluation are prerequisites for QE. Similarly, the findings of this research corroborate the outlook on QE as argued in the framework. However, this research claims more attention concerning the inadequacy of the school inputs. This research claims that parsimony of resources driven by utilitarianism cannot subsist in a school dispensing QE. Resources should be made equally available to every learner. For example, the ramps are not available because there are very few learners with any physical impairment. Most resources are aligned or policies are formulated to suit the majority. Some subjects are not offered because the number of learners opting for them is too low, and therefore supplying these subjects would not be cost-effective. This study suggests that more periods should be allocated for holistic development. At the secondary school level, learners are at different stages of human development, whether children, adolescents or adults. Learners tend to show relatively more concern for their physical, social, and cultural development than for their cognitive development. School inputs in this research are inclined toward the quality of infrastructure which means that resources are not aligned to meet the basic requirements only, but also to bring comfort and to enhance school experiences. Examples are (i) blackboard and chalk to be replaced by interactive whiteboards, and (ii) electric fans to be replaced by air conditioners, etc. Another important aspect in this respect would be the conditions of the staffroom. This research positioned the conditions of the staffroom at the centre of teacher development, demonstrating that the staffroom is no longer viewed as a working space, but also as a place for socializing. The facilities provided should match the status ascribed to them by society. Teachers should be availed at the least of facilities that they have at home, or as near to these as possible, or they will not be motivated to work.

The framework advocates that home inputs, such as having a place to study at home, are important ingredients of QE. According to the framework, the home should prepare the learners for school. Parents should provide lunch, proper clothing and school material so that learners come to school with the least stress. This research found the same importance in the contribution of home inputs to QE. However, this research is restricted to the influence of school factors on QE. This research has not looked into typical home aspects such as providing a place for a learner to study at home, as this is beyond the scope of this research. This research, however, gives much attention to parental involvement and the PTA. This research suggests the involvement of the PTA in the preparation of the SDP.

The study has a few identified gaps in the framework. Based on these gaps, and with the guidance of existing literature, a new framework was designed to summarize the findings of this study while also expanding perspectives on QE. The gaps recognized showed that the framework for QE (Tikly & Barrett, 2011) is limited; as it considers the achievement of desired outcomes as the only driver of QE. Furthermore, the framework shows greater concern about the number of learners achieving the desired outcomes as a percentage of the number of learners that had access to the education system. The framework focuses on the development of simple competencies such as numeracy and literacy as an achievement of QE. The emphasis was laid more on the outcomes than on the process presented for achieving those desired outcomes. However, this research considers all the processes and provisions put in place at the school as an integral part of QE. The findings of this study highlight all the processes such as pedagogy, policy inputs, examinations, assessments, the curriculum, resources, infrastructure; and all the school activities are considered an integral part of QE. Despite all the learners having achieved the desired outcomes, the school would not be categorized as an institution providing QE were the school processes and school provisions flawed. This implies that all the processes and the provisions put in place at the school by the school community for achieving the goal are in accordance with the standards and quality prescribed by the school community and educational trends. The feel-good factor experienced by all stakeholders including parents, teachers, learners, non-teaching staff, and the rector during the processes is given equal and due attention. This research claims that QE would be experienced should all learners appreciate the educational journeys with their peers in achieving the desired outcomes in the most conducive, peaceful, and safe school environment.

The second gap identified by these research findings on the existing framework is the achievement of excellence of the desired outcomes. The framework for QE as stipulated by

Tikly and Barrett (2011) does not show much concern for the quality of desired outcomes in terms of excellence. However, the findings of this research reflect that there is much concern about the quality of the outcomes. Great interest was shown by all stakeholders towards the achievement of desired outcomes; however, much more interest was also shown toward the achievement of excellent desired outcomes. The achievement of these desired outcomes matters more when they are of excellent quality. It is indicated that achievement of excellence conveys the feeling of happiness, pride, and also adds to reputation. One of the purposes of education is to become competent in the job market; and the claim of having a competitive advantage in the job market can be demonstrated by competencies and skills of excellence. Achievement of excellence is not limited to academic achievement only, but is extended to all non-academic activities such as sport, drama, music, etc. In contrast with the framework, the findings of this study reveal the importance of having different types of assessments and examinations as quality provisions because these represent processes and preparations for excellence. Finally, as in all dominant discourse on QE, all the school processes and arrangements that are intelligently put in place at school to ultimately to achieve excellence in education.

The third gap recognized by this study is that QE is more likely to be accredited to the principles of fitness for purpose and fitness of purpose. QE is based on the findings of this research and gives more attention to how the resources aligned or procedures put in place at the school contribute to the achievement of the desired outcomes. Compared to the framework, QE described by this study shows more interest in the adequacy and effectiveness of the utilization of resources interplayed within the processes enacted to achieve the desired outcomes. For example, the library is mentioned in the framework as one of the most important prerequisites of QE. However, not all students have adequate access to the library and can use the library facilities to achieve their goals. The library, despite being central to the achievement of certain educational outcomes, is not sufficient to serve the purpose. The framework mentions that a library facility is a key requirement for QE; however, it does not mention that library facilities should be available adequately to serve the purpose. The findings of this research argue that the resources and facilities put in place should be of the right quantity and quality to give opportunities to all learners; and should also be of quality in the sense that they lead to the achievement of the desired outcomes. In other words, facilities and resources should not be seen as satisfying the checklist requirement of fitness of purpose; but should rather be viewed as fitness for purpose.

The fourth gap identified in the framework (Tikly & Barrett, 2011) is that QE focuses more on completing a cycle in education. However, this study highlights the importance of continuity in education; that is, the transition to the next cycle of education. The framework describes QE as a system that allows learners to complete the cycle of education and achieve the desired outcomes of raising the capability of learners. There is nothing explicitly stated about raising the interest of learners to transit to the next cycle or next level. The transition of learners to the next level or cycle of education depends on other factors such as the wishes of parents, the wishes of students, and other constraints of a financial nature or availability of such facility. However, this research argues that QE is about sensitizing the parents and the learners to the importance of education in this information era and in the context of globalisation; and more importantly, raising the interest of students to pursue their learning. According to this research, a school providing QE has to induce in the learners the desire to learn more and to achieve higher skills and competencies for a greater return on investment in education. It is also argued in this research that a school dispensing QE should motivate learners and should create more awareness, such as offering career guidance to raise interest or to foster ambition in learners towards greater achievements. Taking seriously this idea of raising the motivational level of learners to advance to university, the school community should be empowered to formulate policies that will enhance their learning experience at school by organising more interschool competitions thus give the students a stronger hunger for learning. Again, apart from achieving excellence, schools should show substantial efforts to improve the transition rate to university or any post-secondary institutions. The findings reveal that the school community derives contentment and pride when the learners transit to university or any tertiary institution.

9.3 Summary of Findings

1. In this study it was found that the concept of QE conveys different meanings to different people. This is consistent with the literature that suggests that the concept of QE is fluid and dependent upon varied indicators. The variation of the meaning is due to the different agendas and the role of the people involved in the education system, including learners, teachers, rectors, parents, and policymakers. Also, the meaning of QE varies from one education cycle to another. Findings of this research reflect that there is a slight difference between the educational outcomes mentioned in the framework and this research. The framework was referring to outcomes of the elementary education cycle, whereas this research refers to outcomes of the secondary education cycle. In the secondary education cycle, the degree of fluidity is more pronounced as the learners are more mature and therefore have a broader

perspective in terms of aspirations and ambitions. Also, the increased level of fluidity can be associated with the learners in the secondary education cycle being from all phases of human development − children, adolescents and adults. The fluidity of the concept of QE also arises from the three-phase system approach to education, namely, input-process-outcomes. Some people refer to QE as quality inputs, such as budgets, access to all learners, resources, infrastructure, etc., while others prefer to see QE as a quality process encompassing such as pedagogy, teachers' conditions, examinations and assessments, feedback giving, and so on; and eventually leading to quality outcomes of either academic performance, or non-academic performance.

2. The study also found that the concept of QE is fully inclusive of the academic, extra-curricular, and holistic development of an individual. Findings of the research reveal that QE is a multidimensional concept that is both broad and deep. QE in secondary school subscribes to the act of giving value to various educational outcomes, including both academic and non-academic achievements. While the academic aspects of the educational outcomes comprise the development of knowledge, skills, and critical thinking as publicly approved in the human capital tradition, the non-academic aspects such as emotional, social, and physical development are more likely to be from the realm of the humanist tradition.

3. The study reveals that QE is equated to the achievement of high performance in all school activities such as examinations, and interschool sports competitions. While the school leader, teachers, learners, and parents view QE as the holistic development of the learner, the learners and parents tend to gravitate towards academic excellence as a de facto indicator of QE. The school should give equal opportunities for the more holistic development of the learners. The research suggests that schools should offer a range of activities of proportionate quality and quantity to the learners. It is also indicated in the findings that the school community considers the achievement of excellent academic results to be the primary purpose of schools. However, excellent achievement of non-academic results should be also valued. Despite the research showing an inclination of QE towards excellence, there is also evidence that the school tends to demonstrate parsimony when it comes to the alignment of resources for non-academic achievement.

4. The research also found that all processes and activities that have been enacted in the school to achieve QE are considered integral parts of QE itself. While other literature including the framework considers internal examinations, assessments, giving feedback, remedial classes,

pedagogy, curriculum, sports facilities, and alignment of resources as provisions enacted for QE, it is obvious from the findings of this research that these provisions are indeed integral parts of QE. Similarly, all the inputs comprising school inputs − enrolment, self-evaluation, recruitment of teachers, professional development of teachers, teaching conditions, infrastructure; policy inputs such as targeted funds, inclusion, waiving examination fees; home inputs such as school uniform, school materials, and lunch pack, etc. are also considered constituents of QE. In the research findings, QE is articulated as the sum of school experiences of the people connected to the school, that is, learners, teachers, parents, rector, non-teaching staff and members of the community.

5. The findings of this research reveal that within the concept of QE, schools are encouraged to make use of ICT and technology whenever possible for the delivery of lessons. Here, technology means all manufactured tools that enhance human capabilities. I separate ICT from technology as ICT refers more to computers and tends to overshadow technology. This research suggests that schools should provide opportunities for learners to acquire adequate skills for using the most recent technology including ICT. For dispensing QE, the school will have to transform the teaching and learning environments into a more technology-friendly environment. Learners and teachers should be exposed to the latest technology, this being believed to facilitate the acquisition of ICT and other technology skills. According to the concept of QE, as per the findings, the education sector has reached a watershed for the integration of technology into pedagogy. Notably, technology and ICT should not be viewed as a means only of improving a school's efficiency and effectiveness, but also as a way of enhancing both teaching and learning experiences. This research enlists ICT literacy as a required educational outcome, as are literacy and numeracy, among others.

6. This research also found that the concept of QE at the level of school shows greater concern for the community and the values of the community. The findings reveal that there is much more to gain when schools embark on projects such as community engagement. This attitude is embedded in the humanist approach to education. Engaging the learners in community projects enhances the social skills of the learners. Additionally, the findings highlight that community engagement has a more positive impact on learners' behaviour in society. Community engagement boosts some broader socio-ecological factors that impact learners' development, such as citizenship, love for others, respect for elders, inter alia.

7. It is also found in the research that the notion of QE in a secondary school tends more to a collaborative approach to education. This research demands that children be trained and taught to learn through collaboration. Within the collaborative approach to learning, any learning task should be an opportunity to help learners develop their abilities to resolve or tolerate differences. The collaborative approach contributes to the development of critical thinking of the learners who are constantly being challenged socially and emotionally by the various views and opinions of their friends. In a way, students would learn how to defend their ideas and opinions. Within the purview of QE, learners should be not encouraged to foster egocentricity. However, QE should favour a collaborative learning approach that triggers the development of social skills.

8. The study also found that QE is experienced at school as a feeling of pride and excellence. It is indicated that the school community should endeavour to command the respect of society and should demonstrate a feeling of pride when the school delivers excellent performance in both academic and non-academic competitions. The school community tends to celebrate most spectacularly when the school gains exceptionally good achievements such as laureates. The school community extends pride as a socio-emotional product of happiness and success. The findings also reveal that such success does not only induce a feeling of pride, it also creates a reputation for the school, especially so when the success or achievement is covered by the local media. A school that dispenses QE should trigger the pride of learners, teachers, and parents; this will motivate all to work harder for keeping up the same level of performance or even improving on it. Also, this research argues that a school intending to optimize QE should organize more events with greater fervour, to celebrate non-academic achievements, such as sports day, music day, benevolent day, etc.

9. The findings of this study also reveal that, within the concept of QE, learners' motivational level for continuing with their education is always increasing. The study recognizes that the motivation of learners is triggered by good teaching and a relevant curriculum. The findings suggest that good working conditions and adequate qualifications for teachers, as well as appropriateness of the curriculum, can largely contribute to sustaining the interest of learners to continue with their education. The concept of QE calls for enhancing the learning experience at school to motivate learners to complete the education cycle and ultimately to transit to university. Therefore the holding of frequent career guidance workshops at school to augment awareness of career prospects and to present to learners the courses available in different universities are always welcomed in pursuit of QE.

10. The study shows that a school dispensing QE tends to increase the employability of the learners. The findings reveal that all efforts are intelligently provided by all stakeholders to include in the school curriculum and to align necessary resources that would contribute to the development of learners' competencies that facilitate employability. It is also indicated that many learners would reach the age of 20 at the end of the secondary education cycle; and many of them would wish to enter the job market for diverse reasons such as helping their parents or being financially independent. Heading towards QE, a secondary school, in particular, should give sufficient attention to the development of communication and ICT skills of learners to facilitate their employability in the job market. The school should demonstrate the efforts put towards increasing the employability of learners by giving more subject combinations that include computer studies, travel and tourism, design and technology, business enterprise, inter alia.

11. This research articulates the importance of the use of appropriate pedagogy to unfold the curriculum as a baseline of QE in school. Findings show that learners are urging teachers to make use of a teaching approach that would enhance their learning experiences. Teaching approaches that match, to the best degree possible, the level of interest and abilities of the learners are indicators of QE. A teacher is indeed the architect who designs the lessons and aligns resources to make the class as interesting as possible. He or she is responsible for converting the curriculum into learning experiences that satisfy the innate curiosity of learners. Such a pedagogy which promotes active learning should be touted in schools subscribing to QE. Learning is a consequence of teaching; therefore, as a consequence, teachers should be informed on how to enhance the quality of the learning experience provided to students. This study ultimately equates with QE, an active and caring pedagogy approach that aims at enriching the experiences of learners.

12. The study reveals that the concept of QE becomes functional when a school is provided with the right quantity and quality of resources and facilities. This means that resources have to be aligned in a combination that satisfies both criteria of fitness of purpose and fitness for purpose. For example, a school needs an adequate number of teachers for all learners. Not having enough teachers will have a negative effect on the quality of education. On the other hand, having insufficient teachers qualified to teach will impact negatively on QE. Therefore QE will only be possible if the resources are aligned to the satisfaction of both criteria of fitness for purpose and fitness of purpose. The study indicates that some resources aligned in school are nevertheless limited in quantity for developing learners' capabilities. Other resources are

limited in quality − such as a playground not properly maintained, teachers who are insufficiently qualified, and more. The findings reveal that resources at school should be in the right proportion of quantity and quality to yield desired outcomes.

13. Another important finding of this study is that the leadership of a school rector plays a central role in the concept of QE. While Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2014) argue that there are many different styles of leadership that a rector could adopt to manage his or her school effectively, this study found that distributive leadership is most appropriate for a secondary school. This appears to contradict the provisions of the School Management Manual (2009) which advocates that instructional leadership is most suitable for state secondary schools in Mauritius. However, findings of this research reveal that distributed leadership style is the most apt for a QE which is supposed to make the best decisions on all the different aspects of the school. In Mauritius only qualified teachers who have at least a bachelor's degree or a diploma (in scarce subject areas, for instance, Telugu, music, and Modern Chinese) are recruited to teach in state secondary schools. Most teachers have a master's degree and a PGCE. In a distributed leadership approach, the power of a rector should be shared with teachers, who must be allowed to participate in the decision-making process. The rector, as a leader, builds up a shared vision for the school. In the school, many committees and clubs are set up to give opportunities for the staff to share their opinions and views. In this way, within the concept of QE, a school will thrive and will easily yield desired outcomes.

9.4 The Concept of QE as emerging from the Thesis

The emerging theory from the thirteen interwoven findings presents quality education, at the school level, as a dynamic concept that is embedded essentially in a blend of human capital, humanist, and human-rights based approaches to education, in which human development is central to school improvement. Quality education requires a quality school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning, and human development. The school environment should adapt to the needs of all stakeholders, such as learners, irrespective of their differences, and should be equated to current technological and social needs. In this context, human development encompasses physical, social, emotional, cultural, and financial development; and a quality school environment includes infrastructure, social facilities, and educational facilities. The thesis also mentioned that the educational outcomes are diverse and should be

excellent. The educational outcomes stemmed from human development as desired by the members of the school community, both individually and collectively.

9.5 Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study is that it takes place in a state secondary school which is owned by the state of Mauritius. All resources such as infrastructure, library, books, conditions of classrooms, and recruitment of teachers, among others, are taken care of by the government of Mauritius. Every school is unique; different schools have different cultures. This makes every school a separate case to study. I have not pursued the study with the intention of generalization. Notably, in Mauritius, there are three types of private secondary schools, one of which is private secondary schools which are grant-aided. These schools gain both licence and full grants to operate from the Private Secondary Education Authority. This type of school is similar to a state secondary school such as PWSS. However, they do not receive admissions from the MES. The second type is the private secondary school, also licensed by the PSEA. However, fees are fully paid by the learners; and these schools follow a different curriculum. The third type is a fee-paying private secondary school which is licensed by the PSEA, but enrols students who are either dropouts from state secondary school or from the first category of private secondary school. This type of school also enrols students who have exceeded the eligibility criteria for secondary schools. These schools are relatively smaller and with fewer resources. Furthermore, there are boys' schools, girls' schools, and mixed schools in both state and private secondary schools. Therefore, researching in any one of these schools would be a different experience; and would certainly further expand our perspective on QE. However, I can say I was truthful to the data produced, and as far as I was able, I have done justice to the data produced.

9.6 Recommendations for Future Research

This study has succeeded in shedding light on and expanding our perspectives on QE. The research approach has contributed to uncovering many silent issues faced by learners and the school community in general that have been compromising the quality of education in secondary schools. Recently, the MOE has brought about a massive reform in the education sector, including secondary and primary education cycles. One of the major actions of the reform was to allow children who have not succeeded in the PSAC examinations to transit to Grade 7 to a regional secondary school closest to their home. These children have generally

been admitted to a special class known as the Extended Stream Grade 7. Naturally enough, these children are labelled by other students and teachers as extended-stream students. While many of these learners show deviant behaviour and are ill-disciplined, they also demonstrate poor literacy and numeracy skills. The strategy of creating such a separate class for them in a regional secondary school has surprised many people who are serving the secondary educator sector, including myself. This research has now provided a lens through which to understand QE in a secondary school. It would have been good to apply research to expand our perspective of QE from a social justice perspective in the context of regional secondary schools, more precisely on the extended stream. Another important action of the reform was the creation of secondary schools of academic excellence known as secondary academies. There are 16 secondary school academies on the island. Only students who have given excellent performance in the NCE examinations are given admission to these secondary academies. There are only four grades − Grades 10, 11, 12 and 13 − in a secondary academy. Furthermore, these secondary academies are mixed schools − they enrol both girls and boys and are owned by the government. I suggest that research could be conducted in an academy school to explore how QE is enacted in such a school. I would also recommend that in the future research be conducted in schools to unveil how 'theory, practice, and policy' would work together in the blended approach that includes the human capital, humanist and the rights-based approaches for providing quality education. The research should expand perspectives of quality education in the blended approach, at least to unravel how the school community would navigate through the constraints so as to facilitate enabling factors of quality education.

9.7 Concluding Thought

The study concludes that there has been a significant change in the way QE is conceived in schools. We have to subscribe to the fact that every person is unique, and the same appears to be true in their collective actions in communities. The model of QE perceived and conceived in their respective group, school, or community would be naturally unique and different from that of the wider public. The findings of the research have provided answers to the three research questions with the guidance of the theoretical framework for QE (Tikly & Barrett, 2011). This chapter represents the destination point of the research journey. The study has highlighted the meaning and implications of quality education in a secondary school through an ethnographic inquiry; and has also shown its limitations and given more directions to research on QE in different contexts. This study concludes that QE is holistic in nature as it touches on all spheres of the education setting and beyond. Quality education is a dynamic

result emanating from many aspects of an education setting such as inputs, processes, environments, policies and outcomes that are mostly desirable and are of the highest standard available in the context. Before entering the field, I believed that quality education is about reaching the highest degree of educational achievement. QE was mostly about improving the school environment for optimal use and for achieving excellence in academic performance. However, after the research, my perception of the notion of quality education has changed greatly. Quality education is not about one strand of perfection only, such as academic performance, or a school having the best possible environment; rather, QE is a dynamic and holistic development of human beings in a fostering environment in its own context. Quality education is about giving access to all children to an educational system that facilitates human development. In this way, learners can live harmoniously and contribute to their community, society, country, and to global context. However, the phenomenon of quality education seems to be ever-expanding; future research will continue to provide further insights.

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APPENDIX 1

Ethical Clearance (UKZN)

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

10 June 2016

Mr Manoj Sunassee 213573470
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Sunassee

Protocol reference number: HSS/0437/015D
Project title: Exploring the notion of quality education: An ethnographic study in a secondary school.

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 30 April 2015 , the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL.**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc. Supervisor: Professor Labby Ramrathan, Dr SE Mthiyane, Dr Rada Tirvassen
Cc. Academic Leader: Dr SB Khoza
Cc. School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo & Ms B Bhengu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
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APPENDIX 2

Gate Keeper (MOE)

REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & HUMAN RESOURCES, TERTIARY EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Our Ref: ME/0/305/3 T4 (2)

[redacted]

Mr Manoj Sunassee
Corner Naz/Berthaud Avenues
Quatre Bornes

Dear Sir,

Subject: Permission to Conduct Research Project at Dr Regis Chaperon SSS

Please refer to your letter dated 20 April 2015 in connection with the above subject.

2. The Ministry is pleased to inform you that approval has been granted for you to carry out your research at Dr Regis Chaperon SSS as mentioned in the letter under reference.

3. It is understood that:

- It will be left to the Educators themselves to decide upon their participation or not
- Students' participation will be subject to parental consent
- No classes will be disrupted while you are carrying out your research.
- You will submit a brief of your findings to this Ministry at a later stage.

4. You are kindly advised to liaise with the Rector prior to conducting your survey

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

E. Pillay (Mrs)

for Supervising Officer

APPENDIX 3

Inform Consent

Corner Naz/Berthaud Avenues

Quatre Bornes

Mauritius

16 July 2016

Dear Participant,

INFORMED ASSENT LETTER FOR LEARNER PARTICIPANTS

I,Mr Manoj Sunassee, Physics Educator at DRC State Secondary School hereby write to you to seek your consent to participate in research for myPhD Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Edgewood Campus, South Africa. My research topic is on Exploring the notion of quality education: An ethnogaphy in a secondary school. The focus of this exploration is through the lens of the school community.

You have been selected as aparticipant in this study through a purposive sampling process. Participation would include a series of interviews that will take place over a period of one month from commencement of the interview process. The interviews will be of a conversational type, making reference to object, events and activitieswithin the school. The interviews will take place at a time convenient to you and will not disrupt your study programme.

Please note that:

- Yourconfidentiality is guaranteed as inputs will not be attributed to any specific person/s, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- Each interview may take up to 45 minutes and may be split depending on yourpreference.
- Any information given by your cannot be used against yourself, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. Youwill not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment: audio recording, video recording and photographic imaging.

I can be contacted at:

Email: mansunpri01@yahoo.com

[redacted]

My supervisor is Prof. Labby Ramrathan who is located at the School of Education, Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details: email:ramrathanp@ukzn.ac.za,

[redacted]

You may also contact the Research Office through:

Ms Phumelele Ximba

[redacted]
Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

[redacted]

Manoj Sunassee

APPENDIX 4

Participation inform Sheet

DECLARATION

I.....Deodass THUMIAH..... hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw my participation from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I also understand and give permission for the use of the following recording devices during the interview and data production process.

	Willing	Not willing
Audio recording	✓	
Photographic equipment	✓	
Video recording	✓	

SIGNATURE OF RECTOR **DATE**

[redacted]

ROSE HILL STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL

APPENDIX 5

Interview Questions

Name			**Date**	
Pseudo Name			**Time**	
Category			**Duration**	

1. **Notions of Quality Education**
   - 1.1.1. What does quality/good education mean to you?
   - 1.1.2. Do you think your students are receiving good education at school? Explain using your understanding of good education.
   - 1.1.3. In your opinion, what are the indicators of quality education in a secondary school? Why do you regard these indicators as those of quality education?
2. **How the notion of Quality education is enacted in the school?**
   - 2.1.1. What are the provisions made for providing quality education in school? Can you tell me more about what provisions are put in place at the school for quality education?
   - 2.1.2. Are you satisfied with your working conditions at school?
   - 2.1.3. Do you think that working conditions of teachers really have a bearing on quality education?
   - 2.1.4. Do you have recourse to one single or a variety of teaching strategies?
   - 2.1.5. What inform your choice of a particular teaching strategy?
   - 2.1.6. How many assessments do you conduct in one term?
   - 2.1.7. How do you give feedback to students?
   - 2.1.8. Do you think giving feedback is important for quality education?
   - 2.1.9. How often/ and when do you give feedback to students and parent?
   - 2.1.10. How often do you meet parents?
   - 2.1.11. Do you have common assessments?
   - 2.1.12. Do you have opportunities to undergo professional development courses?
   - 2.1.13. What are the type of professional development courses do get at school?
   - 2.1.14. How often do you confer with your colleagues?
   - 2.1.15. How often your rector interact with you?
   - 2.1.16. Are you involved in school decision making process?
   - 2.1.17. Do you think quality education is being compromised in the school? What are they? and why do you think so?
   - 2.1.18. Can you elaborate on teachers working conditions? Like toilets?
3. **Experience of school education in relation to quality**
   - 3.1.1. Are you satisfied with the current school system? Why?
   - 3.1.2. When do you feel you are experiencing quality education is your school?
   - 3.1.3. What achievements that make you experience quality education?

APPENDIX 6

Student Questionnaire

[redacted]

[redacted]

S. N.	Questions (interview)	
1	What does quality education mean to you? Is it similar to good education?	Quality education would be us students going our best to improve our results and be self dependant.
2.	what do you like about your school? why?	What I like is that there is a friendly relationship between students and teachers. There are also many facilities available.
3.	What do you dislike in/ about your school? Why?	There are so many facilities available but due to a small group the others have to suffer, for example the toilets have been closed due to smokers.
4.	If you were the rector of the school, what would you change? Why	If I had to be the rector, I would imply strict regulations. Students are just given threats which does not bring any change at all.
5	Does the feedback given to you make sense to you? Are they appropriate? (Feedback means comments on your performance on your test, classwork atc)	Yes as teachers guides us about where there has been a lack of emphasis and where improvement is needed.
6	Do you have remedial classes or similar exercises? (remedial class means special classes to explain to you where you got difficulties to grasp)	Yes remedial classes are done but not by all teachers. Only some of them consider it to be done to bring some improvement.
7	Do you participate in extra-curricular activities?	Yes but rarely due to unfair selections.
8	Are you happy with the way your school organize the extra - curricular activities?	NO. When school organize curricular activities, selections are done by only the teacher's consent which is unfair to other students than can be more brilliant.
9	Does your school provide adequate support for extra-curricular activities?	There are the support of teachers which provides us with school facilities.
10	Does your school give students opportunity to lead some committees at school?	As I know, only represents of the class can lead the committees.
11	Are the decision-making processes clear to you?	Before making any decisions, teachers consult us. So yes.

APPENDIX 7

Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion

Date : 12/05/2017 Place: Biology lab . Time: 1050 – 1121

Students involved [redacted]

Students involved | Rayan, Bertand, Fadil, Nadim, Hafiz, Jean, Ashley, Fadil, Shamil and Jerome

1 Question - Do you have remedial classes or similar classes?

2 Ashley: Yes but for namesake. The teacher does not do anything - 'Ce mai pareseu' So have professeur le. (pas chez 2st)

3 Nadim: Yes, very rare.

4 Fadil: No, not ~~really~~ really - They just do revision classes.

Shamil: Yes, not [illegible] at all. 'Pas faire rarement' plutôt pas faire

~~Jerome~~ Shamil: Mr Swarsee, you are well aware.

Jerome: Yes, cependant rarely. But it is not appropriate - we are given classwork.

Rayan: 30 minutes only - last to do.

APPENDIX 8

Obervation Sheet

OBSERVATION SHEET

	Date: 14 September 2001 Place: [redacted] / Grade 9 [redacted] 5th period Time: 11:30 People/Thing/Activity Students	Remarks Mr Neeran is the [redacted]
	- Mr Neeran was preparing lesson pupils were talking. The classroom is filled with noise. The noise is really disturbing. Some students comes infront to ask the teacher if her can go out to bring some water. Mr Neeran is very friendly to them. The setting is very different. - A lot of colour on the floor - The class was dark. A lot of sheaffs were stacked on the table. The Student seem to like the class. They respect Mr Neeran well - Everytime Mr Neeran raises his head, they immediately keep quiet There are a lot of posters pasted on the wall	
	Important notes:	

[redacted]

APPENDIX 9

Language Editing

Mr. Amal Gopaul
Avenue Ligne Berthaud
Quatre Bornes
Mauritius
Email: gopaulamal@gmail.com
Tel: [redacted]

This is to confirm that I have undertaken language editing of a doctoral thesis Mr. Manoj Sunassee entitled Exploring the conception of quality education. An ethnographical inquiry in a secondary school.

[redacted]

Date : 20 July, 2022

APPENDIX 10

Turnitin Report