THE 'HOW', 'WHY' AND 'WHAT FOR' OF SCHOOL MEMBERS' RESPONSES TO THEIR NEW PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP

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Many conjectures surround the number and nature of education reforms that schools have adopted throughout the years in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T). Such conjectures attempt to explain why some of our schools continue to underperform and fall short of international assessment benchmarks. Speculations have focused on the nature of the changes themselves, the agendas of the promoters and competencies of the implementers. However, while the many change initiatives may be documented at the system and school levels, there is not much written about teachers', students' and even parents' responses or receptiveness to these change initiatives. Such documentation can add to our understanding of what contributes to desirable or even unintended school change. Emerging from a multiple case study research design, the findings reported here, as drawn from a broader study, highlight responses of school members to principal-initiated change in one school. This article reports on three main categories (positive, positive qualified and negative) of school member responses to the leadership of a new principal, and highlights three main reasons for, and five purposes of those responses. These findings have implications for the preparation and practice of school leaders and for future investigations into school effectiveness and improvement.

Brief Primary Education Context and Introduction

In the highly centralised education system of Trinidad and Tobago (T&T), primary schooling is compulsory to students aged five to 11+ years and culminates with the sitting of the very high-stakes Secondary Entrance Assessment Examination. The primary education sector consists of public government and denominational / government-assisted schools and private schools. The case reported on in this paper is a school within the public domain. Though accessibility to education is no longer a major problem, T&T's system of education, shaped by its colonial history, still contends with issues of equity and quality related to school performance (De Lisle, Seecharan & Ayodike, 2010).

On appointment, it is expected that new principals will make structural, instructional and/or cultural changes to their schools (Northfield, 2011) in order to improve performance, and most try to. Schools then experience many, many change episodes often initiated by their principals who may seek to fulfill their personal visions for their schools (Yoeli & Berkovich, 2010) and/or enact centrally mandated policy. School members – especially teachers but also students and their parents – thus experience countless reform work over the course of their school lives. The constancy and imposition of such change initiatives unfortunately only result in a few reforms actually manifesting into real, effective and sustainable school change towards improvement (De Lisle, 2009; Fullan, 1991). Fullan (2016) ascribes this untenable situation to the "social complexity" (p. 67) of educational change particularly during implementation, where implementers' change in beliefs and practices and their willingness to work together become major factors that determine success. Thus, school members may respond in various ways to principal-initiated and system-imposed reforms, especially in contexts where principals have little or no authority to recruit, select or dismiss staff as is the case locally.

However, there is very little published empirical work on this specific topic locally; although, Thompson's (2019) work on teachers' perspectives on organisational change strategies implicitly alludes to reasons for teachers' support of principal leadership. The existing knowledge base about the T&T school improvement landscape consists of literature on the school improvement policy context (James, 2013), leadership development for educational reform (De Lisle, 2009), the nature of school leadership practice (James, 2010), leadership and education in high poverty contexts (De Lisle, Annisette & Bowrin-Williams, 2020; De Lisle, Seunarinesingh, Mohammed & Lee-Piggott, 2017) and promoting change through social justice leadership (Conrad, Lee-Piggott & Brown, 2019). Together, these and related works help to deepen our understanding about context-specific system and school change that can better position policy makers, educationists, and practitioners to move the T&T education system forward.

This paper adds to the discourse by offering the reader an opportunity to explore school member responses that are largely not evidenced in existing educational literature. This study's guiding questions are: (1) What are the responses of school members to new principals' attempts at school change? and (2) How might these responses be understood?

Theoretical framework

School members' responses formed one part of the theoretical framework reported in a broader study (Lee-Piggott, 2016), from which this work was extracted, as shown in Figure 1.
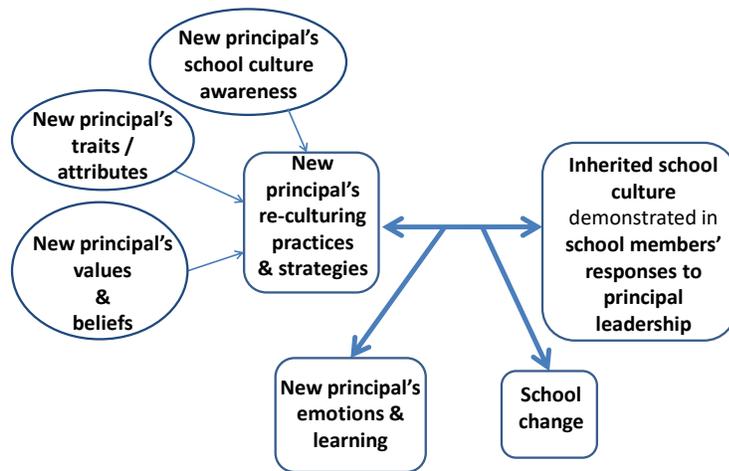

Figure 1. Theoretical framework

Figure 1 shows the interplay (the central two-way arrow) between new principals' leadership and their inherited school cultures. The term 'inherited' is used to mean the existing culture a new principal meets on appointment to a school that is new to him/her. The interplay, as shown, lies on the premise that whilst a new principal may wish to re-culture and restructure a school, the existing school's culture and the new principal's own professional judgment may combine to influence his/her ability to do so (Day et al., 2011; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1996). This, in turn, may cause principals to change their leadership approaches (Eshbach & Henderson, 2010; Osterman, Crow & Rosen, 1993). Thus, leadership, in this study, is viewed as two-way influencing (Hallinger & Heck, 2011) with school culture framed as not only a leadership mediator but a lesser-researched leadership moderator (Osterman, et al., 1993). This understanding eschews notions of leadership as an independent variable and leadership effects as unidirectional and proceeding solely from the principal as leader as is dominantly conceptualised in leadership studies.

In this study, new principals' leadership is framed within four types of leadership: transformational, transactional, managerial (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) and political (Crow & Weindling, 2010). Political leadership was included to address findings that emerged from this study's data and instructional leadership was subsumed within managerial leadership's focus on managing the instructional programme (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). See Figure 2.

Figure 1 also shows antecedents that contribute to a new principal's practice of leadership and interaction with their inherited school cultures. They include: their depth & breadth of school culture awareness (Deal & Peterson, 1990; MacMillan, 1996); their traits/attributes (Day et al., 2011; Jacobson, Johnson, Ylimaki & Giles, 2005; Zaccaro, Kemp & Bader, 2004) and values and beliefs (Leithwood & Day, 2007; Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995). The framework also suggests that the nature of the leadership-school culture interplay influences the extent of school change.
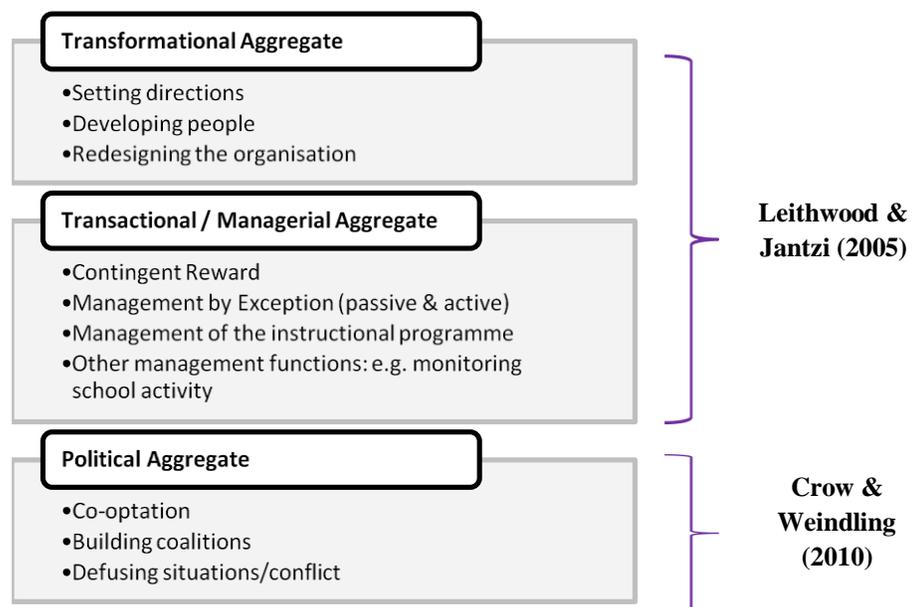

Transformational Aggregate
- Setting directions
- Developing people
- Redesigning the organisation

Transactional / Managerial Aggregate
- Contingent Reward
- Management by Exception (passive & active)
- Management of the instructional programme
- Other management functions: e.g. monitoring school activity

Leithwood & Jantzi (2005)

Political Aggregate
- Co-optation
- Building coalitions
- Defusing situations/conflict

Crow & Weindling (2010)

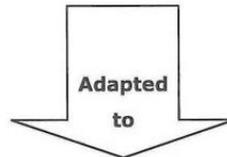*Figure 2*. Leadership conceptual framework

School Culture

School culture is widely accepted as significant to positive school change and enhanced student outcomes, but a school's culture can work for or

against school improvement and reform (Barth, 2001). If the norms embedded within the reforms do not fit or are incompatible with those of the existing school culture, then take up of the reform would be shallow even though accepted (Sarason, 1996). Within a reciprocal perspective of leadership, as adopted here, the responses of school members to their new principals' attempts at leading and managing change are viewed as a function or expression of school culture. In this study, school culture is defined as "a dominant pattern of behaviors and beliefs held by school members that acts as a 'frame of reference' for the way they interact with others and do their work at a school" (Lee-Piggott, 2017, p. 200). This conception of school culture, which is based on Schoen and Teddlie's (2008) empirically-tested conceptualisation of school culture, does not discount the individual agency of school members or the existence of subcultures within a school. The author-adapted conceptualisation of school culture is shown in Figure 3 and developed in Table 1. The main adaption was the creation of a dimension called 'Student Orientation' and the subsuming of

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

Adapted to

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

Figure 3. Adjusted descriptors of school culture dimensions (Adapted from Schoen & Teddlie, 2008)

original dimension 4 (Student-centred Focus) into dimension 3 (Quality of the Learning Environment and Experiences). The dimensions of school culture as shown in Table 1, along with levels of school culture (artefacts, values and underlying beliefs) (Schein, 1992) and the strength and homogeneity of school culture (Maslowski, 2001) all assist with diagnosing the inherited school cultures that the new principals encountered.

102

The 'how', 'why' and 'what for' of school members' responses to their new principals' leadership

Stoll and Fink's (1996) typology of schools is used to match the diagnosed cultures to school types, namely: (1) moving schools, (2) cruising schools, (3) strolling schools, (4) struggling schools and (5) sinking schools. According to the authors, moving and cruising schools have healthy school cultures characterised by norms of celebrating achievement, collegiality among staff, purpose-driven practice, high expectations and trust. However, cruising schools do not keep pace with their changing contexts. The pace of improvement of strolling schools is inadequate, while struggling and sinking schools are both ineffective. However, where struggling schools have a will to improve but are in need of good leadership; sinking schools make no effort to change. In essence, school member responses collectively appear to represent these school types.

The literature on new principals' interaction with school culture (Earley et al., 2011; MacMillan, 1996; Northfield, 2011) suggests a possible initial temporary disequilibrium between (new) principal leadership and school culture and highlights strong influences of either on the other with significant implications for the introduction of change (Lee-Piggott, 2016; MacMillan, 1996). Thus, a (major) source of such disequilibrium may be school members' responses.

School Member Responses

While new principals on their appointment may occupy themselves in reading a school's culture; at this time, school members also do their own reading of the new principal (Deal & Peterson, 1990; Harvey, 1991). Everything from the incumbent's age, gender, reputation and other characteristics become important signals about who he/she is and what he/she does and values.

Table 1. *Dimensions and Indicators of School Culture (Adapted from Schoen & Teddlie, 2008)*

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

The 'how', 'why' and 'what for' of school members' responses to their new principals' leadership

Although rather dated and not focused on school members' responses to new principals' work, Blasé's (1989, 1991, 1995) studies offer the most comprehensive look at school member responses to principals' attributes and practices and, thus, are informative to the current study reported here. It should be noted, however, that the current study does not regard principals as 'open' or 'closed' as does Blasé's studies, and where his data-collection methods probed the individual responses of teachers, the current study probes collective action of teachers and other school members.

Blasé (1989) identifies six major strategies used with open principals – those who were considered supportive, encouraged collegiality and participation, and held high expectations. These major strategies were diplomacy (which was most used), conformity, extra work, visibility, avoidance, and ingratiation. Observed also were three minor ones: documentation, intermediaries, and threats, which were used by about 3% of 440 teacher-participants (p. 383). These strategies used with open principals, Blasé reports in his (1991) study, are used to a lesser degree with closed principals – those described by teachers as authoritarian, inaccessible, inflexible, unfriendly, and non-supportive. However, other strategies, such as confrontation, coalitions and non-compliance were used only with closed principals (Blasé, 1991).

These differences indicate not only an association between principal leadership and the responses of teachers but also, according to Blasé (1989, 1991), the importance of principal characteristics in contributing to the orientations or responses of teachers, which was found to be one of the main explanations cited by teachers for every strategy used toward closed principals in Blasé's (1991) study. Similar findings were reported by Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckenooghe & Aelterman (2008).

In response to principals' leadership practices, moreover, Northfield (2011) finds that staff, in particular, mitigated new principals' innovative attempts at school change by scrutinising, resisting or ignoring such attempts, especially those meant to adjust their instructional and assessment practices. Knight (2009) concurs that teachers may resist instructional change perpetuating a vicious cycle of attempt, attack and abandon, rationalising their lack of implementation as do "pragmatic skeptics" (Ponder & Doyle, 1977, p. 12); whilst in McKenzie and Scheurich's (2008) study, many teachers were found to not even try, demonstrating reluctance to change initiatives much like the "stone-age obstructionists" described by Ponder and Doyle (1977, p. 11). These teachers resisted change even if they recognised that it was needed and

even when they were in formal positions to influence such change. Northfield (2011) also notes veteran teachers' refusal to commit to their schools' development in response to their new principals' encouragement, suggesting that teachers' professional life phases (Day & Gu, 2007) may be one factor in teachers' take up of change initiatives. According to Day and Gu, not only are teachers in professional phases 4-7 years and 8-15 years more amenable to school change but they find attractive opportunities to lead school development even while trying to define their work-life balance.

Eshbach and Henderson (2010) also identify low commitment, intolerance and divisiveness as teacher responses to new principal transformational leadership, classifying them as "disengaged behaviours". In reporting on similar forms of resistance, the school leadership literature seems to neglect mentioning more positive forms of responses, which facilitate school change as observed in the "rational adopter" (Ponder and Doyle, 1977, p. 10). Under-reported, too, are the reasons and purposes of school member responses.

Reasons For and Purposes of School Member Responses

Knight (2009) proffers at least four reasons that explain why teachers may not respond positively to a principal's introduction of an instructional programme, particularly. According to Knight, teachers may not adopt the changes because they appear to make little/no sense, being not personalised to them or match their students' needs – an idea alluded to by Sarason (1996). This issue concerns values and the extent to which they are shared between new principals and teachers, who are the main actors in a school's culture. Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) name four categories of values that principals may hold to: (1) basic human values, such as respect for others; (2) general moral values, such as honesty and social justice; (3) professional values, such as the best interest of students and (4) social and political values, such as stakeholder involvement and their commitment to a school's vision. Knight (2009) also asserts that if high quality implementation is difficult and sufficient support for such implementation is unavailable or opportunities to see that the programme works are not provided then the main implementers' responses to such change would be negative. Moreover, if teachers are made to feel disrespected or frustrated particularly if their professional autonomy is ignored, they may also resist principal-initiated reform especially in 'power-over' situations (Blasé, 1989; McKenzie & Scheurich, 2008).

McKenzie and Scheurich (2008) situate teachers' reasons for their responses to principal leadership within their thinking about others and

themselves. They argue that teachers who did not see themselves as needing to change tended to subscribe to deficit thinking of students and their parents and, thus, passed blame to them. McKenzie and Scheurich (2008) also highlight teachers' apparent or perceived distrust in principals who may be viewed as outsiders to the teacher ranks and their thrust for school improvement as passing judgement on teachers and their work. Trust, according to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998 & 2000, as cited in Tschannen-Moran, 2014, pp. 19-20) is a "willingness to be vulnerable to [someone] based on the confidence that [he/she] is benevolent, honest, open, reliable and competent". In the case of T&T, teachers may also distrust principals' "value commitments and practices of postcolonial leadership [which] continue to act as barriers to change" (De Lisle, 2009, p. 80). Notwithstanding, trust is developmental in nature (Lewicki, Timlinson & Gillespie, 2006) and principals' (re)establishment of trust among school members is widely reported as critical to school improvement (Day et al., 2011).

Another reason, related to the previous, is that teachers may resist internal school reform initiated by principals who try to distribute leadership because they did not see themselves as teacher leaders leading other teachers in development work (McKenzie & Scheurich, 2008). The authors interpret this as a 'social positionality' issue (p. 130) among staff which seemed to influence their degree of acceptance to change – an idea related to Danielson's (2007) 'tall poppy syndrome', where teachers may avoid being recognised as a teacher leader (one breaking the teacher ranks) for fear of aggravating other teachers and being subjected to humiliation and/or alienation (Fullan, 1991; Lee-Piggott, 2014; Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 2000).

With respect to purposes for school members' responses, Northfield (2011) finds that teachers' responses (resistance, low commitment, and indifference) served a conservatory purpose – maintaining the status quo. Whilst the teachers in Blasé's (1989, 1991) study also sought to maintain a sense of balance, they tended to do so through exchange and reciprocation processes, where relationships of long-term debt and interdependence are created with principals through political strategies which yield for teachers desired results perceived as equity (Blasé, 1989). Thus, teachers' responses to principals they described as open and effective or closed and ineffective were mainly intended to "maximise gains", such as increased job security, recognition and influence in decision-making or "to reduce the costs of interaction" (Blasé, 1991, p. 401). School member responses, such as confrontation,

were used to force principals to respond to needs perceived by teachers as pressing; while teachers' use of coalitions, such as involving a teachers' union or forming teacher groups, were for influence and protection from closed principals (Blasé, 1991). Taken together, investigating the 'what', 'why' and 'what for' of school member responses to new principal leadership may assist in understanding why a school may see superficial, short-term change while others may realise improvement. Answers may be found in considering such school member responses as manifestations of the culture of a school, such that school culture may then be viewed as a possible influencing factor of new principal leadership and school change.

Methodology and Methods

An explanatory multiple case study approach (Yin, 2014), utilising multiple methods, was employed in the collection of data for the broader study (Lee-Piggott, 2016). The scope, depth and rigor that case study affords (Yin, 2014), were most appropriate for capturing participants' social constructions of reality within their natural settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus, while it is recognised that schools may work closely with their communities, for the purposes of this study, data were collected from and on those most directly involved and affected by principal-initiated school change. Participants were principals, teachers and students who elucidated on the responses of teachers, students and parents to changes introduced by their principals. Four main research activities were involved in the study: (1) diagnosing school culture, (2) getting to 'know' the principals (attributes, values, beliefs, leadership practices), (3) understanding the leadership-school culture interplay by juxtaposing leaders' practices against school members' responses to that leadership and (4) determining the impact of the interplay on the principal and the school.

The schools, each of different effectiveness states – 'excelling', 'mostly effective' and 'under academic watch' (National Test Report, 2011) – were the first unit of purposive sampling, for which indices of Academic Performance (API) and a free school meals allocation of > 60% were utilised. The schools selected were headed by new principals who agreed to participate in the study.

Questionnaires

For making sense of school members' responses, two author-developed questionnaires were used to diagnose the schools' cultures: (1) The

Teacher School Culture and Principal Leadership Questionnaire and (2)
The Student School Culture and Principal Leadership Questionnaire.
They were constructed using:

- The adapted conceptualisation of school culture (Figure 3; Table 1);
- A few adapted items from two established school culture questionnaires: the School Cultural Elements Questionnaire (SCEQ), developed by Cavanagh, Dellar and Giddings (Cavanagh, 1997) and the School Culture Scale (SCS), developed by Higgins-D'Alessandro and Sadh (1997).
- Interview and observation data from the broader study (Lee-Piggott, 2016).

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

The Student School Culture and Principal Leadership Questionnaire consisted of 49 items arranged in the same sections with comparative items as the teacher questionnaire, but excluded the School Culture Strength and Homogeneity section. It was completed by a total of 117 out of 264 upper primary students from the three participating schools – a 44% response rate. See Table 2. See Lee-Piggott (2016).

Table 2. *Participant Table*

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

A Critical Incident Technique

Widely used in qualitative research (Butterfield et al., 2005) in various disciplines including education (Day & Gu, 2010; Earley & Fletcher-Campbell, 1989; Kerry, 2005), the critical incident technique (CIT) was the main data-collection method used. It is "essentially a procedure for gathering important facts concerning behavior [sic] in defined situations" (Flanagan, 1954, p. 328) either through the use of observers or participants' reports. The CIT was selected because of its unique focus on 'incidents', which may be major life-changing events or "commonplace events that occur in routine professional practice" (Tripp, 2012, p. 24-25).

      In the current study, three new principals were asked to describe critical incidents (CIs) in which they encountered the culture of their

schools. They were also asked to rationalise the significance of each CI, evaluate their professional judgments as was done in Kerry's (2005) study, and tell about the consequences of each CI in 20-minute interviews. It is through relating on especially the consequences of each CI that data on school member responses were revealed. The transcripts and CI reconstructions were given to each new principal for 'member checks' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314) to ensure that they were satisfied that the data remained true to their reports.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews allowed the new principals opportunity to further discuss their CIs. Additionally, as shown in Table 2, twenty-two teachers from a total of 46 from the three schools were also interviewed on their perceptions of school members' responses to their new principals' attempts at introducing and managing change. They were also asked to provide examples where necessary. See Table 3 for a sample of interview questions.

In each school, upper primary school students were also asked to deliberate on this topic (see Table 3) in focus group interviews, which have the advantage of easing any likely anxiety of students if they were interviewed individually. A total number of six focus group interviews were done with a total of 27 student interviewees. See Table 2.

Table 3. *Sample Interview Questions*

Interview topic	Associated Interview Questions (P – Principal; T –Teacher; S – Student)
School member responses	P Q9 – In what ways has the culture of the school function to support/influence/contest your leadership? Can you give an example? P Q11 – How did staff/students/parents respond to your interventions? Why do you think they responded as they did? P Q12(a) – Where your interventions were met with resistance, how did you diffuse or manage these? And why did you choose those means? T Q7 – In what ways do you think the school's culture supports the principal's leadership? Please provide examples. T Q11 – To what extent does the school's culture influence/contest the principal's leadership? And, in what ways? S Q6 – What do you think prevents [your school from being the way you would like]? S Q7b – How do you feel about the changes [made by your new principal]?

Data analysis involved iterative inductive and deductive coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994), utilising a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) until data saturation was reached (Newby, 2010). Interpretation was facilitated by the creation of thematic matrices (Miles & Huberman, 1994).   Questionnaires were analysed using simple descriptive statistics, where questionnaire data were entered into MS Excel and the total number of each type of response (Yes, Sometimes, No/No response) for each questionnaire item was counted in order to determine the proportion of the total number of respondents responding in each way. As reflected in Table 4, data from the questionnaires were then triangulated (Denzin, 1978) with the more qualitative-type data for the purpose of within-case and cross-case analyses (Yin, 2014), which contributed to the generation of rich data (Geertz, 1973).

Table 4. *Method and Source Triangulation*

Research Activity	Methods	Participants
School culture diagnoses	observation questionnaires interviews document research	teachers & students teachers & students principal, teachers & students -
Investigating new principals' practice & strategies	critical incident technique interviews observation (shadowing) document research	principal principal, teachers & students principal -
Investigating school member responses to principals' leadership	critical incident technique interviews observation	principal principal, teachers & students teachers & students

Findings

School members' responses were juxtaposed to their respective school's cultures, resulting in findings which are reported here. Identified in the broader study (Lee-Piggott, 2016) were nine different ways that school members across three participating schools most commonly respond to their new principals. These were: (1) support, (2) accommodation, (3) astonishment, (4) reasoning, (5) disregard, (6) disapproval, (7) withdrawal, (8) confrontation, and (9) wounding/defamation/sabotage. These school member responses were further grouped into three categories: (1) positive school member responses, (2) positive qualified school member responses and (3) negative school member responses. See Table 5.

Table 5

Types of School Member Responses across the Three Case Study Schools

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

The evidence presented shows that within the manifestation of the leadership-school culture interaction at the schools, the most common school member responses were generally reflective of the new principals'

reculturing foci, highlighting the importance of new principals' informed responsiveness to school culture and earnest attempts at true collaboration and relationship building with school members. Thus, not all nine school member responses were evident at every school.

The findings presented in this article focus on those school member responses found in one case: 'Test and trials – Mr Quincy & Memorial Park'. For the purpose of contextualising the findings, a brief description of the case is first presented.

Tests and Trials: The Case of Mr Quincy and Memorial Park.

'Tests and trials' characterised an unstable interaction between Mr Quincy and the 'struggling' culture (Stoll & Fink, 1996) of Memorial Park. Mr Quincy predominantly used political leadership strategies as shown in Figure 4 to reculture Memorial Park, which is a small, urban, underperforming boys' primary school that serves a socio-economically disadvantaged community.

The 'how', 'why' and 'what for' of school members' responses to
their new principals' leadership

Transformational Aggregate:

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 4. Mr Quincy's leadership practices and strategies

Memorial Park's struggling culture is captured in Table 6 and expounded in Lee-Piggott (2016, 2017). While at Memorial Park all nine

school member responses were evident, the number of coded data units was used to identify the most common school member responses to Mr Quincy's leadership at Memorial Park. Thus, no positive qualified school member responses are discussed here only the most common school member responses are reported here and include: (1) support, (2) disregard or non-compliance, (3) disapproval (4) withdrawal (5) confrontation and (6) wounding/sabotage. They were generally found to be negative, though he did enjoy some support. Moreover, there was no supporting evidence that school members

Table 6. *Memorial Park's 'Struggling' School Culture*

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

moved through the named responses as if they were sequenced stages. However, the evidence shows a direct association between the school member responses and their intended purposes as shown in Figure 5. The findings across the cases are presented here according to the broad categories of school member responses indicated earlier and includes their purposes. Following, the reasons for these responses are explained.
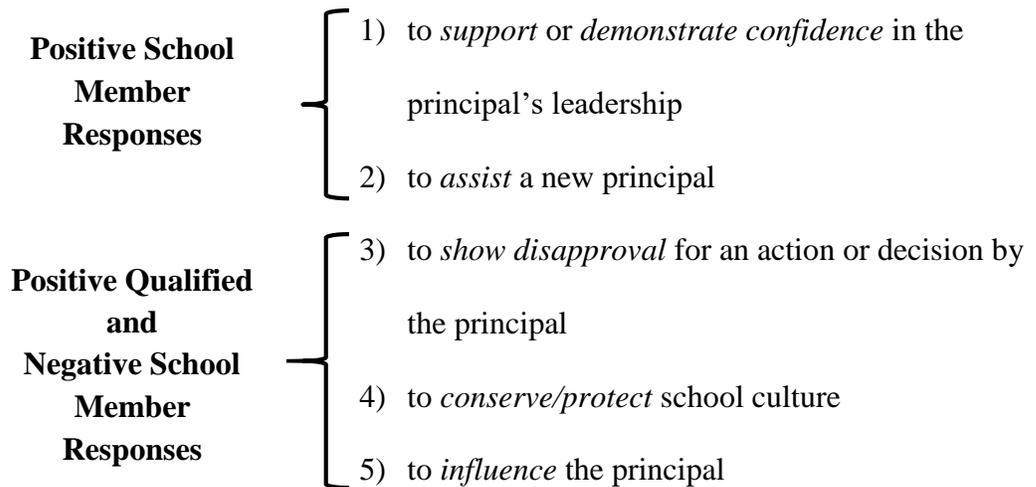
Positive School Member Responses	1) to *support* or *demonstrate confidence* in the principal's leadership 2) to *assist* a new principal
Positive Qualified and Negative School Member Responses	3) to *show disapproval* for an action or decision by the principal 4) to *conserve/protect* school culture 5) to *influence* the principal

Figure 5. Direct Association Between School Member Responses and Their Purposes

Positive School Member Responses

At Memorial Park, there was no evidence that school members needed to accommodate Mr Quincy in areas that many beginning principals typically struggle with, such as managing paperwork. The only positive school member response evidenced was support.

Support. School members' support is defined here as actions meant to assist, advance or conform to a new principal's leadership and principal-initiated school change. Such school change often targeted teachers' instructional practices or attempted to develop a more inclusive school community. While support for Mr Quincy's leadership was evident at Memorial Park, it was not consistently demonstrated but waxed and waned. Also, such support began with a selected few that Mr Quincy referred to as his "stalwarts" and was demonstrated through school members' compliance to the principal's requests and in increased participation in or willingness to try principal-initiated changes whether or not they had been tried in the past.

> *There are a few [teachers] who would support. …[T]hey are going all out: staying back after school… [S]ometimes they come in [to the school] during the vacation to ensure success (Meeta, teacher).*

The 'how', 'why' and 'what for' of school members' responses to their new principals' leadership

School members supported their new principal simply because they wanted to. Whether from a position of low or high initial trust or from their developing trust initiated by their principals' own trust-building behaviours (discussed later), they wanted to show their confidence in their principal's leadership. Taking on extra responsibilities beyond teaching commitments was another demonstration of support, especially by teachers, in leading extra-curricular activities, capacity building work or providing learning support, as indicated below:

I'm getting [teachers] to [remain after] school more often and some are giving [after-school] lessons as well now (Mr Quincy, Principal).

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

Parents and students' compliance was also evident in for example, the increased number of students being punctual, in full uniform and disciplined. Some parents were said to also lend their support by attending parent-teachers' meetings, offering assistance and contributions.

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

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

Though Mr Quincy enjoyed some support, as earlier mentioned, most of the school member responses to his school-change initiatives and reculturing were negative resembling "Tests and trials". They are discussed next.

Negative School Member Responses

Five negative school member responses were identified at Memorial Park: (1) disregard, (2) disapproval (3) withdrawal (4) confrontation, and (5) wounding/defamation/sabotage. These negative school member responses appeared to be 'shades of resistance', moving through a most passive form or lighter shade of resistance – *disapproval* – through to a quite overt and aggressive form or darker shade of resistance – *wounding/defamation/sabotage*. See Figure 6.
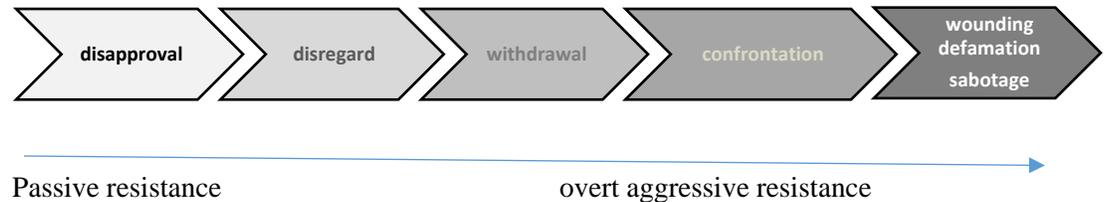
Passive resistance   overt aggressive resistance

Figure 6. Shades of Resistance to New principals' Leadership

Disregard. While this school member response was evident at all the case study schools, it was most prevalent at Memorial Park, where school members appeared to often pay little to no attention to or ignored Mr Quincy's expressed wishes for the purposes of showing disapproval, protecting school culture and influencing the principal's decisions. Such non-compliance, at times, elevated into school members' usurping authority or failing to treat the person or office of the principal with proper respect, as the following excerpts indicate:

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

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

Disregarding this new principal's requests was not always outright but often followed short-term compliance to initiatives intended to improve teacher-student relationships, staff punctuality and student discipline. For instance, the male teachers' response to a tie-wearing initiative encouraged to improve student discipline, referred to below, differed from the support shown to other measures intended to achieve the same purpose. Notable is the distinction made between the responses of a new teacher and those working at the school for longer.

> *He assumed that we agreed to wear ties; however… he was shocked when he saw I didn't wear a tie, Mr Earl didn't wear one, neither Mr Dass; only the young teacher wore a tie. But he has just started [teaching]. It's a different mindset when you now start (David, key staff).*

120

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

Disapproval and withdrawal. While disapproval at times took the form of grumbling behind the back of Mr Quincy, school members were found to withdraw their support of principal leadership and reculturing following such disapprovals. Withdrawal, in this paper, is defined as the purposeful disengagement, either emotionally or physically, from personally supporting the achievement of school goals. School members were found to retract their involvement in co-curricular and extracurricular activities or from collective decision making needed for school goal achievement. This is captured in the following extract, which refers to a teacher discontinuing reading remediation with a group of students because Mr Quincy asked her to apologise to a parent for hitting a student in the eye.

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

The extract above also shows that in showing disapproval and withdrawing, school members possibly intended to influence the principal's future actions. Students also used withdrawal in their dropping out of the prefect system organised by Mr Quincy.

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

Confrontation. Confrontation, also found to be a teacher response to principal leadership by Blasé (1989, 1991), was highly prevalent at Memorial Park and was intended to mainly conserve school culture and influence or even force the actions of the principal in particular directions. Confrontation was found to take the form of regularly expressed reminders to the principal to deal with an issue. However, threats, abusive face-to-face encounters or coalitions involving teachers' union representatives against Mr Quincy were the most common forms of confrontation, evidenced by the following CIs:

> *The aunt of a student calls the principal by phone and 'buse him up' [talks aggressively to] and threatens to go a [popular local television talk show] and to the Ministry of Education. This was in response to the principal enquiring about an injury sustained by the infant student and believed to have been inflicted whilst he was at home and not at*

school. At a subsequent meeting with the principal and class teacher, another barrage of threats and displays of aggression were dished out to the principal by the child's mother and uncle... (Mr Quincy's reconstructed CI 1).

Just as an impromptu meeting with infant teachers was about to begin, in, bringing chairs and all, walk the teaching staff's union representative and the district convener for the teachers' union into the principal's office. Their intention was to sit in on the meeting to "represent teachers". They had been invited by one of the invitees… without the knowledge or permission of the principal… (Mr Quincy's reconstructed CI 2).

As indicated by the CIs above, confrontations came from parents but especially teachers as alluded to by Naomi, a key staff, who said, "People love to oppose and fight [the principal] and that is wrong I know… Teachers here want to do what they want".

Wounding/defamation/sabotage. At times the responses to the leadership of the new principal took on a dark shade of resistance in the form of wounding, defamation or sabotage – a response that potentially tarnishes a new principal's character and/or reputation, hurts him/her or obstructs the realisation of school goals for the intended purposes of school culture preservation and forcing the hand of a principal. Mr Quincy experienced wounding through defamation of character but also saw teachers attempt to sabotage school improvement initiatives, as captured in the following extract and CI.

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

While attending a Catholic Principals' Convention the principal received a phone call informing him that there was a 'Hand, Foot and Mouth' viral outbreak at the school and that letters had been issued to students to take to their parents concerning an indefinite closure of the school. Upon receiving no facts, he took this to mean that he was being 'set up' and returned to school immediately to find that not only had the school been earlier dismissed, but all teachers were present, waiting for him and having their own conference chaired by a disgruntled teacher who earlier in the week he had asked to apologise to a parent (Mr Quincy's reconstructed CI 3).

Every one of the school member's responses reported here was expressed for at least one of the reasons discussed below.

Reasons for School Member Responses

Findings reveal one main reason for school members' support of Mr Quincy's leadership in introducing school change: trust development. However, three main reasons for their negative responses were also found and are discussed here. These are: (1) the degree of compatibility of values, (2) function of school culture and (3) disapproval of the principal's reculturing practices and strategies. Trust development is discussed first followed by the others.

Developing trust. At Memorial Park, trust development was facilitated by two key factors: 1) trust disposition and 2) the new principal's personal attributes.

Trust disposition. It was evident that some school members were more ready to extend trust through their support to their new principal, demonstrating a 'disposition to trust' (Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 54). Mr Quincy's 'stalwarts', for instance, demonstrated this kind of faith in his plans for school improvement.

> *There are a few [teachers] who would support... It's as though, they, the few, are having the great desire to succeed in whatever his ideas or projects are. They want them to succeed, so they are going all out... (Meeta, teacher).*

"The few" referred to were generally junior and/or less experienced teachers who likely had little or no experience of broken trust with former principals and thus had a higher disposition to trust than more senior members of staff at Memorial Park. This was evident in the support of the junior teacher who supported the 'tie initiative' earlier mentioned.

New principals' personal attributes. School members often responded with support to favourable, personal attributes of their principal. Mr Quincy's trustworthiness, in particular, was a key factor in school members' trust development. His trustworthiness was demonstrated through modelling trust, treating with staff issues confidentially, frowning on staff gossip, empowering staff through distributed leadership and enabling the successful achievement of improved school outcomes or goals, as captured below:

> *[Mr Quincy], as a principal, is good at delegating and getting people to do things... Like Sam, the security guard, [Mr Quincy] gives Sam a*

> *little bit of power, ... make him feel important… [and] he comes to school when he doesn't have to come. All those [posters] you see stuck up around the school, Sam put them up (Naomi, key staff).*

> *[The parents] believe in me. Many of the things that have been discussed in [PTA] meetings have come to fruition… a [parent] came and said, "Sir I'm going to contribute some money" and he did... and there are other parents who pledged to help as well (Mr Quincy).*

Compatibility of values. The degree of compatibility of values between new principals and those espoused and in-use by their inherited school cultures was found to be a major influencing factor to the nature of their interaction and ultimately the degree of school change and improvement realised at their schools.   Where values and beliefs were highly compatible, such as a value for high academic achievement and student discipline, school members generally supported their new principals. However, where values or beliefs were incompatible or partially ascribed to, resulting in "culture clashes", according to a teacher at Memorial Park, school members sometimes tended to more negative responses to principal leadership. The following diagram (Figure 7) is an attempt to represent the degree of compatibility of values that was present at the case discussed herein. Values have been categorised using Leithwood and Steinbach's (1995) classification: basic human values; general moral values; professional values and social/political values.

Figure 7 shows that at Memorial Park many of the values held were either incompatible or partially compatible – a realisation not lost on staff as intimated by David, a key staff member, "He is not accustomed to our culture here and we are not accustomed to his culture. So right now, we are getting [many] clashes in between". Such low compatibility of values, once perceived, prompted the likely emergence of distrust (Sitkin & Roth, 1993 cited by Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Incidentally, teachers' value for student discipline and high standards for sporting achievement were evidenced as highly compatible with Mr Quincy's valuing of high standards of achievement and best interest for the school as shown in Figure 7. These commonly held values facilitated communication at Memorial Park and will also likely be the avenue by which principal-school member relationships will develop. This evidence underscores that school culture – in this case the values held to – should not be overlooked in ushering school change and improvement.

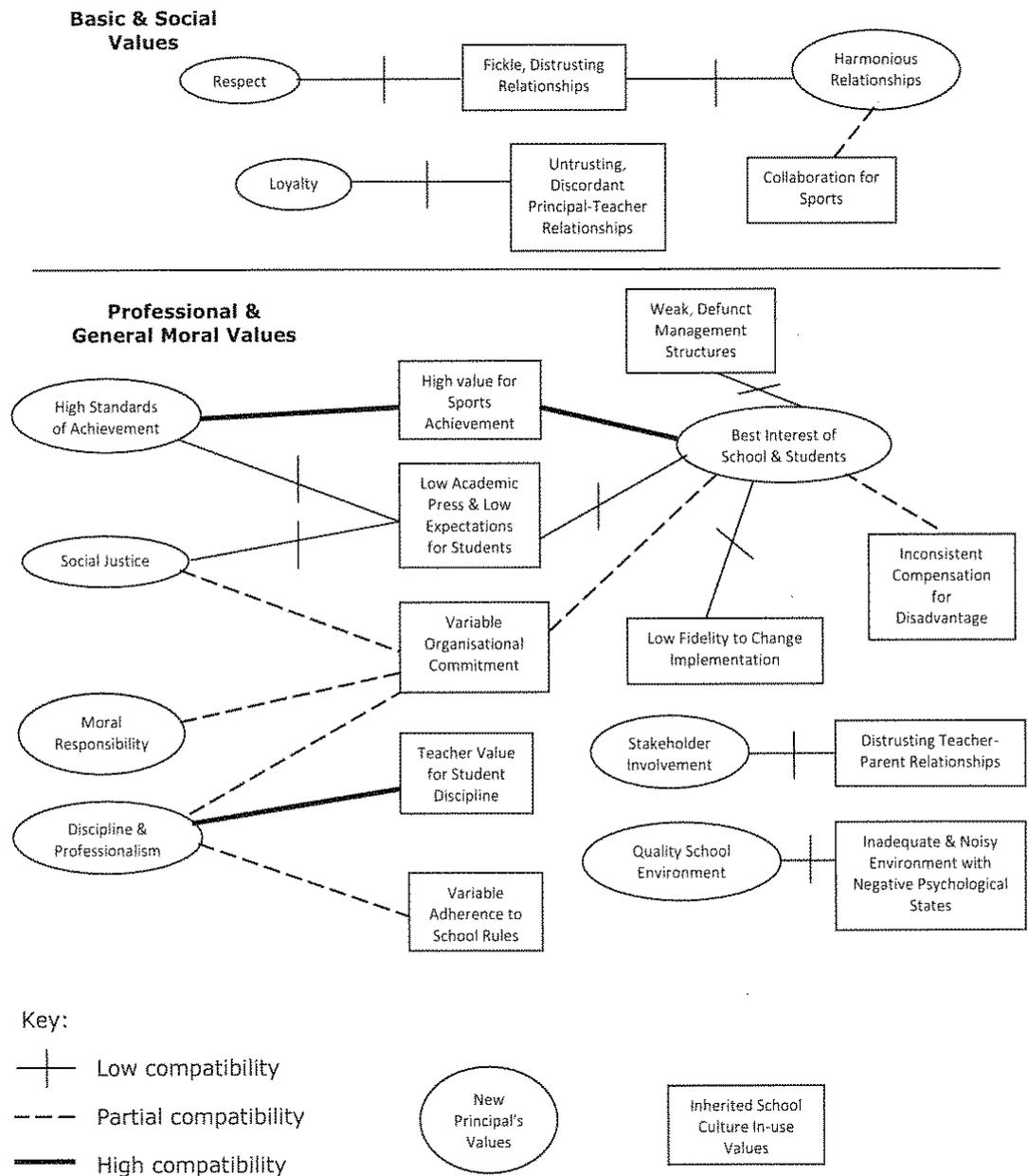*Figure 7.* Case 1 Values Compatibility

125

School members' responses to their new principals' change efforts may also actually be normative expressions for them as discussed below.

A function of school culture. Comparing Memorial Park's basal culture with that of its school members' responses to Mr Quincy's leadership reveals that some of their responses functioned as normative expressions of their school's culture. For instance, school members' disregard and non-compliance towards Mr Quincy were customary behaviours displayed with past principals and other school leaders at Memorial Park.

> *[Administration] would start off on their high horses, 'We're planning this, we're planning that', we have this committee, that committee and people would probably meet for two weeks, papers might fly around the school and end up in the dustbin; but, nothing, no action. And that has been happening since I came here (Naomi, key staff).*

School members, particularly teachers, had over the years developed low confidence in their principals' leadership and school change ideas. Confrontation and defamation were also endemic at the school. For instance, before Mr Quincy's appointment, teachers tried to oust one principal, defame another to supervisors and 'gang up' on an acting principal.

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

One can only speculate whether or not these expressions became learned responses to former principals' less-than-successful leadership and wounding or were especially reserved for any new principal inviting school change. However, the evidence also points to genuine disapproval of Mr Quincy's reculturing practices and strategies.

Disapproval of the new principal's practices/strategies. Disapproval as a reason, rather than a school member response in itself, appeared to be linked to school members' expectation that their new principal demonstrates an understanding of the school's culture in his school reculturing as alluded to below:

> *He came from [named school]. He is accustomed with when they call for parental support, they'll get it... He quarrel[s] about why we are not getting it and it is because [they are] different schools. He has to understand that we are from the bottom of the barrel. Our parents don't come (David, key staff).*

The 'how', 'why' and 'what for' of school members' responses to their new principals' leadership

Disapproval or dislike for an action, decision or request made by Mr Quincy was the most apparent reason for school members' disregard, confrontation, defamation and withdrawal and the only reason identified for school members' wounding/defamation/sabotage. A dislike for some leadership action/decision/request stemmed from teachers considering them to be unfair, unreasonable or unjustified such as Mr Quincy's request of male teachers to 'dress up' on the school's formal dress day.

> [U]pstairs is very hot and you sweat a lot… and two, if I wear a tie, it doesn't affect my performance as a teacher… I believe that if I give my best… my dress has nothing to do with it… I told him, "Sir, I only wore ties four times in my entire life". Sometimes I have to go [outside in the playground]. You think that I could go out there with a tie in that hot sun? I will cook! (David, key staff)

Those strategies that were also influenced by his frankness and determination especially resulted in confrontation, withdrawal and disregard from school as illustrated below:

> [Mr Quincy] said, "That's being dishonest. You didn't come here at eight-thirty". So I said, "But sir, I was outside talking with a parent, I heard the bell ring". He said, "Well, next time just sign the book the time you reach". I find that was unfair; he saw me speaking with the parent… You [shouldn't] count minutes early in the morning and then in the afternoon now, after three, the minutes don't count… You want us to stay in at lunch time, make sure the children eat lunch… We leave here sometimes ten o'clock at night if we have a function the following day and… still in [our] work clothes… He is very rigid about the minutes… I stay after school, but I won't now (Nicole, teacher).

Such interactions caused teachers, in particular, to feel that they were not being heard by Mr Quincy but dictated to. Teachers who tended to feel this way were generally those who tried to justify actions that deviated from the values the new principal was trying to promote. Despite the reasons that school members respond, these reasons must be viewed as legitimate and thus addressed in order for real, lasting school change to take place.

Discussion & Conclusion

This paper has presented evidence of the responses of teachers, parents and students to the leadership of their new principal. While most of the evidence presented here comprises teachers' responses, the findings are consistent with extant literature (Blasé, 1989, 1991; Knight, 2009; Northfield, 2011) and highlight responses from also parents and students. They include positive responses, such as support, and negative responses presented as 'shades of resistance' existing along a continuum of passive forms to more overt and aggressive forms of resistance. While some responses, such as disregard and disapproval, are prevalent in the literature (Blasé, 1989, 1991; Knight, 2009; Mc Kenzie & Scheurich, 2008; Northfield, 2011); others such as withdrawal, confrontation and sabotage are not so commonly evidenced even though practitioners and other stakeholders may 'know' of or have experienced these directly or indirectly at schools.

This paper, through explicit attention to the purposes and reasons for school members' responses to principal leadership, contributes evidence-based explanations for why principal-initiated school change, and possibly externally imposed reforms, have little to no uptake towards school improvement and sustainability. The numerous negative school member responses as discussed concerning the case presented, show a clear indication of the influencing strength of school cultures (Maslowski, 2001) that new principals may face through, for instance, sabotage of school activities, withdrawal of support, disregard, and confrontations. While these findings cannot be generalised, relating them to schools in similar disadvantaged/underperforming contexts within the public primary school system within T&T, raises concerns about if these findings could be normative expressions of the culture of these schools. If this is so, then this may be one plausible explanation for the elusiveness of sustainable school improvement. It seems that school members need to be made aware of or reminded of boundaries on acceptable and professional conduct and of existing consequences for infringement. New principals may also need to be more willing to enforce the latter when necessary; however, not without firstly analysing the reasons for school members' negative responses towards resolving identified problems in emotionally-regulated spaces.

The reasons and purposes for school member responses presented in this paper are valid ones that principals and other education stakeholders would be well-advised to not overlook. Findings related to school members' intent on influencing their principal for the purpose of conserving a toxic school culture (Blasé, 1989, 1991), inadvertently at the

expense of student achievement, help to explain why school change is so difficult. Additionally, while findings on the importance of trust between principals and school members are not new (Day et al., 2011), findings here recognise trust to be both a precondition to school members' support of new principal leadership and a consequence of new principals' trust-building behaviours. This provides a strong justification for T&T principals to make the mental and attitudinal shift from the power-over (Blasé, 1989) and postcolonial leadership practices (De Lisle, 2009) that many may hold to and that hinder educational reform locally. Trust can grow but not without effort on the part of a new principal first and foremost.

The evidence in this study clearly shows how school change is impacted by the degree of compatibility of values between principals and their inherited school cultures – a notion alluded to by Knight (2009) and Sarason (1996). Although findings exist on the influence of successful leaders' values (Leithwood & Day, 2007), the degree of compatibility of their values with those of their schools' cultures, have not been sufficiently explored empirically. Future investigations into the influence of values compatibility are therefore needed.

Moreover, consistent with Mc Kenzie's and Scheurich's (2008) findings, the evidence herein on school members' disapproval of the new principal's practices and strategies points to a need for new principals to be keenly aware of the culture of their schools. Specific principal preparation for leading schools in disadvantaged contexts and for diagnosing school culture would equip aspirant principals in this respect. Preparation programmes that include work-shadowing of other school principals; mentoring by experienced, successful principals or school-based training may be most useful in these respects. Other experience-based opportunities, such as reflection on critical incidents like those collected from the new principal participants of this study, may also be beneficial to aspirant principals.

Recognising school member responses as a potential moderating factor of principal-initiated school change, as does this study, provides a fresh perspective on studying schools and school improvement – one which future researchers are encouraged to embrace. Future work can also focus on the responses of school members to the leadership of more experienced principals who have experienced varying degrees of school leadership success. Other studies can investigate the relationship between teachers' professional life phases (Day & Gu, 2007) and their responses to principal-initiated school change. Such investigations may point to the

129

need for specific leadership and teacher support, which can lead to improved effectiveness of schools locally.

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132

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