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# How do educational leaders in small, fragile, and developing countries translate their understandings of student learning and achievement into leadership practices? A case-study about leadership in Haitian urban schools

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Graduate Program in Education

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy  
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## Abstract

Haiti is unique in many respects; full of contradictions and paradoxes. While beautiful in many regards, it is fraught with issues: political, economic, societal, environmental, cultural, health-related, and educational. The latter stands out, however, as education affects the quality of the country's human capital, determining the quality of life of its citizens. Therefore, having competent people in leadership positions is critical especially within schools where they can impact students' learning, development, and achievement (SL/A).

Aiming to describe the state of educational leadership in Haitian schools to inform policy-makers of the lived-experiences of educational leaders (ELs), the objectives of this study are to map out EL's understanding of leadership and SL/A, their roles and responsibilities, and make sense of their strategies/supports, challenges/constraints. The argument I made is that, while ELs in Haitian schools share similar ideas about SL/A, the ways in which they translate their understandings/interpretations into leadership practices vary depending on the various contexts or fields within which they work.

A theoretical *Bourdieuian Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework* was created drawing on Bourdieu's thinking tools (field, habitus, capital, strategy/practice) that work relationally within a broader critical policy framework.

This qualitative case-study used semi-structured interviews, non-participative observations, field notes, and document analysis as data collection instruments. Thirty ELs from 28 schools (religious, private, public) in Port-au-Prince took part in the study.

Findings revealed that ELs' strategies/practices were based on their philosophy/values, and perceptions of leadership and SL/A. They identify various aspects: culture, administration, human resources, students, teachers, parents/communities, materials/infrastructure, and finances. Paradoxically, these same categories also represent challenges/constraints. Furthermore, policy contexts affected ELs' leadership practices.

Embracing many leadership approaches, Haïtian educational leadership has developed a school leadership practice based on a leadership habitus and forms of capital, shared among ELs within the field, yet specific to each leader and school field.

This study permitted Haïtian school leaders to reflect on their practices and commitment to improving them. Most importantly, it gave them a voice, allowing them to transfer the breadth of knowledge accumulated over time; thus, adding to the scholarly literature about educational leadership in small, fragile, developing countries like Haïti.

**Keywords:** educational leadership; school leaders; student learning and achievement; Bourdieu (field, habitus, capital, strategy/practice); case-study; Comparative and International Education (CIE); Haïti; small, fragile and developing country; religious, private and public schools; primary and secondary schools; urban schools.

## Dedication

To my biggest, strongest, most fierce supporters,

To my backbone and my rock,

To each and every single one of you,

My Mom Emmanuelle, my dad Frantz, my sisters & brothers (my partners in everything!), Anne-Laurence, Jean-Sébastien, Frantz-Emmanuel, Isabelle-Catherine,

Christie-Anne; my aunties Simone, Michelène, Yolène, & uncle Joël;

my cousins (my backup team!)

Ma famille!!!

Ce projet est à vous! Ce doctorat est en grande partie le vôtre!

Vous m'avez poussée, chacun à votre manière. J'y suis arrivée parce que vous m'avez encouragée à continuer, à foncer, à persévérer quand je n'en pouvais plus, à me relever quand je tombais, à regarder de l'avant, à croire en mes capacités quand, moi, j'en doutais.

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Nou kwè nan mwen! Nou kwè nan Mari Jann ke mwen ye a! Sa mwen t'ap fè san nou!

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I made it through part of my doctoral process thanks to you. Working with you on your own research, through every step leading up to publication, gave me a unique insider view of what conducting a research actually entails: the challenges and attention to details, the literature review and ethics process, participants' recruitment and

interviews, and the coding and analysis. Having done all that while working on the leadership standards project, it was far less daunting for me when I had to do my own. I am grateful for the expertise, knowledge and guidance that you have generously provided throughout these past four years. And I have no doubt that I will apply all the experience I gained working under your supervision. To you also, I say "Merci!"

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## List of Acronyms

<b>AASA</b>	:	American Association of School Administrators
<b>BCPVPA</b>	:	British Columbia Principals' & Vice-Principal's Association
<b>BELPF</b>	:	Bourdieuian Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework
<b>CIA</b>	:	Central Intelligence Agency
<b>CIE</b>	:	Comparative & International Education
<b>CPR</b>	:	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
<b>CPS</b>	:	Critical policy sociology
<b>Dir</b>	:	Director
<b>ECE</b>	:	Early childhood education
<b>EF</b>	:	École fondamentale or Enseignement fondamental
<b>EFA-GMR</b>	:	Education For All Global Monitoring Report
<b>EL</b>	:	Educational leadership
<b>ELs</b>	:	School/Educational leaders
<b>EN or ÉN</b>	:	École Normale
<b>ES</b>	:	Enseignement secondaire
<b>F</b>	:	Female
<b>FAES</b>	:	Fonds d'Assistance Économique et Sociale
<b>Fo</b>	:	Fondamentale
<b>FOKAL</b>	:	Fondation Connaissance et Liberté
<b>GDP</b>	:	Gross domestic product
<b>GNP</b>	:	Gross national product
<b>HDI</b>	:	Human development index
<b>IBE-UNESCO</b>	:	International Bureau of Education – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>ICT</b>	:	Information and communication technologies
<b>IHFOSED</b>	:	Institut Haïtien de Formation en Sciences de l'Éducation
<b>IMAO</b>	:	Initiative de Mise en Œuvre Accélérée de l'Éducation Pour Tous
<b>Int</b>	:	Interview

<b>INURED</b>	:	Interuniversity Institute for Research and Development
<b>M</b>	:	Male
<b>M.D.</b>	:	Medical Doctor
<b>MENFP</b>	:	Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle
<b>MENJS</b>	:	Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports
<b>MSPP</b>	:	Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population
<b>NGO</b>	:	Non-governmental organization
<b>NMREB</b>	:	Non-Medical Research Ethics Board
<b>NPM</b>	:	New Public Management
<b>NS</b>	:	Nouveau Secondaire
<b>Obs</b>	:	Observation
<b>-P</b>	:	Private secular schools
<b>P&amp;P</b>	:	Positionality and positioning
<b>PAHO-WHO</b>	:	Pan American Health Organization – World Health Organization Regional
<b>PE</b>	:	Physical education
<b>Ped</b>	:	Pedagogical
<b>Princ</b>	:	Principal
<b>Priv</b>	:	Private
<b>PSUGO</b>	:	Programme de Scolarisation Universelle, Gratuite et Obligatoire
<b>Pub</b>	:	Public
<b>-R</b>	:	Religious (private or public) schools
<b>R&amp;R</b>	:	Roles and responsibilities
<b>Rel</b>	:	Religious
<b>-S</b>	:	State funded, public schools
<b>SA</b>	:	Student achievement
<b>SE</b>	:	Secular
<b>Sec</b>	:	Secondary
<b>SEL</b>	:	School/Educational leadership
<b>SES</b>	:	Socio-economic status

<b>SIDS</b>	:	Small island developing states
<b>SL</b>	:	Student learning
<b>SL/A</b>	:	Student learning and achievement
<b>SS</b>	:	Small states
<b>UNDP</b>	:	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	:	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>USD</b>	:	US dollars
<b>WHO</b>	:	World Health Organization

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### I. Problematic situation and context



Source: <https://mspp.gouv.ht/site/downloads/EMMUS%20V%20document%20final.pdf>

Figure 1.1 Map of Haïti

## Broad problematic context

The *Republique d'Haïti* (Haïti in short) is a Caribbean country full of beauty and uniqueness, as much as contradictions and paradoxes. It is a country where ancient customs and traditions are blended with modern day views, where contemporary issues are intertwined with old ones. These issues stem from all aspects/fields and from every level of the country: politics, economics, society, environment, culture, health, and education. A brief overview of these categories will provide a general glimpse into the overarching context in Haïti; thus, situating this research within the broader context of the country as a whole.

Proud of its legacy as the first independent black nation in this part of the world, the country has been unable to learn from its two-century-old history as a free nation. Politically unstable, it has not capitalized on the momentum of its independence. For the most part, the political scene has been, and is, to this day (to a certain extent), fraught with uncertainty, unrest, government instability (and coups), and constant changes (Haïti Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population [MSPP], 2012). After decades of what historians have labeled dictatorship, Haïti has tried, since the 1980s, to institute and establish democracy, only to enter into uninterrupted and repetitive internal political crises (Initiative de la Mise en Œuvre Accélérée de l'Éducation Pour Tous [IMOA], 2008; Luzincourt & Gulbrandson, 2010), characterized by other forms and levels of control, authoritarianism, violence, and governmental/institutional corruption. From the conception of this study in 2013 to now, June 2017, there have been three different presidents and five different governments. The 2011 elected president has had three

governments in five years (2011-2016): the first one from October 2011 to February 2012, the second one from May 2012 to December 2014, and the third and last one from January 2015 to February 2016 after months of exacerbating tensions and unrest, street protests/manifestations (Haïti-Référence, 2017a, b, c; Ordre des Experts-Comptables, 2017). In February 2016, after agitated presidential and legislative campaigns and inconclusive elections (August-December 2015), an interim president and government were installed with the primary objectives of organizing presidential and legislative elections. The latter took place in November 2016. And in February 2017, a newly elected president took office with his government ratified in March 2017 (France Diplomatie, 2017; The World Bank, 2017). It was during these troubling times, from November 2015 to March 2016, that data was collected for this research in Port-au-Prince, the country's geo-political and economic capital.

One of the main sectors affected by this political instability is the economy (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], 2017). Haïti is considered as the only low income (i.e. the poorest) country in the region and continent (Education For All – Global Monitoring Report [EFA-GMR], 2015). The population reaches approximately 10,485,800 inhabitants with approximately 55% between 0-24 years-old (CIA, 2017). The country's gross domestic product (GDP) has been declining for several years with a growth of 1.2% in 2015. It imports three times more than it exports. The depreciation of the national currency –the *gourde*– is ongoing, and the inflation rates, rising, from 12.5% in 2015 to 13.8% in 2016. The state is facing an increasing fiscal deficit, and it is not helping the situation that more than 50% of operational public spending goes to public employees' salaries (Vaughes, 2016; The World Bank, 2017). According to the United

Nations Development Programme's [UNDP] 2016 Human Development Report, Haïti is the only country in the Latin America and Caribbean region with a human development index (HDI) at this low level 0.493, 163<sup>th</sup> position out of 188 (UNDP, 2016, 2017b).

Unsurprisingly, all these situations and issues combined have resulted in an unemployment rate around 41% of the population, with 80% living in poverty and 54% live in abject poverty (CIA, 2017). According to the Pan American Health Organization-World Health Organization [PAHO/WHO] (2013), with approximately 1.5 million Haïtians living abroad, most households depend on remittances that can reach up to USD \$ 800 million annually. Furthermore, the country relies heavily on international economic assistance while remaining seriously indebted (30% of its GDP in 2015). In fact, part of its budget (20%) comes from foreign aid or direct budget support (CIA, 2017; Ordre des Experts-Comptables, 2017; Vaughes, 2016). This situation has prompted Peck (2010) to state that economic dependency (hence political as well) has weakened the country and everyone in it as they are afraid to lose their donors, which is actually happening: close to 75% of funding reductions/cuts (Vaughes, 2016). The declining economy, depreciation of the national currency, high external debt, lack of investments, and unequal wealth distribution –with 80% of the population having only 32% of its revenue, according to IMOA (2008)– represent but a few of the economic issues the country is facing.

As a society, Haïti's citizens share a culture rich in traditions, arts, folk stories, cuisine, carnival, music, and religion, to name a few, that binds them together at one level or another. However, despite all that, a class system prevails within the society itself, partly based on socio-economic status and race. Heine and Thompson (2011) zeroed in

on it when they argued that issues of race and class conflict run deep in Haïti's history. In fact, three different levels can be found. Each group can be considered as a social space in itself with its own social habits, rules and mien: an upper class that possesses most of the financial wealth; a middle class composed of professionals and government employees, among others; and a third category regrouping, for the most part, workers from the informal, industrial and agricultural sectors, as well as the poorest inhabitants.

Resulting from these political, economic and societal issues and tensions, violence has almost become normalized in the country with organized crimes (kidnapping, robberies), gangs, various forms of aggression and homicides, *inter alia* (France Diplomatie, 2017; Ordre des Experts-Comptables, 2017). Because of this situation, Haïti was dubbed unsafe and insecure, although in the American continent (North and South America, and Caribbean) it is one of the least violent in terms of homicides, 30<sup>th</sup> position out of 38, with the 1<sup>st</sup> place being the most violent (Malby, 2010). Furthermore, to counter that rhetoric, the Ministry of Tourism has been trying to promote a different image of the country through touristic visits of amazing sites, and a rich culture to discover.

Aside from these four pillars, the environment also plays a large role in the country's current condition. A tropical country in the Caribbean, Haïti is vulnerable to natural disasters. It has experienced its share of recurring natural catastrophes from hurricanes/storms to drought to floods, as well as man-made devastations like deforestation (France Diplomatie, 2017; Tondreau, 2008). The earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale that shook the country in January 2010 has been one of the most devastating catastrophes the country had yet experienced, and from which it has been



slow to recover. This has caused extensive damage and loss that reached approximately US \$ 7.8-8 billion, roughly equivalent to 120% of the GDP (CIA, 2017; Haïti MSPP, 2012; UNDP, 2017a; The World Bank, 2017a). And since then, there have been other natural disasters, adding to the already severely affected nation: hurricanes Tomas in November 2010, Sandy in 2012, and a devastating category 4 Matthew in October 2016 (France Diplomatie, 2017; Ordre des Experts-Comptables, 2017; UNDP, 2017a; The World Bank, 2017). These tropical storms and hurricanes have cost the country an estimated 900 million USD, around 15% of the GDP (Haïti MSPP, 2012).

This last section relates to the health system that also has its share of issues with healthcare provision highly fragmented (PAHO/WHO, 2013). In 2014, the government's total health expenditures represented 7.6% of the GDP (World Health Organization [WHO], 2017). Yet, access to high/good quality primary care is very limited and varies by facilities and location, urban and rural (Gage et al., 2017). Adding to that situation, there is the fact that several health centres were destroyed and/or damaged during the 2010 earthquake (Koenig et al., 2015). The majority of the population does not have medical coverage: only 4% of women and men are covered (Haïti MSPP, 2012). Various infectious diseases are continuously affecting the country with outbreaks and epidemics like cholera in October 2010 (France Diplomatie, 2017), chikunguya virus in 2014-2015 (Poirier et al., 2016), and zika virus in January 2016 (WHO, 2016). The malnutrition rate is acute. And given the food crisis due to increasing food prices, there are millions of Haïtians who are food and nutrition insecure; thus, in need of food assistance (France Diplomatie, 2017; PAHO/WHO, 2013).

## Problematic educational issues

Although the issues outlined above are all critical, educational issues stand out more as education touches every sector of society. Furthermore, education is considered important in/to the quality of Haïti's human capital which, according to Montas (2005), determines the income level and the quality of life in the country. Here I provide a brief glimpse of the state of the education system that will be further described in Chapter 5.

The literacy rate has reached just above 60% in this youthful population. Yet, illiteracy among women is higher with 42% as opposed to men with around 36% (CIA, 2017). The expected years of schooling reach 9.1 out of 13 years, with an average of 5.2 (UNDP, 2016, 2017b). Furthermore, students' location in part influences their schooling years. For example, the mean years of complete schooling for women and men is 4.1 and 4.4 respectively in rural areas as opposed to the 7.6 and 8.8 in urban settings (Haïti MSPP, 2012).

Access to schooling in the country remains limited, mainly due to the difficult economic situation. School provision is divided between public and non-public providers, although the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle* (MENFP) –the Haïtian Ministry of Education– is officially in charge of education. On the one hand, the public schools are state schools, funded by the government, that only reach about 10% of all schools. They cater to less than 25% of school-aged students. On the other hand, the non-public sector includes private institutions in which parents pay tuition fees, and congregational/religious schools that are both privately funded, and sometimes subsidized by the government. These private

schools accounted for about 90% of schools, enrolling close to 77% of students (Haïti Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle [MENFP], 2011a, b, c). In other terms, the haïtian education system is quasi-privatized and based on school choice, a point I return to in Chapter 5.

In terms of infrastructure, most of the schools are located in urban centres, departments' capitals, particularly the country's capital Port-au-Prince and its surroundings (Haïti MENFP, 2011a, b). The structures and components of the buildings, as well as the availability (or lack of) materials and resources, vary greatly depending on whether it is public or non-public, serving families with low, middle or high socio-economic status. Moreover, due to the 2010 earthquake, private and public schools were either completely destroyed (over 500) or damaged (around 3 400), a situation from which some are still recovering (La Banque Mondiale, 2017; Luzincourt & Gulbrandson, 2010).

Linguistic barriers in the education system exist because of the uneven status of the country's two official languages, Creole and French. While Creole is spoken by most (if not, all) Haïtians, French remains the principal administrative and written language, as well as that of instruction in schools. Consequently, Creole-speaking students are at a disadvantage in the classrooms. Adding to that issue, the dearth of qualified and competent human resources, primarily teachers, represents a serious problem in the system (Luzincourt & Gulbrandson, 2010).

Taking all that into account, the results obtained in the 2013-2014 state exams for grades 6, 9, 12 and 13 are unsurprising. The percentage of success/failure varied across

levels and across departments (Haïti MENFP, 2014f). For example, in grade 12, about 23% of students who took the test passed, compared to approximately 64% of success for grade 13. The Centre department showed 80% of success for grade 9 whereas the Northwest department reached just above 57%. Furthermore, in grade 6, the overall percentage of students who passed ranged from 65% to 85% throughout the country.

In spite of the global trends on educational system reforms and standardization policies (Knight, Lingard & Porter, 1993; Lingard & Ozga, 2007), the country did not keep up as its last whole-system reform, the *Réforme Bernard*, was implemented in 1979. However, there have been subsequent reforms in 1998 (the *Plan National d'Éducation et de Formation*) and in 2010 (*Plan Opérationnel 2010-2015*), and strategic plan in 2007 (the *Stratégie Nationale d'Action pour l'Éducation pour Tous*) that have elaborated on various education axes: governance, programs and curricula, early childhood education to post-secondary education, special education, professional training and development, increasing access to schooling, and quality education improvement, to name a few. Yet, these reforms have been less visible, if not totally unknown from the general public, including the education sector, unlike the 1979 one that is still in effect, to a certain extent (Haïti MENFP, 2007, 2010; IMAO, 2008; International Bureau of Education-UNESCO [IBE-UNESCO], 2006).

During the past decades, efforts were made to address these systemic issues. They mostly pertained to administrative and structural matters such as start and length of school year, state exams in new grades, principals' and teachers' professional development through training, subsidy programs for pupils, to name a few. The impact of these efforts was limited though as they were initiated on small scales, and were

neither systemic nor regular. Some were funded by international organizations, through partnerships/agreements (Affaires Étrangères, Commerce et Développement Canada, 2015; La Banque Mondiale, 2015a, b); which means that once the funding ceased, there was a great chance that the programs came to a halt as well, having not, most of the time, been conceived to be sustainable. Yet, more recently, in 2015, the MENFP undertook certain reforms, not a whole-system turnover but pertinent enough to concern educational leaders (Haïti MENFP, 2010, 2011c, 2014a). They are mainly concerned with provision of official state exams in grades 4, 6 and 12, and secondary education (see Chapter 5 for more details).

It is within this broader and specific educational scenery that my study takes place; a study examining Haïti's conflicted present, as Heine and Thompson (2011) have termed it. Nevertheless, what aspects of this current situation have garnered my attention, and why? The next section narrows down the focus of this research, and the rationale for it.

## II. Research focus and rationale

Over the years, there has been little consensus in the research literature about the term leadership, its definition, and meanings (Ryan, 2005). At its basis, it is concerned with the place and role of individuals within organizations, the nature of relationships between/among people, and the ends for which they are organized. On the one hand, some scholars have viewed leadership as a matter of single individuals "endowed with

power associated with personal qualities or organizational position” (Ryan, 2005, p. 23); thus, synonymous with “courage, stamina, power... charisma” (Smyth, 1989, p. 1). These characteristics allow individuals to exercise their leadership and make changes, with goals framed in terms of efficiency and productivity. On the other hand, certain scholars perceived leadership as a collective matter where a group of individuals practice collectively the leadership of any given institution, and work together in “enduring and practiced ways” (Ryan, 2005, p. 23).

With that said, school/educational leadership (SEL) is a hot topic nowadays. According to Pont, Nusche and Moorman (2008), it is “an education policy priority around the world” (p. 3). As such, SEL has garnered considerable attention, as well as leaders’ roles and practices in the process. Concerns arise over the concept of leaders as having “all the qualities that have the instant appeal to those who are looking for a way of remedying what is deemed to be wrong with schools” (Smyth, 1989, p. 1). Yet, educational leaders (ELs) occupy a vital place in this process as they can either facilitate or block change in their schools (Nicholson & Tracy, 1982) and, it is argued, also play “a key role in improving classroom practice, school policies and connections between individual schools and the outside world” (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008, p. 19).

Acknowledging the significance of educational leadership is as important as understanding what is meant by student learning and student achievement (SL/A). As Thielens Jr. (1977) rightly said, “learning is the life and heart of education. Education does not absolutely require grades, teachers, classes, curriculums, diplomas, or even schools. But it does require learning” (p. 159). On the one hand, student learning can be defined as students achieving understanding, which includes the processes and strategies

students employ to get there (Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004). Whereas, on the other hand, student achievement has been viewed from a student outcome perspective, meaning academic results on a wide range of domains, particularly in standardized testing on mathematics, reading, and language (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Robinson, Lloyd & Rowe, 2008). Moreover, throughout the years, researchers have tried to make a causal connection between educational leadership and student achievement, primarily based on quantitative (statistical) methods. Lists of leadership styles, behaviours, and responsibilities, countless adjectival leadership frameworks, and notions on school effectiveness and culture have been put forward, linking them with school achievement and student learning (as defined above). So far, research has found this causal relationship between SEL and student learning/achievement to be indirect and weak, because ELs mostly work outside the classroom, and their effect/impact is felt mainly through their (inter)actions with others, like teachers, staff, and the culture and climate they promote (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008).

In light of all this and considering the political, economic, societal, and environmental landscapes of Haïti, having qualified people in charge of various functions is essential. This research thus intends to depict the current state of educational leadership, and its practices in relation to Haitian school leaders' understandings of student learning and student achievement. I am interested in what is actually happening in Haïtian schools in terms of leadership, how school leaders are putting their interpretations of student learning and achievement into leadership practices in their settings. I argue that, while educational leaders in Haïtian schools share similar ideas about student learning and achievement, the ways in which they translate their

understandings/interpretations into leadership practices vary depending on the various contexts or fields within which they work. These contexts or fields encompass Haïtian society, education, and school (private, public, religious) fields, among others. Authors like Militello, Fusarelli, Alsbury and Warren (2013) have clearly stated that leadership practices are expressed differently in schools, with no fixed ways of doing things. These practices are also resultant of diverse social interactions and the manners in which the various elements come together and work together (Biesta, 2010). Currie and Lockett (2007) further found that focus and attention should be paid to the socio-historical context(s) within which leadership is practiced. There are multiple, multi-dimensional, and multi-faceted ways to enact school leadership that is a “complex and dynamic phenomenon that is bound up with context... a relational process that takes place... in particular settings” (Gordon & Patterson, 2006, p. 224). In essence, “contexts are essential to understanding the ways leadership emerges” (Gordon & Patterson, 2006, p. 224), which aligns with the main argument of this dissertation.

To paraphrase Ryan (2005), the way people see leadership, and by extension student learning and achievement, will affect and shape the strategies they put it into practice. Therefore, I posit that gaining a deep understanding of Haïtian school leaders’ leadership and their interpretations of SL/A and its translation into leadership practices can provide valuable insights into how we can better assist ELs as they work towards SL/A, tailoring supports such as training, resources, and aids, to name a few, to their specific needs based on their lived experiences.



### III. Purpose, goals and objectives of the study

This study's main purpose is to describe the state of leadership in Haïtian educational settings in order to inform policy makers, particularly during these challenging times, of the reality and lived experiences of educational leaders (ELs), their relevance, and importance as they enact their understandings/interpretations of student learning and achievement (SL/A) in their schools.

The objectives and goals I put forth are closely linked to the abovementioned purpose. This project seeks first to describe the educational leadership in this specific context, educational leaders' interpretations of student learning and achievement, and how these interpretations are put into leadership practices.

Furthermore, this study will look into leaders' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities towards SL/A. It will also describe the strategies they use and enablers they rely upon, and the challenges and constraints they face in their work. And doing so will help us understand the supports they feel they need and require.

Lastly, given everything that is involved in any educational setting and especially in the broader landscape Haïtian schools evolved in, this project plans on explaining how these leadership practices are influenced by the contexts within which the ELs work. In a nutshell, the goals of this research are to:

1. Map out school leaders' understandings of student learning and achievement in the Haïtian context.

2. Make sense of educational leaders' roles and responsibilities, the strategies they use, the supports and enablers they rely on and need, and the challenges and constraints they face in their work as they translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices.
3. Explain how the contexts within which they work influence ELs' leadership practices.

#### IV. Research questions

Bearing in mind what this study aims to accomplish, these research questions were designed to provide guidance through every step; thus, steering the researcher in the right direction. The main research question for the study is: "How do educational leaders (ELs) interpret student learning and achievement (SL/A), and translate their understandings/interpretations into leadership practices?"

The sub-questions included:

1. How do educational leaders (ELs) define leadership as a field of practice? How do they perceive their roles and responsibilities within that field?
2. How do ELs understand SL/A?
3. What strategies/practices, including forms of capital (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic), do ELs use to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices?

4. What support or enablers are available for Haitian ELs to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices? What constraints and challenges do they face?
5. How are the strategies/practices used by ELs to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices influenced by the contexts within which they work?

The assumptions that have shaped my thinking about the study were:

- Student learning and achievement are indirectly and partially related to the work of educational leaders in the Haitian educational context.
- The relations between ELs and SL/A at the school level is complex because various factors affect ELs' work towards SL/A such as economics, politics, society, culture, religion, resources (human and material), geography/demography, health, *inter alia*.
- These factors can serve as both enablers and constraints.

## V. My (self)positionality and investment

Given the fact that “no research is free from bias; from the inception of the topic to the interpretation of the results” (Lavalée, 2009, p. 23), my viewpoints, perceptions, (self)positionality, and investment as the researcher conducting this project affect the

research, in one way or another. Levering (2006) rightly says that it is close to impossible for researchers to remove themselves from the world they are studying. As such it is crucial that, from the beginning, I position myself within, and with regard to, the study. By that, I mean that I have to explain my connections and/or relationships with the context under examination, and how that might impact the outcomes. Moreover, this research is housed under the Comparative and International Education (CIE) field which, according to Grix (2004), is undertaken based on researchers' past experiences and the personal knowledge they bring to their studies; thus, permitting them to make comparisons and/or judgements. This (self)positioning not only allows others to know who I am, but also prevents certain misinterpretations by addressing issues like reliability and trustworthiness. In essence, I aim to build and establish a trust rapport between my readers and myself.

This (self)positioning is multi-dimensional. This means that it incorporates several facets that, put together, provide an all-encompassing picture of who I am, where I come from and/or stand, and what kind of researcher I am. This section will, therefore, expand on (a) my insider/outsider status, (b) my past experiences in the setting, and (c) the impact of my habitus and capital.

Phillips and Schweisfurth (2008, 2014) put forth the notions of 'insider' and 'outsider' to research and its setting as a framework for explaining one's own positionality. On the one hand, Haïti is my home country: I was born and raised there, and I studied in the education system for twenty-one years. According to the authors, this makes me an *insider* to the Haïtian context. Additionally, I am conducting this study about my own country. Benefiting from that *insider* status, I plan on connecting with

participants being researched (Lavalée, 2009) and on immersing myself in the field to obtain a deeper “understanding of what is going on” (Blaikie, 2007, p. 11). Moreover, the fact that I am doing the project outside of the country, currently attending a Canadian university (i.e. living in another country) will influence and impact, to a certain extent, the lenses I bring to the study as I will be using an international theoretical/conceptual framework to analyze what is happening in Haïti (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014; see also Postlewaite, 1988 in Crossley & Watson, 2003). Put differently, I am an ‘*insider with my own perspectives*’, having my own frame of references set on my own culture and experiences while being trained in different culture and shaped by those experiences as well.

On the other hand, my *outsider* status stems from the fact that, as I analyze and interpret the findings from Haïtian school leaders, I will do so by using trends, patterns and lessons learned from others, from Western to small, fragile and developing countries/settings. Based on Phillips and Schweisfurth (2008, 2014), I am an *outsider* to these settings, having never lived nor worked there (prior to my graduate study), although certain similarities may exist between these countries and my own. As I conceive a theoretical framework anchored in this body of literature and theories, which positions me, in this instance, as an ‘*outsider with my own perspectives*’.

Speaking of theoretical/conceptual framework, the one developed for this study is based on French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and his thinking tools (more details in Chapter 3). Using that framework not only applies to the participants in this study and results but to me as well. In other words, part of my positionality is about reflecting how my habitus and forms of capital (social, cultural) and the manners in which I activate

them, consciously and/or unconsciously, have an impact on the study. In a country that strongly believes in connections, it is inevitable/unescapable that I will tap into my own social capital, i.e. the personal and professional relationships I have there, to help me recruit potential participants. That will provide the initial contacts and references needed to establish rapport and build on that (for more details, see Chapters 5-6). I know that my linguistic habitus and embodied cultural capital, i.e. the language(s) I choose to speak or speak naturally with participants, Creole, French and English, can push some participants to use it even if they are not comfortable with it, and even if I clearly state that they can choose whichever language they prefer. Lastly, I understand that, in a country like Haïti that places a great value on education, conducting research for a doctoral degree (institutionalized cultural capital) is an accomplishment in and of itself. And as such it will be viewed favorably by most.

(Self)positioning myself pushes me to further acknowledge my own subjectivities and connections that stem from my past professional experiences in the country. In my twelve years of career in Haïti, I occupied various positions, leadership and otherwise, primarily in the education field, such as assistant director, teacher, vice-principal, co-principal, seminar instructor, and coordinator. My identity is thus closely related to these experiences that have shaped me, as much as my (international) academic and research journey has. There is the likelihood that some participants in Haïti will be more receptive to the national professional, whereas others will be more open to the international researcher.

Part of my (self)positioning also relates to understanding the duality, or more precisely the paradox, that exists in my observations, accounts and interpretations

because being an *insider* can be problematic, to a certain extent. This implies that given my personal and emotional involvement/implication, consciously and/or unconsciously, there will be things I see and do not see, things I choose to acknowledge and not acknowledge, things I choose to disclose and not disclose (to outsiders); there will also be what I want others to know and how I want them to perceive my country, what/how I choose to present my results and findings, what ends up in the document and what is left out. Additionally, participants' viewpoints and accounts of their realities further test these issues as they will not only socially construct their answers but they will also say what they think I want to hear, what they want me to hear, and omit what they do not want to be known. Acknowledging and stating all that from the beginning allow me, as a researcher, to be cognisant of how it might/will affect the study while finding a way to make sense of everything.

In essence, these dualities, although challenging and unsettling at times, are enriching as I navigate these waters and experience both worlds. And being able to (self)position myself within the study represents one of the reasons why I opted for a qualitative research anchored within an interpretivist paradigm (see Chapter 4). It makes space and room for such subjectivity and investment.

## Concluding summary

In addition to this first introductory chapter, this dissertation is comprised of seven more chapters. Chapter 2, Literature Review, does a review of the literature

relevant to this study. In Chapter 3, Theoretical Framework, I conceived and elaborated a theoretical framework based on French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's thinking tools and on pertinent Critical Policy Study's principles. This Bourdieuan Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework (BELPF) allows me to view Haïti, its ELs and their practices as a completely different unit of analysis than usually perceived in the literature. Chapter 4, Methodology and Methods, lays down the approach adopted for this research, all the details, procedures, protocols, and processes. It also discusses the study's limitations and challenges. Setting the stage, Chapter 5, first delves into the Haïtian educational context, providing accounts and facts about its state. Then it presents the participants, their contexts, and backgrounds. In Chapter 6, I describe the findings resulting from the multiple-sourced data I gathered in Port-au-Prince, Haïti from the school leaders. Analysis and Discussion, the 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter, intends to make sense of what participants said and did, by operationalizing the BELPF, and making it work. The last and final Chapter 8 summarizes findings and discussions, puts forth areas for future research, and elaborates on the study's originality. Then I conclude this dissertation with my personal reflections and thoughts regarding this journey.



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

This project aims at describing and analyzing Haïtian educational leaders' understandings and interpretations about student learning and achievement, and how they translate them into practices in their specific settings. To paraphrase Davies (2005), "No [study] can be comprehensive in terms of trying to encompass or include every facet or dimension of leadership, and certainly this [study] does not claim to do so" (p. 1). Nonetheless, with my research located within various fields, I review the current state of the literature in the areas relevant to the study, such as leadership, educational leadership, educational leaders (ELs) and approaches to leadership, student learning and achievement (SL/A). This chapter also looks into the state of educational leadership in small and fragile states, and developing countries. Given that Haïti is the setting, I explore the literature on and about the country, with regard to the aforementioned themes. Lastly, I conclude by explaining how this study is attempting to fill in a gap in the literature, particularly with regard to Global South countries like Haïti.

### I. Leadership

The term 'leadership' has been used, studied, and researched for decades from different perspectives within different domains (economics, politics, sciences, social

sciences, and humanities, to name a few) without anyone reaching a consensus on its definition and meaning (Richmond & Allison, 2003; Ryan, 2005). Leadership is often conceived as the “ability to motivate or persuade others to act in certain way in order to achieve a goal” (Sullivan, 2009b, p. 287; see also Gardner, 2013). It is described as “the ability to understand what needs to be done and moving resources and people forward in concert to get the work done with ethics and values” (Starr, 2014, p. 228). Leadership is also seen as a determinant in organization, its climate and productivity, which in turn determine the leadership’s effectiveness (Griffith, 1999; Walker, Bryant & Lee, 2013). According to Levy (2011), leadership creates a sense of possibility and of making a real difference, which can, from my perspective, further create a sense of belonging.

Leadership views organizations through multiple frames: structural (goals), political (power) and symbolic, as well as human resources (Bogue, 1992; Bolman & Deal, 2013). As “a relational form of influence that may exist at the individual, organizational, or discursive level” (Rottmann, 2007, p. 53), leadership is about “individuals, organizations, systems, and ideas work[ing] together in complicated, interactive ways to influence one another” (Rottmann, 2007, p. 54). As such leaders are closely linked with the historic context from which they originate, the actual settings in which they evolve, and the systems of which they are in charge (Gardner, 2013).

Clark and Clark (1996) provide a clear summary of what leadership encompasses. It is an “activity or set of activities, observable to others, that occurs in a group, organization, or institution and which involves a leader and followers who willingly subscribe to common purposes and work together to achieve them” (Clark & Clark, 1996, p. 25).

## II. Educational leadership

When applied to education, leadership takes a different dimension because schools differ from other entities since their educative mission makes them unique. Yet, as stated previously, there are no clear, set, and agreed upon definitions (Bush, 2003), although nowadays educational leadership is a “hot topic” (Starr, 2014, p. 224) throughout the world. And there are even contradictions in conceptualizing what it entails (Starr, 2014), which underlines the multi-faceted nature of educational settings.

Educational leadership, in a sense, is about “foster[ing] the learning, personal growth, and development of all participants, including adults at work as well as students” (Owens & Valensky, 2011, p. 13). With that said, research abounds on what educational leadership should be, how educational leaders ought to behave and act in their school settings; what is effective leadership. Furthermore, it has been acknowledged that school leadership changes constantly and at a fast pace, depending on the context where it is being exercised (Lashway, 2006). Closely linked to that specific setting/context, school leadership is a “process of social influence” (Southworth, 2005, p. 77). This begs the questions: who is influencing whom? to what end? who is left aside? And critiques on school effectiveness ask similar questions: effective for what? and effective for whom? (Bogotch, Mirón & Biesta, 2007).

Given the current trend to view schools (complex and dynamic entities) as corporate organizations (Caesar, 2013), the term leadership overlaps with management and administration (Bush, 2003). As such, many scholars use these three terms interchangeably, while others take great caution to differentiate between them (Gardner,

2013). Certain countries even favour one over the others. For example, the United States, Canada, and Australia are more likely to choose administration, whereas management is preferred in Britain, Europe, and Africa (Bush, 2003).

Management is defined as a “set of activities directed towards efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in order to achieve organization goals” (Spare, 2002, p. 102). In education, management is therefore concerned with the operations of educational settings such as schools. In fact, it deals with all the operations within the schools, with the relationships with the outside world (the environment) that includes the different communities, and with the governmental agencies to which they are accountable (Bush, 2003).

There is a growing trend in which educational leaders (ELs) are expected to be effective managers in their schools with a focus on maintenance activities, technical issues, and school-related operations (Bush, 2003; Tolofari, 2005). Such movements can be related to the New Public Management (NPM), a set of collective ideas/reforms of public administration that has also reached and affected the education sector.

As a global phenomenon influencing policies worldwide, NPM can be defined as a public management approach that uses knowledge, principles, skills, and experiences gained from business management and other fields to enhance the efficacy, effectiveness, and performance of public services (Verger & Curran, 2014). It stems from both neoliberal and neoconservative perspectives with economic, political, social, intellectual, and technological drivers (Tolofari, 2005). Basically, NPM is characterized by marketization, privatization, managerialism, performance measurement, and

accountability (Tolofari, 2005; Verger & Curran, 2014). Its impact and/or influence in education is mainly observed through the application of business principles, a *managerialism* of sorts, in educational administration and settings. There is a combination of decentralization and centralization processes taking place at the same time (Gunter & Fitzgerald, 2013).

Some of the practices associated with NPM in education encompass, among others, school choice and competition; performance appraisal/monitoring and performance related-pay; professional standards (principals, teachers) and central/national curriculum; output controls through standardized testing (national and international); public reports, test data and league tables; parsimony in resource use; funding and vouchers formula; hiring and firing staff/teachers based on business plan/review; finance and budgeting; public-private partnerships; school improvement plan and surveillance; outcome-based incentives (Anderson & Herr, 2015; Fink, 2009; Gunter & Fitzgerald, 2013; Jarl, Fredriksson & Persson, 2012; Tolofari, 2005; Verger & Curran, 2014). The related policies and reforms are in fact adapted, re-contextualized, and regulated in “very uneven and paradoxical ways” (Verger & Curran, 2014, p. 253). It can be argued that this occurs because these policy and reform processes imply “potentially irreconcilable differences that place leaders within educational institutions in an almost impossible position, caught between a leadership-inspired imaginary of agential change and the need to implement reforms that have been centrally determined” (Hall, 2013, p. 270). One can say that it not only creates tensions and contradictions (Hall, 2013), but also takes away the ‘humanist’ side of education that fundamentally

cannot exist without human beings, and replaces it with a managerial, business approach to education.

Ultimately, NPM is a matter of *performativity* that represents the “raison d’être of educational institutions”, where schools “perform or disappear”, where “school leaders’ job is to manage performance” (Tolofari, 2005, p. 86), where “principals have become middle-managers responsible for their school’s survival in the school market” (Jarl et al., 2012, p. 434). And that adds pressures and creates a dilemma for ELs as they have to figure out whether or not, and how “to focus on professional matters and attend to the technical core activities of the school, or whether to concentrate on a growing administrative workload, a considerable amount of which is, at best, indirectly related to teaching, learning and curriculum” (Dimmock, 1999, p. 449). Some scholars take this a step further by pointing out the tensions that NPM can cause for school leaders:

A further dilemma for school leaders arises from the tensions between competing elements of leadership, management and administration. Irrespective of how these terms are defined, school leaders experience difficulty in deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, student and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower order duties (administration). (Dimmock, 1999, pp. 449-450)

In essence, this distinction between these terms is to be questioned as they share an “intimate connection” and a “great deal of overlap, particularly in respect of motivating people and giving a sense of purpose to the organization” (Bush, 2003, p. 8), in this case, to schools. And such tensions and dilemma, especially with New Public Management (NPM) principles that have been problematized/critiqued for not delivering on its promises and causing serious damages, tend to push educators further away from

education's social and cultural values. Therefore, another way of thinking about leadership in educational contexts that challenges this narrow technical-rational administrative and managerial approach is to consider more broadly what it means to be an educational leader.

### Educational leaders' effectiveness and associated best practices

It is recognized that educational leaders' success depends on the school's climate and context (Griffith, 1999) and vice-versa, meaning that the school effectiveness also relies on principals' leadership (Militello et al., 2013). But leaders themselves vary greatly and, as Gardner (2013) put it, "come in many forms, with many styles and diverse qualities" (p. 21). Educational leaders, principals or school headteachers, regardless of the title, set the tone for their schools (Thomas & Davis, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, 2013). As some researchers argued, they "explicitly seek and want to make a difference in the schools they lead" (Southworth, 2005, p. 75) because of their "desire and responsibility to enhance a school's success" (Southworth, 2005, p. 76).

Leadership has, for a long time, been perceived as a matter of single individuals under the assumption that 'the' individual is "endowed with power associated with personal qualities or organizational position" (Ryan, 2005, p. 23) allowing him/her to exercise his/her leadership and make changes. Since some authors pay attention to educational leaders as individuals, their attributes and behaviors, it is unsurprising that they focus on leaders' actions as conducive to student achievement (SA). A school leader is thus considered as a "promoter of change" which requires "a strong strategic

focus, an ability to prioritize between initiatives and to develop plans for action that can deliver on these priorities” (Bennett, 2011, p. 253).

Viewed in this light, it has been noted that educational leaders possess a great deal of power and influence that can determine many decisions and affect many people (Bush, 2003). However, Gardner (2013) has cautioned that leadership and power should not be confused given that leadership is not equal to official authority. True power originates from the people leaders work with, and is mainly about trust and support: it “comes from gaining the trust and support of the people who then give you the power” (Autry, 2001, p. 21).

Researchers have established several criteria for the effectiveness of school leaders, in terms of behaviors and actions. For authors Notman and Henry (2011), the discussion is centred on leaders’ personal characteristics, their leadership skills (management, consultation, decision-making), leadership strategies (vision, improvement practices, employment, team) and leadership sustainability (collaboration, contingency), through modeling, inspiration, challenge and encouragement (see also Kouzes & Posner, 2010). Effective school leadership also revolves around the establishment of “pedagogical, administrative and cultural conditions necessary for successful learning and teaching” (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 7).

Some of the commonly accepted factors and dimensions of effective leadership have been provided through lists of traits and/or behaviours exhibited by ELs; in other instances, through what are perceived as best practices for school leaders in their leadership journey. The notion of ‘best practices’ not only varies from one setting to



another but it can also be problematic and contested. In other words, what is considered best practices for some can be ineffective for others. Yet, scholars like Eacott (2010) critiqued that notion of ‘best practices’ for its reductionist perspective, its ‘one-best-way’ approach, its continuous ‘what-works’ desire. Scholars have argued that evidence-based approach – ‘what works’ – is problematic because “there are limits to the kind of knowledge that can be generated and limits to the [...] links between actions and consequences” (Biesta, 2010, p. 501). In fact, regarding the school effectiveness and school improvement movement, Bogotch, Mirón and Biesta (2007) pointed out the fact that means are mistaken for ends, judgements ignored, and people affected, disaffected, and/or left out. As such, a value-based approach to practice is proposed as it not only takes into account “the nature of social interaction, the ways in which things can work, the processes of power that are involved” but most of all considers “the values and normative orientations that constitute social practices such as education” (Biesta, 2010, p. 501).

Authors such as Griffith (1999), Leithwood and Jantzi (2005, 2008), and Sergiovanni (2013) focussed on topics like setting directions, developing and/or redesigning organization, school processes. Other researchers covered themes such as having and communicating a clear mission and vision; and making tough decisions and engaging in constructive problem talk (Institute for Education Leadership, 2012; Lashway, 2006; Nettles & Herrington, 2007; Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd, 2009). Emphasizing and focusing on teaching and on curriculum (planning, coordinating and evaluating), and leading instructional program have received great emphasis from scholars such as Griffith (1999), Leithwood, Harris and Strauss (2013), Leithwood and

Jantzi (2008), Nettles and Herrington (2007), and Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd (2009), to name a few. Other research has also pointed out the importance of setting high expectations for student performance, and monitoring their progress (Leithwood et al., 2013; Nettles & Herrington, 2007; Southworth, 2005), as well as providing professional development and support, especially for teachers (Griffith, 1999; Nettles & Herrington, 2007; Robinson et al., 2009). For Nettles and Herrington (2007), and Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd (2009), creating a safe, orderly, and supportive environment is as equally important.

Some researchers have noted that aspects like managing resources strategically (Griffith, 1999; Robinson et al., 2009), building relationships and developing people through collaboration (Autry, 2001; Institute for Education Leadership, 2012; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005, 2008; Militello et al., 2013), and securing and holding others (particularly teachers) accountable for results (Institute for Education Leadership, 2012; Lashway, 2006; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008) mattered for educational leaders' effectiveness. Lastly, there are scholars who have pointed out that educational leaders have been able to create educationally powerful associations by connecting, communicating with, and involving (be involved in) the outside world and other stakeholders (Autry, 2001; Griffith, 1999; Nettles & Herrington, 2007; Robinson et al., 2009).

These criteria stem from and/or can be found in various approaches or theories of educational leadership that are elaborated based on specific discourses and/or end results. These forms include, with some references, transformational (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005, 2008; Leithwood & Slegers, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2013), interactive (Rosener, 1990), sustainable (Davies, 2007; Fullan, 2005; Hargreaves, 2005), steward and servant (Autry,

2001; Greenleaf, 2002; Sergiovanni, 2013), moral (Sergiovanni, 1992), distributed, shared, participative (Harris, 2005, 2009; Spillane, 2006), transactional (Gordon, 2008; Law & Glover, 2000), inclusive (Ryan, 2006), democratic (Woods, 2005), instructional (Blase & Blase, 2004), authentic, strategic (Davies & Davies, 2005), authoritative, managerial, contingent, postmodern, to name a few. I agree with Eacott (2013a, 2013b) and Miller (2013a) that there is a ‘proliferation’ and ‘mushrooming’ of adjectival leadership which only serves to confound educators more with regard to an already complex endeavour (see also Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004).

In this backdrop, arguments have also been made for a blending of styles or approaches stating that it allows educational leaders to balance them as they can complement each other, draw on each strength, and be implemented depending on the situation at hand. It calls for leaders’ flexibility in the sense that they need to be able to choose and fit their leadership, their styles, and their repertoires as needed, depending on the specific circumstances (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014; Dorathy, 2013; Freeley & Scricca, 2015; Leithwood et al., 2004). In other words, educational leadership ought to be contextualised and attune to the diverse nature and the needs of the schools its leaders are in charge of (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2008; Thomas & Davis, 1998).

The leadership competencies, skills, and responsibilities put forth are also considered as part of leadership standards. Leadership standards are defined as articulated values and principles for professionals, as well as measurement tools employed regularly for performance assessments in several areas; therefore, for making judgements (Ingvarson, Anderson, Gronn & Jackson, 2006). Specifically, they determine

what school leaders ought to know, comprehend, and do in order to succeed in their schools (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014). Contextualized, leadership standards can be viewed as policies that “drive [leadership] practice and guide professional relationships” (Ingvarson et al., 2006, p. 31). Countries have created agencies and/or institutes in charge of elaborating such standards that are then given (that are imposed) to educators at various levels of the system: school districts, school leaders, and K-12 teachers. Due to current accountability measures that demand for immediate and extensive increases and improvement in student achievement (Moody & Stricker, 2009), standards have turned into a *modus vivendi* for educators. In a quest for ‘what works?’ for school leaders (again that notion of effectiveness and best practices), several educational leadership frameworks have been conceived and implemented. The following table (Table 2.1) offers a glimpse of the development of these standards in diverse settings. It shows what themes are covered, and how they overlap and are shared among many contexts, which is not surprising considering how policies, in this globalized era, travel, and are borrowed and implemented.

**Table 2.1** *Professional standards for educational leaders*

Countries	Framework by agency/institution	Main themes
<b>United States of America</b>	Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (2014) by Council of Chief State School Officers (2013, 2014) & Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (2015) by National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vision, mission, values</li> <li>• instructional capacity</li> <li>• instruction</li> <li>• curriculum &amp; assessment</li> <li>• community of care &amp; support for students</li> <li>• professional culture for teachers &amp; staff</li> <li>• professional capacity of school personnel</li> <li>• professional community for teachers &amp; staff</li> <li>• communities of engagement for families</li> <li>• operation &amp; management</li> <li>• ethical principles &amp; professional norms</li> <li>• equity &amp; cultural responsiveness</li> <li>• continuous school improvement</li> </ul>

Countries	Framework by agency/institution	Main themes
<b>Canada (Ontario)</b>	Ontario Leadership Framework by Institute for Education Leadership (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• setting goals</li> <li>• aligning resources with priorities</li> <li>• promoting collaborative learning cultures</li> <li>• using data</li> <li>• engaging in courageous conversations</li> </ul>
<b>United Kingdom (England)</b>	National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers & National Standards for Headteachers by England Department for Education (2004, 2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• qualities &amp; knowledge</li> <li>• pupils &amp; staff</li> <li>• systems &amp; process</li> <li>• self-improving school system</li> <li>• shaping the future</li> <li>• developing self &amp; working with others</li> <li>• managing the organization</li> <li>• securing accountability</li> <li>• strengthening community</li> </ul>
<b>Australia</b>	Australian Standards for Principals and the Leadership Profiles by Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• requirements: vision &amp; values; knowledge &amp; understanding; personal qualities, social &amp; interpersonal skills</li> <li>• leading teaching &amp; learning</li> <li>• developing self &amp; others</li> <li>• leading improvement, innovation &amp; change</li> <li>• leading the management of the school</li> <li>• engaging &amp; working with the community</li> </ul>
<b>France</b>	Référentiel métier des directeurs d'école by Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche (2014, 2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responsibilities related to pedagogy, instruction, teaching, learning &amp; school mission</li> <li>• responsibilities related to the functioning of the school</li> <li>• relations with parents &amp; school partners/ stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>South Africa</b>	The South African Standard for Principalship: Enhancing the Image of and Competency of School Principals by Department of Basic Education (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leading the learning school</li> <li>• shaping the direction &amp; development of the school</li> <li>• managing quality &amp; securing accountability</li> <li>• developing &amp; empowering self &amp; others</li> <li>• managing the school as an organization</li> <li>• working with &amp; for the immediate &amp; the broader school community</li> <li>• managing human resources (staff)</li> <li>• managing &amp; advocating for extra-curricular activities</li> </ul>

Countries	Framework by agency/institution	Main themes
<b>New Zealand</b>	Kiwi Leadership for Principals: Principals as Educational Leaders  by Ministry of Education (2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• culture (values)</li> <li>• pedagogy (knowledge about teaching &amp; learning)</li> <li>• systems</li> <li>• partnerships &amp; networks (positive links to support learning)</li> </ul>
<b>China</b>	Professional Standards for Compulsory Education School Principals <sup>1</sup>  by Ministry of Education (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic principles: morality, talents cultivation orientation, leading the development, emphasis on abilities, life-long learning</li> <li>• standards: setting development plan, engaging in curriculum &amp; instructional leadership, facilitating teacher professional development, creating nurturing school culture, optimizing internal organization management, adjusting to external contexts</li> </ul>

As Waters and Cameron (2007) demonstrated in their Balanced Leadership Framework, leadership frameworks and standards organize leadership responsibilities into structures using various parameters such as a focus of leadership (instruction, curriculum, assessment, goals, resources), a magnitude of change (ideals, vision, missions, flexibility) and a purposeful community (relationship with community and stakeholders). If one of the aims of leadership standards is about “[b]alancing when and how to maintain the status quo with when and how to challenge it” (Waters & Cameron, 2007, p. 19), it is not surprising that their intended purpose sometimes differs from what is happening in reality. Some of the common practices (intended and unintended) involved being used as preparation/training programs, guidelines for work, checklist, professional development guide, recruitment procedures, induction process, job description, self-reflection/self-assessment tool, performance evaluation/appraisal

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Liu, Xu, Grant, Strong & Fang (2015).

(British Columbia Principal & Vice-Principal Association [BCPVPA], 2013; Ingvarson et al., 2006; Institute for Education Leadership, 2008; McKerrow, Crawford & Cornell, 2006; Militello et al., 2013; Pollock & Winton, 2012; Pont et al., 2008; Riveros, Verret & Wei, 2016; South Africa Department of Basic Education, 2014). However, critiques about principals' professional standards were made regarding the fact that they de-contextualize the profession, reducing it to a one-size-fits-all approach, and as such "complex roles are de-skilled and dumbed down" (English, 2012, p. 167). Similar to leadership theories and approaches that abound in the field, with regard to standards, "there is no one way leadership practices [and standards] are lived in schools" (Militello et al., 2013, p. 85). And that, to me, points to the complex and demanding nature of the profession that requires school leaders to be attentive and attuned to their specific contexts and their practice.

Regardless of what each of these frameworks and theories claims, and what term is used like productive leaders (Hayes, Christie, Mills & Lingard, 2004), effective leaders (Freeley & Scricca, 2015; Tietjen, 2014), successful leaders (Garza Jr., Murakami-Ramvalho & Merchant, 2011; Klar & Brewer, 2013; Leithwood, 2005), as Witziers, Bosker and Krüger (2003) argued, some researchers are on an "elusive search for an association" (p. 398) between educational leadership and student achievement (topic that will be addressed later on). The main reason lies in the belief that the former makes a definite contribution to "raising student achievement at levels and all stages" (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014, p. 4).

In addition to everything that has been mentioned so far, it is worth noting that there exists a body of literature that presents competing perspectives of educational

leadership. For example, leadership is viewed as a way to challenge the status quo, or as a search for social change and emancipation. Scholars have also approached leadership from a critical and socially critical perspective. On the one hand, the critical approach to educational leadership focuses on organizational practice and analyzes issues of power.

This focus on power, and on locating the school within a wider set of purposes and rationales leads critical researchers to make claims about realism. So the starting point for critical work is less about the job being too big for one person and is more concerned with the situation in which a principal is working. (Gunter, 2013, p. 566)

In some ways, critical approach challenges this notion of power as associated with organizational positions and legitimate authority, and looks into the human, authentic, and everyday practice of leadership in problem solving. On the other hand, a socially critical approach advocates for processes and practices of leadership that are more socially just. From this vantage point, attention is also being paid to children in the process, to their positioning as disciplined, ordered objects that exist only to “produce data for elite adults to demonstrate performance” (Gunter, 2013, p. 568). Moreover, scholars from both perspectives tend to question instances of power, and its workings in terms of advantages and disadvantages. In other words, their approach is not so much about “leadership per se but about the way economic and political interests configure and operate power relations in order to ensure a strong fit between education and wealth production” (Gunter, 2013, p. 572); therefore, it is “less concerned with how tasks are performed and [...] more concerned with the rights and opportunities for those employed to perform them” (Gunter, 2013, p. 572).

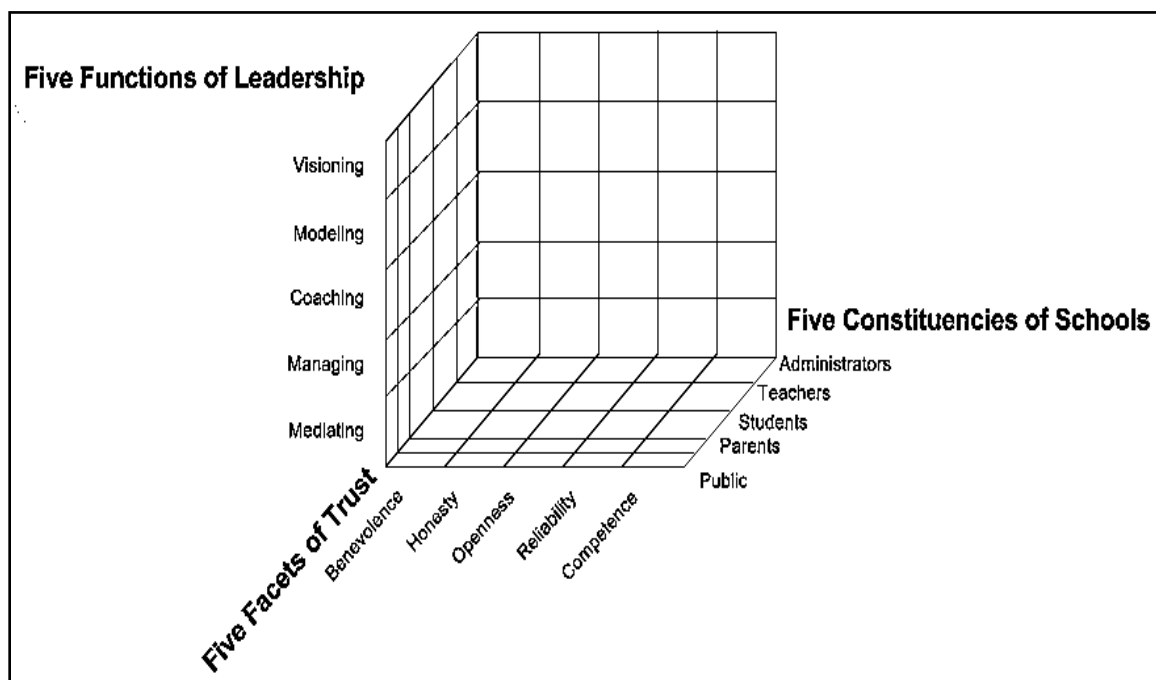


Last but not least, there exists an aspect of educational leadership that ties, together and well, all these concepts and approaches mentioned throughout this section: the notion of trust. Trust is viewed as “a pre-condition of co-operation... a pre-requisite for effective and meaningful collaborative working relationships” (Troman, 2000, p. 335). Five facets of trust have been distinguished by Tschannen-Moran (2013): benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability and competence. They are related to the five constituencies that constitute schools, meaning leaders/administrators, teachers, students, parents and the general public (Leithwood et al., 2013; Tschannen-Moran, 2013). Moreover, considering the ways in which the constituencies are connected and interact, without trust there cannot be progress and effectiveness in the schools. Tschannen-Moran (2013) stated that mistrust from any constituent of the school can spread through the others and affect academic performance and “undermin[e] the tenure of ... [the] leader” (p. 40) who cannot “survive the demise of trust” (p. 40). Trust, therefore, is viewed as critical to school success.

Based on the principle of trust and given its multi-dimensional nature, five functions of educational leadership are proposed (Tschannen-Moran, 2013): visioning, modeling, coaching, managing –as in delegating and finding the right balance to deal with policies, procedure and rules, and mediating –when conflict erupts, when trust is broken. When put together, the functions of educational leadership, the facets of trust and the constituencies of schools, they form a *Trustworthy Leadership Matrix* (see Figure 2.1). Leadership built from trust pushes everyone towards the same goals, in the same direction because “trustworthiness has to do with concern for relationships combined with a concern for the task” (Tschannen-Moran, 2013, p. 50). In essence it provides a

way to look into the interconnectedness of these elements and how they can make “a difference in student achievement” (Tschannen-Moran, 2013, p. 52), which is the focus of the next section.

Moreover, it should be noted that the literature on trust and leadership reviewed above comes from an apolitical perspective that ignores or minimizes how the notion of trust is socially-constructed and is used as a form of control over individuals or groups such as teachers, staff, students, and even educational leaders. In some contexts, trust negotiations occur between/among individuals and groups. Further, there are instances where manifestations of power and authority are clearly evident, and where actors are constrained and limited in what they can do. It can be thus argued that such situations can lead to the erosion of trust (Troman, 2000), although in some cases, that does not prevent the institution from performing.



Source: Tschannen-Moran (2013, p. 42)

**Figure 2.1** Trustworthy leadership matrix

### III. Educational leadership and student learning and achievement: Is there a connection?

School leadership revolves around teaching and learning (Soutworth, 2005).

Given the focus of this research project, it is only natural and legitimate to view what the research literature tells us about what student learning is, and what constitutes student achievement.

In the literature, there exists an ‘elusive search for an association’ between educational leadership and student achievement (Witziers, Bosker & Krüger, 2003) leading scholars to construct, elaborate, and put forward several claims. Certain scholars studying educational leadership focus on student achievement with the belief that what educational leaders are actually doing, their perceptions, struggles, and successes “can impact thousands of students” (Nettles & Herrington, 2007, p. 725). These claims, although they are not completely false, have for the most part been investigated with statistical methods.

It is thus worth mentioning that in these studies, mostly done using a quantitative approach (Robinson et al., 2009), the terms ‘student achievement’, also referred to as ‘academic achievement’ and ‘student learning’, have rarely been defined or explained, thus assuming that everyone agrees on their definition and meaning when, in fact, they mean different things depending on scholars’ and practitioners’ school of thought. For the purpose of this project, here are some understandings of these terms, which vary greatly.

## Student learning

A lot has been written about learning in general, and student learning in particular. Student learning can be defined as students who have achieved understanding, which includes the processes and strategies students employ to get reach that understanding (Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004). It is also based on certain principles that span from traditional to more contemporary views, both of them valid (Pagliaro, 2012). The traditional principles include motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic), goal-directed activities (clear purpose, objectives leading to learners' ego-involvement), success (through successful opportunities), feedback (being informed of progress and/or results), realistic and positive level of expectations, active involvement, use of senses (providing direct experiences), discovery learning (finding relationship by themselves), meaningful materials, readiness (ability to connect new learning with past experiences), sequence, transfer (use in new situations and contexts), early review (for reinforcement), practice (distributed over short periods), recitation, interference, and nature/processing of original learning (through vividness, contrast, frequency, emotional environment, various activities) (Pagliaro, 2012; see also Gronlund & Waugh, 2009). Contemporary approaches to student learning encompass student-centered instruction, authentic learning situations, real-life complex problem and problem-solving, social negotiation and collaboration, and multiple representation of knowledge (Pagliaro, 2012). These approaches are not mutually exclusive and can blend well together.

Furthermore, other features need to be taken into consideration when dealing with student learning. One aspect encompasses learning styles –how students learn– that refer

to their cognitive styles and learning modalities. This feature is closely related to the multiple intelligences theory that promotes approaching a new concept, subject or discipline using various ways and mediums (Gardner, 1995, 1998).

### Student achievement

Within the literature on the topic, several perspectives exist; and some have received greater attention than others, especially in this globalization era. In a nutshell, student achievement (SA) is multidimensional as it encompasses students' ability and performance, taking into account a holistic approach to their development and human growth, which entails cognitive, emotional, social, and physical dimensions. It does not occur in one single instance but takes place throughout one's life, across time and levels. Furthermore, SA is about learning and mastering curriculum's objectives, and demonstrating it through assessments and evaluations administered regularly (American Association of School Administrators [AASA], 1993; Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer & Wisenbaker, 1979; Philippe, 1993; Soehner & Ryan, 2011).

However, critiques have been made as well to those associating SA with performance in assessment tests, especially standardized testing. Some of these flaws encompass: extreme anxiety in students and parents, unhealthy competition between students (and among parents as well), and waste of resources and times that could have been better used if allocated to classroom instruction (Deneen & Deneen, 2008).

Moreover, arguments are made that there should be less focus on academic achievement, and more so on specific qualities that will better benefit and successfully influence students in school and throughout life, such as perseverance, patience, team

work, time management, and organization (Deneen & Deneen, 2008). From that vantage point, this makes perfect sense considering that school's primary objective should be to enable students to lead a fulfilling and successful life in every way/aspect of their life's journey.

In essence, there appears to be a “multicolored, multipatterned “achievement” tapestry [...] constantly changing as new standards, mandates, expectations, and forms of assessment are spun into its fabric” (AASA, 1993, p. 2). And that obviously affects how educational leaders view and approach their practice in schools, particularly towards SA. This can also explain that constant, yet elusive, search for a connection between educational leadership and student achievement.

From this perspective, school quality and student achievement are determined by the leadership, personality style, and ability of principals. Educational leaders' practices at the school level are said to positively impact on student learning and achievement (Bezzina, 2002; Freeley & Scricca, 2015; Institute for Education Leadership, 2012; Miller, 2013a). As such, the primary goal and functions of schools and their principals relate to student achievement (Deneen & Deneen, 2008). As Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) asserted, educational leadership is “second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” (p. 5). This view can be problematic and should be nuanced because, in terms of association, educational leaders are unlikely to have direct impact and effects on students' learning and achievement. In fact, they are most likely to have indirect, minimal and mediated effects on SA through the school environment they foster and their interaction with teachers (Freeley & Scricca, 2015; Ingvarson et al., 2006; Lingard &

Christie, 2003; Walker et al., 2013); as their foci are translated through their responsibilities and actions.

Based on Marzano, Waters and McNultry's (2005) meta-analysis, seven leadership responsibilities and six leader action themes are proposed that are said to improve student achievement (Taylor, 2010). These responsibilities and actions are not different from what has been stated above; the main difference lies on the categorization, on how they are regrouped. The responsibilities include: knowledge of the curriculum, instruction and assessment, optimizer (lead role), intellectual stimulation, change agent, monitoring and evaluating, flexibility, and ideals and beliefs. As for the action themes, they contain: focus school culture on SA, make data-based decisions for SA, stimulate intellectual growth, personally invest in the changes happening, and expect result from collaborations (Taylor, 2010; see also Freeley & Scricca, 2015; Institute for Education Leadership, 2012).

The literature reviewed thus far gave a multifaceted view of what educational leadership entails. However, these research studies and ensuing frameworks and theories mainly focussed on western, developed and English-speaking countries, although they claim to be universal. Then, what is happening in other parts of the world? The next section examines precisely that: educational leadership in small states, fragile states, and developing countries.

#### IV. Educational leadership in small states, fragile states, and developing countries (Global South)

Haiti, the setting of this study, is not part of the Western, Global North countries that have been the primary focus of most of the educational leadership literature reviewed so far. Referring to its situation, terms such as small state, fragile state, and developing (Global South) country have been used. Therefore, this section reviews the existing literature on educational leadership as it relates to these specific contexts, small states, fragile states, and developing countries, given that “every country is unique” (Sanford & Sandhu, 2003, p. vii) and that leadership, particularly in educational settings, is highly contextualized. But before delving directly into the topic, it is important to clearly explain how certain concepts are perceived throughout this study. This also serves as a means to frame the scope of the study and avoid misinterpretation.

Small states (SS) or small island developing states (SIDS) are usually defined as nations with a population of 1.5 million inhabitants, although some extended this benchmark to 5 million (Crossley & Sprague, 2014). SS are distinguished by the common issues they face such as remoteness, insularity, and susceptibility to natural disasters. The majority of SS are located in the Caribbean and Pacific regions. It is important to point out that SS come from both Global North and Global South countries, which include rich and poor nations. Scholars like Crossley and Sprague (2014) further stated that SS “were not simply scaled down versions of larger countries but have a social-cultural ecology of their own” (p. 87). Despite the growing discussions about/on SIDS in many fields, education has not been at the forefront of these conversations



(Crossley & Sprague, 2014). Taken into account, SS experiences can inform other countries by offering valuable lessons drawn from their distinctive and unique contexts.

Fragile states are also referred to as crisis states, countries at risk of instability, countries under stress, or countries with fragile situations. Even without an agreed-upon definition, fragile states are at the basis defined as “unable to perform its core functions and displays vulnerability in the social, political, and economic domains” (Sekhar, 2010, p. 263). In other words, they are those nation-states where those in power cannot or will not carry their core functions and provide basic necessities to its inhabitants (Heine & Thompson, 2011). There exist common characteristics of countries in these situations: weak and deteriorating governance, fragile situations of prolonged crises, post-conflict or political transition, high security risks, and threats to development or low development status (Heine & Thompson, 2011; Naudé & McGillivray, 2011; Turrent, 2011). Fragile states are considered highly vulnerable to conflicts at both the national and international levels (Gauthier & Moita, 2011; Sekhar, 2010; Turrent, 2011). Another indicator is the presence of a United Nations and/or regional peace-keeping or peace-building mission for a minimum of 3 years (Turrent, 2011). Despite the fact that most fragile states come from the developing world, Sekhar (2010) asserted that the degree of fragility, the causes and consequences, as well as the coping mechanisms, vary greatly from one country to another. However, other scholars such as Grim, Lemay-Hébert and Nay (2014) pushed for a deconstruction and a “disentangle[ment]” of this reality, arguing that “the concept of ‘fragile states’ can be seen as an attempt by state powers to describe reality in accordance with their foreign policy priorities” (p. 198). In other words, this speaks to the way Western donors conceive it and strategize around it, as well as the way in which countries

labelled ‘fragile states’ internalize it, reinterpret it, and exploit it too. Moreover, Naudé and McGillivray (2011) concluded that “all states are fragile to various degrees, in various domains, and over different time periods” (p. 5).

Synonymous to the 1950s and 1960s’ term of ‘Third World’ as well as the term ‘Global South’ countries, this classification of ‘developing countries’ varies broadly, ranging from countries with low or middle levels of gross national product (GNP) per capita to those with relatively high income. Regardless of this lack of homogeneity (Sullivan, 2009a), developing countries, according to Grover (2012), Radin (2008), and Sullivan (2009a), are generally recognized for their low living standards and high poverty, high population growth, low levels of productivity, lack of industrialization, dependency on agriculture and primary exports, as well as dependency in international relations. Other features characterize these countries such as megacities, excessive sovereign debt, political corruption, high mortality rates, inadequate capital (physical, human, financial), poorly developed financial markets, to name a few (Barrow, 2014; Sullivan, 2009a). However, as Barrow (2014) posited, in these developing countries, there will be areas and sectors that are less developed while others are more developed. It is important to note that throughout this dissertation, I will interchangeably use these three terms when referring to the research’s setting, Haïti.

Regardless of the terminology employed, as Naudé and McGillivray (2011) pointed out, these terms/classifications are not static. They evolved and changed over time. And by examining educational leadership in these countries, this section delves into what has been done outside of the Western world, providing insights and different perspectives on the topic. As such, it offers the opportunity to learn and acknowledge

other viewpoints that are not widespread in mainstream discourses about/of educational leadership.

Social contexts and local factors (political, economic and cultural) affect and condition leadership practices across the globe as well as globalization flows, in a complex interplay between agents (Bezzina, 2002; Louisy, 2004; Moorosi & Bush, 2011). Sider (2014) referred to this as the ‘glocal’ reality of educational leaders from small island developing states/fragile states/developing countries like Haïti as they experienced the “globalisation impacts on [their] local practice” (p. 83). In other words, they are “standing at the intersection of the local and the global, with national cultures drawn into new global inter-connections” (Louisy, 2004, p. 286). It has been noticed that educational leaders sensible to local needs informed by local experiences invest in “ensuring that their schools provide a quality education” (Sider, 2014, p. 84), thus increasing student achievement. However, it is important to mention –and caution against– two aspects of this globalization impact on non-Western countries. First, there is the notion/assumption that Western/Anglo-American conceptualization of educational leadership can be (and has been) generalized and applied outside of these settings (Oplatka, 2004); this could not be farther from the truth. As Oplatka (2004) argued, educational leadership theories and approaches are not universal and are not “valid in all contexts” (p. 442). Secondly, non-Western countries tend to transfer and implement education policies (in general and/or for specific domains) created in/for developed countries (Oplatka, 2004). The consequences of such practices are seen in conflicting views, definitions, and perceptions on certain issues, in diverging actions and misaligned

programs as the original policies were conceived based on specific cultural scripts originating in the West.

Therefore, by looking at educational leadership in these SIDS/fragile states/developing countries, my aim is also to point out their similarities to what is happening in the developed world/Global North (as mentioned in previous sections), as well as the features and facets of leadership that are specific to these developing settings and make them unique. Similarities are observed in actions and practices among school leaders in SS/fragile states/developing countries such as those listed below:

- Due to recent reforms, some developing countries require that prospective school principals obtain specific qualifications in educational leadership, although issues are raised concerning the limits, constraints, and inadequacy of these educational/qualification trainings (Bezzina, 2002).
- Considering the push towards decentralization in several non-Western settings, school leaders' roles have changed and evolved (Sharp & Gopinathan, 2002). Pressures at multiple levels are exerted upon them to “do too much with limited power to take the decisions that matter” (Bezzina, 2002, p. 14). In other words, they have an illusion of autonomy while in reality, they just have more responsibilities and still have to abide to central authorities' decisions regarding their schools (see also Beepat, 2013; Oplatka, 2004). In many other countries, education systems still remain highly centralized (Oplatka, 2004).
- The level of stress school principals endure is said to discourage vice-principals (deputy principals) to apply for the principalship positions (Bezzina, 2002). As

such, succession and/or filling in the position is not straightforward nor is it an easy task for those in charge of it.

- In countries like South Africa, Ghana, New Zealand, and Ecuador, professional standards are elaborated as guidelines and benchmarks for practice for school leaders (Ecuador Ministerio de Educación, 2012; New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2008; South Africa Department of Basic Education, 2014). For nation states like Hong Kong, there exist also leadership educational programs that aspiring, newly appointed, and experienced school leaders have to attend (House, Ping-Man & Chung-Chi, 2004).
- Settings like Singapore, China, and many more have a culture of high stake examinations with publication of table leagues of schools' performance. This had principals taking improvement initiatives, having teachers teaching to the test, dealing with societal pressure for results (Sharp & Gopinathan, 2002; Yin, Lee & Wang, 2014). In sum, school leaders are held accountable for the school's and students' achievement.
- Although not a common practice in the Global South, some educational leaders are concerned with issues of inclusion of, and social justice for, students with special needs. Regardless of the system they evolved in, they have developed strategies and found innovative/creative activities to support and assist these students (Brown & Lavia, 2013; Jean-Marie & Sider, 2014).

The following features showcase SS', fragile states', and developing countries' different and unique approach to educational leadership as opposed to Western countries.

- Gender issues in school leadership are raised in developing countries and SIDS as gender prejudice often lingers (Bezzina, 2002; Miller, 2013b). They take into account circumstances such as ethnicity, social class, location, and beliefs that speak to their identity as leaders. Suffice to say that gender discrimination experiences are different in nature across different settings worldwide.
- Educational leaders in Trinidad and Tobago for example take part, to some extent, in the training process of prospective teachers who are assigned to schools before entering Teachers' College. Nonetheless, they complained that, despite their reports, unsuitable candidates are still accepted into the programs (Brown & Conrad, 2007). Whereas in countries like Malta, principals have no input in, and no control over, teachers' selection process which creates serious challenges for them (Bezzina, 2002).
- Family members and/or local community members have strong influence on individuals' aspiration, formation, and career path from teaching to principalship (Bezzina, 2002).
- In South-East Asian countries like Thailand, principals' identity is closely linked to their status of government officials as key representatives and guardians of the national culture and the system's policies (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013). But in other settings such as Pakistan, Kuwait, UAE, principals are not that much valued because education is less valued there as well (Oplatka, 2004). Unsurprisingly, this has shaped their professional practice.

- With regard to leadership development approaches, there exists a lack of skills and lack of consistency related to professional learning practices which can be seen as a “noticeable paradox” (Miller, 2013a, p. 21). This becomes an issue when governments are ‘encouraging’ principals to engage in professional development programs (Oplatka, 2004). As Bissessar (2013) argued, for professional development to be successful for both principals and teachers, there needs to be a “leader buy-in” as well as a “teacher buy-in” (p. 139), as much as there needs to be resources (financial and material) available for that.
- Again without that ‘leader buy-in’, it has been found that principals in some developing countries like Trinidad and Tobago did not embrace nor support school improvement reforms and initiatives for various reasons. The latter did not bring any added-value to the schools, teachers and students; the reforms were foreign-driven initiatives; and/or the school leaders were set in their routines and felt threatened by new approaches (Hackett, 2008; Oplatka, 2004). Whereas in East Asian countries and China, a compliance culture –deference to superiors’ decisions– prevailed, implying that school leaders mobilized staff and teachers for reform implementation (Yin et al., 2014). Either way, both positions created conflicts, contradictions, and uncertainty for school leaders.
- Considering the precarious financial situations of/in developing countries, school principals also have to deal with their pupils’ financial situations. Consequently, some students lack the basic materials and accommodations needed for their schooling. To palliate to that, ELs have devised a wide-range of school-based

programs that provided and assisted students in their learning (Sharp & Gopinathan, 2002).

- Funding schemes are another distinct feature of school leadership in some developing countries. In some African countries, school leaders, particularly in public schools, have to find other sources of funding, mostly from parents and community members, in order to attend to the school's basic infrastructures and students' needs; whereas in China, they have to generate money for their schools through various entrepreneurial businesses (Oplatka, 2004).

These snapshots of what educational leadership in SIDS/fragile states/developing countries entails, and their subsequent challenges and issues, showed, on the one hand, that school leadership challenges are universal to some extent. And on the other hand, educational leadership is fashioned by different contexts, norms, and cultures, and these contexts must be taken into account when studying and enacting educational leadership. The following and last section of this review examines just that: how educational leadership is fashioned in the specific Haïtian education context, with its own norms, distinctive culture, and dire challenges.

## V. Studies about Haiti

Haïti can be found and placed under all three labels described above: a SIDS (without the low population), a fragile state, and a developing country in the Global South (Gauthier & Moita, 2011; Heine & Thompson, 2011; Sider & Jean-Marie, 2014).



As such its educational leadership is likely to have similarities to those mentioned above, but it also has its own traits differentiating its school leaders from others. First of all, it is worth noting that scholarly research conducted about Haïti focused on various fields from economics and business to law and political sciences to medicine and psychology to history/geography and anthropology, and anything in between and beyond. In other words, these studies stem from hard and applied sciences, as well as social sciences and humanities. In the later categories, education-related researchers have examined topics such as access to education (Demombynes, Holland & León, 2010; Easton & Fass, 1989); community participation and local capacity (Désir, 2011; DiAquoi, 2011); early childhood education (Blazek, 2003); education sociology (Allerdyce, 2011; Nelson, 2015); education system (Wolff, 2008); equity, inclusion, and quality education (Fevrier, 2013; Étienne, 2008; Salmi, 2000); family and education (Nicholas, Stepick & Stepick, 2008); finances and economics (Amuedo-Dorantes, Georges & Pozo, 2010); gender (Ménard, 2013); governance (Fallon, 2016); language (Jean-François, 2006; Spears & Joseph, 2010) ; politics (Joseph, 2010); post-earthquake contexts (Luzincourt & Gulbrandson, 2010); post-secondary and higher education (Interuniversity Institute for Research and Development [INURED], 2010; Vital, 2015); professional development (Coupet, 2015); reading (DeGraff, 2017); teacher training and evaluation (Cherenfant, 2009; Institut Haïtien de Formation en Sciences de l'Éducation [IHFOSED], 2007); teachers (Dupoux, Wolman & Estrada, 2005); technology (Sandiford, 2013); and youth and schooling (Lunde, 2006).

As Sider and Jean-Marie (2014) asserted, some scholarly focus has been given to areas of Haïti's school system other than the state of educational leadership. In fact, a

thorough search for literature about school leadership in Haïti revealed a definite gap in the literature, as alluded to by the authors.

With that said, the meagre literature found on/about educational leadership in the Haïtian context looked at various issues and facets of leadership like preparation, training, capacity-building, innovative practices, social and professional networks, responsiveness to local needs, and commitment to change. School leaders' professional preparation, training, and development are low in the country. This situation can be explained by a lack of leadership training centres where aspiring and actual school leaders can receive the proper, on-going qualifications and competencies required for their leadership roles in schools (Sider & Jean-Marie, 2014; Solect, 2009). In that regard, the cost of attending such programs, as well as the distance to, can be too much for participants, particularly those living in rural and remote regions.

Another factor that affects educational leadership in Haïtian schools, as noted by Solect (2009), relates to the principals' recruitment process, especially in the public sector. This can also be linked to the fact that, in Haïti, educational leadership is not strictly controlled, and there exist little help and rare oversight of school leaders and their schools, from the ministry of education (Jean-Marie & Sider, 2014; Solect, 2009). Therefore, principals, particularly those from the private sector, work independently without a central office's support, monitoring, and/or input. It is not surprising that educational leaders in Haïti have also relied on their own social networks both within and outside of school. According to some researchers like Jean-Marie and Sider (2014), these connections and relationships have allowed them, to a certain extent, to be responsive to localised needs of their community, deemed organic and at a grassroots level. It is

important however to ponder on principals' degree of responsiveness to localised needs if these schools were located in the country's urban megacities where more systemic, endemic, and pervasive issues abound: will the principals be able to address these needs? what will it take for them to do so? and at what cost?

Scholars have noticed that Haitian principals recognized that social, institutional, and financial obstacles and barriers still linger and hinder their work such as reluctance of principals to share practices, ideas and programs; school tuition fees unpaid; principal professional training; teacher vocation and qualification; teaching methods; student failure in school and state exams; access to resources and digital technologies; parental/community engagement and involvement (lack of), to name a few (Claudy, 2009; Jean-Marie & Sider, 2014; Romelus, 2009; Sider, 2014; Sider & Jean-Marie, 2014; Solect, 2009). That did not, however, prevent them from pushing forward; in fact, they have developed a resiliency to overcome certain barriers and inequities (Jean-Marie & Sider, 2014).

Research has shown that for some Haitian school leaders, professional networks have helped them develop and hone their leadership skills, which in turn have allowed them to innovate their practice, particularly with regard to problem-solving (Sider & Jean-Marie, 2014). The nuance with innovation in the Haitian context is that it relates to practices that are not common, typical, and traditionally implemented in schools, although they may not be that innovative/new for school leaders in more developed settings (Jean-Marie & Sider, 2014). Through these networks, some partnerships have also been built with both local and international educational leaders. While the intent and purpose of such partnerships are valid and worthy, it also raises questions of

sustainability and continuity, particularly in a setting such as Haiti where daily challenges can overshadow and take precedence over the big picture. Moreover, there is a risk of over-relying and/or over-depending on these partnerships, especially financially.

## Concluding summary: Gap in the literature and in the field

In summary, this chapter provided a review of what leadership and educational leadership entailed within the scope of this project. It further delved into what constitutes leadership effectiveness and the associated best practices such as direction setting, mission, instructional program, progress monitoring, accountability, relationship building, connection with stakeholders, to name a few; thus, pointing out the complex and demanding nature of educational leadership while understanding that leadership practices are played out differently in schools. One of the components of this dissertation relates to school leaders' understandings of student learning and achievement (SL/A). And, as explained above, scholars have been on an indefinable search to associate and correlate SL/A and educational leadership. As it stands, school leaders' impact and effects on SL/A can be best described as indirect, minimal, and mediated, considering how they set the school's overall, and teaching, conditions and/environment.

Considering the setting in which this research takes place, this chapter also reviewed the literature on leadership outside of the Western world, namely in SIDS, fragile states, and developing countries. Educational leadership in these settings

presented both similarities in some respects and differences in others compared to more developed contexts.

The final section of this review focussed on Haïti and showed that in the English-speaking literature, as well as the French-speaking literature, research about school leadership in the country is limited. As such, conducting a study on Haïtian school principals' leadership practices as they relate to their students' learning and achievement not only adds more scholarly, evidence-based research to this body of literature but also extends the one concerning this specific country; thus enabling us, to a certain extent, to better "ascertain the current state of educational leadership in Haiti" (Sider & Jean-Marie, 2014, p. 279).

This study, in and of itself, aims to enrich the small body of literature on educational leadership in Haïti. Although several theories to educational leadership are widespread, establishing that the effectiveness of school leadership is based on parameters like specific traits, behaviors, tasks, standards, and although school effectiveness and school improvement movement seeks best practices and 'what works', this study about educational leadership in Haïti and school leaders' practices towards SL/A is working from a different set of assumptions. In fact, it posits that various factors affect Haïtian school leaders' work and practices, as both enablers and constraints, and that educational leadership is flexible and contextualized while being complex. The main argument is that, while educational leaders (ELs) in Haïtian schools share similar ideas about student learning and achievement (SL/A), the ways in which they translate their understandings/interpretations into leadership practices vary depending on the various

contexts or fields within which they work. These contexts or fields encompass Haitian society, education, and school (private, public, religious) fields, among others.

Another contribution lies in the theoretical framework created to analyze Haitian school leaders' practices. Bourdieu's work (with an emerging body of literature) presents an alternative theoretical dimension to study and explore educational leadership that will help tease out its complexities and intricacies, especially in a setting like Haiti where using such an approach is new, therefore original. In the next chapter, Chapter 3, I will discuss the various theoretical concepts and principles used, and how they apply to this particular study.

## CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Introduction

Jenkins (1992) asserts that theories can be viewed as “models of how the world is, of how the world ought to be, of human nature” (p. 69). Therefore, a conceptual/theoretical framework is used to make sense of educational leaders’ (ELs) world, especially their leadership practices. In essence, it is composed of interrelated concepts and is viewed as a means to explain, to analyze, to interpret main ideas, key factors, concepts, situations, issues, actions, constructs, so on and so forth, in relation to the research in question. It does so by finding how, within the context of the study, they relate to broader perspectives and issues, to current puzzles or contested positions in the field(s), to existing knowledge, and how they relate to each other. And a theoretical framework, particularly in educational leadership, can help bridge the divide between theory and practice as it intends to inform and explain practice. Thus, the relationship between the theory and the study is dynamic, never static (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Springer, 2010). However, in educational leadership, a single, specific theory does not exist, nor would it be pertinent and appropriate considering that the leadership enterprise in itself is highly contextual, changing with time and space (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014).

As such I elaborated a theoretical framework that can be seen as descriptive, explanatory, conceptual, and interpretive, all at once. This *Bourdieuan Educational*

*Leadership (for) Practice Framework* used main ideas from different theoretical conceptualizations to understand the various aspects of the data gathered and generated, how they connect with/to wider issues, and how they relate to each other; thus, allowing me to answer my research questions.

Keeping that in mind, this framework which aims at analyzing Haïtian ELs' practices in their specific settings primarily draws from French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu who invited researchers to make his conceptual tools 'work', and is enclosed within a wider Critical Policy Studies framework (the first section of the chapter). In the second part of the chapter, I outline in detail how Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' are understood in this framework, specifically created for this research. The framework also incorporated the works of scholars like Eacott, Lingard, Christie, Thomson, Grenfell, Gunter, among others, who have constructed a scholarship based on Bourdieu, around the "conceptualisation of leadership as a social movement and not merely the advancement of the managerialist project" (Eacott, 2013b, p. 183). Lastly, I bring both frameworks together by operationalizing these theoretical concepts in relation with this research. In other words, I expand on how they connect and work together to provide an alternative to study leadership practices in schools. In essence, employing Bourdieu's work at the centre of this framework, complemented with critical policy perspectives, offers "a conceptual lens through which to investigate, combined with the thinking tools needed to explain" (Gunter, 2001, p. 12).



## I. Critical policy studies and policy enactment

Schools are often considered responsible for socializing youth by transmitting, maintaining, and recreating culture; and as such, no one is exempt from that influencing socialization (Prunty, 1985). In a project that aims at describing and analyzing educational leaders' (ELs) understandings of student learning and achievement (SL/A), and how they translate the former into leadership practices, it is important, if not crucial, to do so through an analytical framework that takes into account both school's (and its leaders) and society's workings. Therefore, anchoring this study's theoretical framework within the broader field of critical policy analysis or policy sociology or critical policy sociology (CPS) allows me to do just that: make sense of what is happening in schools in connection to the greater society, as principals' leadership and work are challenging, "dynamic processe[s] where forces that are conscious and unconscious, rational and irrational play out in complex social situations" (Niesche, 2011, p. 138). Furthermore, the questions raised by CPS, a value-laden process, align well with the Bourdieuan framework elaborated specifically for this study.

In this section, I outline key characteristics of CPS that are relevant to this study, which encompass notions of advocacy, of power, of values, of social actors' positioning, of context, of paradox, as well as notions of policy enactments. But, before delving into the main features of critical policy, it is important to get a better grasp at what is intended when referring to policy effects, processes, and cycle.

According to critical policy scholars, policy *effects* differ from one setting to another, from one context to another. They can be uncertain and unpredictable

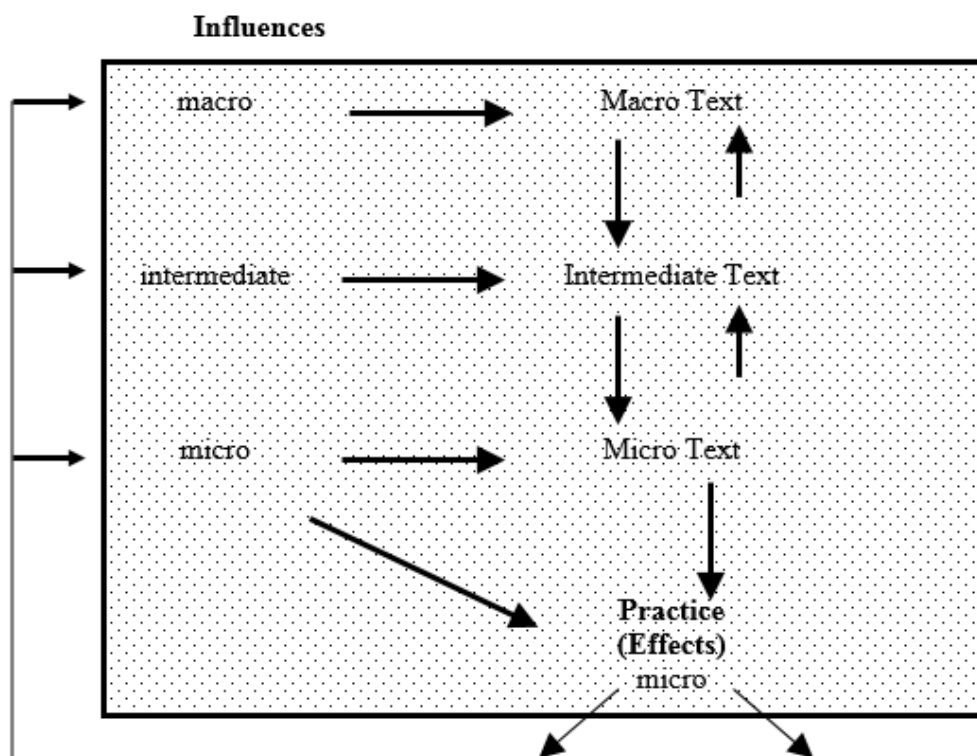
considering that competing interests and discourses may be at work within the policy. Policy effects are categorized into first order and second order effects. The first order effects refer to transformations within the structure as well as in practice, occurring at a micro- and a macro-level. The second order effects are the influences/impacts the first order effects have on processes of social access, opportunities, and justice (Ball, 1993; Taylor, 1997).

Within a continuous policy process, the policy *cycle* includes three different contexts. Context of influence asks “what struggles are occurring to influence the policy?” Context of policy text production points out “what struggles are occurring in the production of the policy text.” Context of practice/effects looks into “what struggles are occurring over the policy practices/effects” (Vidovich, 2011, pp. 20-21), meaning the actions and ensuing results/outcomes. Furthermore, these contexts are interlinked, and unceasingly impact and affect each other; and as such, provide a broader picture of the policy process (Winton & Tuters, 2015).

In fact, Vidovich (2001, 2002, 2007) proposed a modified/hybrid conceptual framework for policy analysis that enhanced Ball’s policy cycle approach (see Figure 3.1). Useful to this project, it offers a certain theoretical eclecticism that teases out “increasingly complex global-national-local dynamics of education policy in new times” (Vidovich, 2007, p. 290). A central point in this framework refers to how *influences* permeate every level and frame the whole policy process. Macro-level influences consider the effects of potential international impact; whereas micro-level influences look at contextual, localized, and specific responses at the institution level, as these responses stem from their organization’s history, geography, social, and cultural dimensions (this

also joins Bourdieu's views on habitus and cultural capital, explained later on). It further takes into account the interconnections between the different levels of the education system within a policy process, particularly during the policy text production. This showcases the dynamics at play, thus discarding a unilateral viewpoint. Acknowledging these relationships also points out to the power relations and forces that vary depending on the levels (Vidovich, 2007).

Another key component of this modified framework relates to the *policy practices/effects* that are the characteristics of the micro level, the schools. As Vidovich (2001) explains, the "localised context of individual institutions can directly influence the nature of practices/effect at that site, rather than operating through the official policy text" (p. 18). And that is where educational leaders' discourses, strategies, and practices are fully displayed and active. In essence, it is about a balance between macro constraints and micro agency that changes depending on the policies in question, the timing, and the setting. It is a matter of balance in the sense that the macro constraints come from the power those in command exert to control the policy process, that is far greater than ELs' (in this case) power at the micro level; which does not impede their agency as they interpret in their own terms the policy and its process.



*Source: Vidovich (2002, p. 11)*

**Figure 3.1 A modified/hybrid Policy Cycle: Incorporating Macro Constraint and Micro Agency**

Keeping all that in mind, a fundamental aspect of CPS is about taking up an *advocacy* stance that unveils and analyzes issues/instances of powerlessness, domination, and exclusion, especially from a policy viewpoint and a practitioner viewpoint. In this case, this analysis aims to look into how such issues (with regard to the policy) affect educational leaders and their leadership practices (Prunty, 1985). Moreover, it raises and asks critical questions related to policy support, approval and consent, regulations, restrictions and constraints, to human development, and to the (un)equitable distribution of economic and social resources (Ozga, 2000).

Consequently, critical policy is concerned with instances of power dynamics and relations. They are examined within the broader structural features of societies within

which school leaders evolve. In certain regards, school leaders' power and control stem from educational policies that they have the responsibility of respecting, applying, and following. As such, CPS seeks to identify, uncover, and expose contradictions, conflicting ideologies, and implicit power structures within the policy texts and the policy processes as well, as they are evidenced at the school level. Therefore, it studies both the motivation and the actions; and questions the consequences, those benefiting from it, and those being left out (Edmondson, 2004; Kennedy-Lewis, 2014; Prunty, 1985).

On that same line of thought, CPS looks into the values –“assumptions and beliefs about what is desirable and about how things are” (Ozga, 2000, p. 47)– that permeate and fill every facet of social life, schools included. As such, they are institutionalized and imposed on students, as well as the conduits through which they circulate: curriculum – “what counts as knowledge”, pedagogy – “what counts as valid transmission of knowledge”, and evaluation – “what counts as valid realization of knowledge” (Prunty, 1985, p. 136). Furthermore, considering the fact that policies are issued from compromises, within a single policy text, multiple discourses can be reflected. CPS, thus, aims to expose the paradoxes and contradictions within the policy(ies), as well as the contradictory ideologies/beliefs, especially nowadays where education core principles wrestle continuously with economic capitalism views (Kennedy-Lewis, 2014).

When critically analyzing policy, social actors' situatedness and positioning, and their historical development, represent key elements as they provide an account of the trajectory, factors, elements, and events that have affected and impacted these actors; thus, affecting and impacting the policy process itself. This aligns with how Bourdieu frames his concepts of habitus, field, and cultural/social capital (explained later on).

Critical policy sociology takes into consideration the context(s), meaning the complex systems and environments within which policy is created, implemented, and enacted. This entails looking at complex social practices at play constructed within various contexts (Diem, Young, Welton, Cumings Mansfield & Lee, 2014). Since schools are not empty social spaces and school leadership does not operate in a social vacuum, critical policy examines the nuanced interpretations of policy on these specific contexts that are the sites of diverse pressure (Ball, 1994). “There is a plurality of contexts and multiple trajectories to be considered simultaneously throughout a policy process” (Vidovich, 2007, p. 292), visible through important power relationships and how they are represented.

This not only recognizes that policy processes are messy and dynamic, but also that policy is closely bounded to specific contexts, a major focus of policy enactment. In fact, policy enactment is a creativity process based on social, emotional, cultural construction and interpretation (initial reading, sense-making, and decoding), and translation (recoding) of policy ideas into practices and actions that are deeply contextualized and multi-faceted; thus making policy enactment a multi-layered re-contextualization process (Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011; Braun, Ball & Maguire, 2011a; Braun, Ball, Maguire & Hoskins, 2011b; Maguire, Braun & Ball, 2015). As Viczko and Riveros (2015) put it, policy enactment, in alignment with critical policy principles, acknowledges the “role of agency, interpretation, sense-making, translation, embodiment, and meaning throughout the policy process” (p. 479).

As such, when enacting policies, contexts are multi-dimensional factors that influence differently the process in each school setting. Situated contexts refer to school

histories, settings, location/locale, and student intake. Professional contexts have to do with values, experiences, commitment, and policy management, particularly with regard to teachers. As for material contexts, they include infrastructures, building, budgets, staffing, and resources/technologies. Lastly, external contexts deal with local authority (support), broader policy context (pressure, expectations), and legality/law (requirements). In essence, context is specific, dynamic, and shifting: an active and energetic force. In fact, it is “not just a backdrop against which schools have to operate, it initiates dynamic policy processes and choices and is continuously constructed and developed both from within and externally in relation to policy imperatives and expectations” (Braun et al., 2011b, p. 590).

Responses to policy implementation, consequently, fluctuate depending on the nature and type of the policy: is it mandatory, recommended, or suggested? Responses vary based on the fact that any given policy enters a school setting where other policies are already at play, each addressing several aspects of the school life. As such, they may intersect, contradict, or relate to the others (Braun et al., 2011a). And responses further differ giving the school’s actual capacity(ies) to deal with the demands of the policy. Actually, policies enter diverse environments where available resources (material, human, financial) vary from one place to another. Additionally, time and space represent actual constraints as to what a school is able to accomplish; thus, influencing and shaping what can happen, what is happening (and not happening), and how it occurs. As Maguire, Braun and Ball (2015) state, time and space “play a crucial role in the when, how and why of policy enactment” (p. 497).

Moreover, in school settings, not all local actors are invested in the policy enactment process. In fact, some take a back seat, play an inactive part (a non-participative role) in the interpretation and translation process of certain policy in their schools/classrooms. Their priorities and preoccupations are focused on something else. Each policy has a different meaning for each policy actor. In other words, their implication, involvement, and engagement, as well as enactments, change depending on their different position, perspectives, and experiences. It is therefore understandable that policy enactment is a “process fraught with fragility and instability” (Viczo & Riveros, 2015, p. 480).

In essence, policy enactment is a complex, incomplete, messy process in ‘becoming’; an interpretation, translation, and intersubjectivity in action; and social constructions, fragile and contingent. It is about complex relations between policy and practices based on diverse contexts with diverse resources; thus, dealing with different challenges. Lastly, it is concerned with social actors involved in the process, their take on it, their dealing with it, based on their experiences, histories, positions, and perspectives. And that aligns with Bourdieu’s concepts of *habitus*, *field*, *capital* and *strategies*, as explained in the next section.



## II. A Bourdieuan Educational Leadership (for) Practice

### Framework

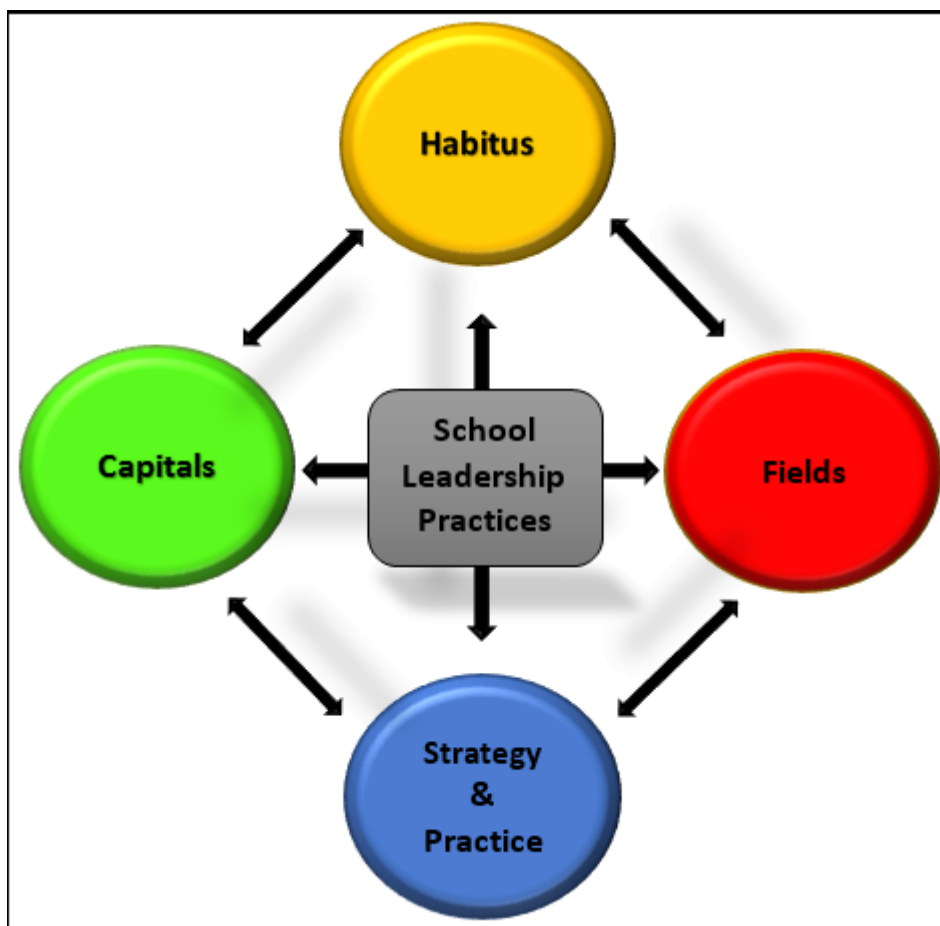
There is an increasing amount of literature on educational leadership using Bourdieu's concepts. Yet, that does not equate nor compare to the wide range of other social sciences fields and domains in education that do make use of the French sociologist's concepts (Eacott, 2010; Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003; Maton, 2008; Robbins, 1991). Thomson (2001), therefore, provided a sound argument for taking up a Bourdieuan perspective to educational leadership. Bourdieu, she argues,

Makes it possible to explain how the actions of principals are always contextual, since their interests vary with issue, location, time, school mix, composition of staff and so on. This 'identity' perspective points to a different kind of research about principal practice: to understand the game and its logic requires an analysis of the situated everyday rather than abstractions that claim truth in all instances and places. (as cited in Lingard & Christie, 2003, p. 317)

In essence, this is about educational leadership as a field of study. As such, a Bourdieuan approach allows me to have a deeper understanding of the leadership at play within the educational context, with a focus on the social actors and their practices, going beyond what is already known and produced (Eacott, 2010); therefore, challenging the ahistorical and context-free accounts of leadership practices thus far (Eacott, 2013a).

Given this study's purpose, I elaborated and developed a theoretical framework, a *Bourdieuan Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework*, engaging with Bourdieu's thinking tools, and making them work in a relational manner which is essential to Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Furthermore, this framework also

built on the work of scholars who have drawn on his evolving, non-static social theory, and applied it to educational leadership (Eacott, 2010, 2011a, b, 2013a, b; Lingard & Christie, 2003; Lingard et al., 2003; Thompson, 2001).



*Figure 3.2 A Bourdieuan Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework*

### Bourdieu's thinking tools

A theoretical framework constructed on Bourdieu's concepts enables me to perceive educational leadership at a macro-level as well as a meso- and micro-level where school leaders' actions are examined. This is meaningful considering the fact that

educational leadership/administration is viewed as a ‘field of study’ based on how leaders conceptualize school leadership. Further, principalship is a central component in the representation and theorization of the social order of schooling (Eacott, 2013b, 2015) and owes “a number of its most distinctive properties to the set of relationships it holds with other institutional/systemic based personnel, other institutions and society at large” (Eacott, 2011b, p. 56). Therefore, Bourdieu’s ‘thinking tools’ that shaped this framework include *habitus*, *field*, *capital* (forms of capital), and *strategy/practice*. As Addison (2009) asserts, these tools help in critically and contextually understanding the complexities of modern-day educational leadership, particularly principals’ practices.

### Habitus

*Habitus* refers to ways of being, of thinking, of acting, of feeling of individual agents or group of agents, acquired through socialization, through gradual processes of inculcation. In other terms, it represents sets of installed social dispositions that are durable and generative, without being consciously directed by any formal rules. These dispositions encompass cognitive, affective and behavioral factors (Jenkins, 1992). Habitus, according to Bourdieu (1990), is a “spontaneity without consciousness or will” (p. 56). Transposable, it evolves constantly and dynamically, and throughout a lifetime, from time to time, place to place.

Habitus refers to structures that are both structured and structuring. In other words, it is an ordered system of dispositions that is structured based on individuals’ past and current situations; and structuring by agents’ present and future actions determined by their habitus. As such, with the habitus, individuals have a sense, an idea of how to

behave and to act, and how to react to each situation on a daily basis, albeit leaving room for improvisation and the establishment of new dispositions. It, thus, provides “a sense of place in the social order” (Swartz, 2011, p. 3), being at the juncture of structure and agency.

As stated by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), habitus entails a “set of historical relations “deposited” within individual bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation, and action” (p. 16). It relates closely to the notion of *hexis*, more precisely *corporeal hexis*, that is considered as the visible, bodily manifestations and expressions of the habitus in social settings (society). As Durand (2015) explains, this is about the dispositions that individuals use with natural and ease that are obtained by “*l’étroite adéquation d’une morale faite corps individuel à un corps collectif fait doxa*” (p. 2) [the close adequacy of a moral incorporated into the individual body to a collective body turned into a doxa (own translation)].

Habitus also represents dispositions that are specific to social groups; for example, by class, gender, and/or profession. They are “generative principles of distinct and distinctive practices... classificatory schemes” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 8). This entails that each group has its own embodied, internalized ways of being in the world with respect to language, stance, self-presentation, ease (and/or lack of) with cultural objects, gendered social experiences.

Habitus represents the ways social actors internalize the structures of their society and see their world. It is about those engrained, acquired, socially constituted dispositions that individuals held to a point where they become natural to them. Put it

simply, their habitus is their “form of internalized social conditioning that constrains [their] thoughts and directs [their] actions” (Lingard et al., 2003, p. 62).

Following that same line of thought, *linguistic habitus* constitutes a sub-category of the habitus as it represents linguistic dispositions acquired while learning a language. They are incorporated into social actors’ own bodies, and as such constitute a dimension of the corporeal hexis. This is particularly significant for this study as languages, particularly in this bilingual setting, play a significant role within the education system and can become cultural and symbolic capital for social actors (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990, 1991, 2003).

### Field

A *field* is a structured social space that sets its own, specific, particular values and regulative principles. It is a “*forme de vie*”, as Bourdieu explains (2001, p. 143) [a way of life/living (own translation)], a field of forces, a force field. Not fixed, fields are thus areas of activities socially constructed and established where habitus comes to life, and where social agents occupy various positions. When referring to the field, it is important to recognize its autonomy because it is through this autonomy that fields have been able to reproduce themselves as well as the fundamental belief in their core principle. Dirx (2015) affirms that this autonomy is based on a “*capacité interne à se doter soi-même d’un principe de différenciation et d’auto-organisation*” (p. 1) [internal capacity to provide oneself with a principle of differentiation and self-organization (own translation)]. This field of forces is structured relationally and differentially as each agent’s position is both dominating and dominated, innovative and conservative. This

leads to agents' ongoing struggles within the field(s) whose borders are fuzzy and challenged/contested.

A field consists of “a set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital)” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 16). This means that it represents structured social areas of activity and space of positions that are determined, as are their interactions, by how different types of resources or *capital* are distributed. Understandably, another characteristic of field is about the power dynamics/relationships at play within it, and among agents. Power is unevenly distributed with those dominating on one side, and those being dominated on the other side.

Within society that is comprised of numerous different fields, these social spaces are relatively autonomous with each having its own logic of practice. As such, they have their own structures, interests, preferences, rules, unique agents, and power struggles. Lingard and Christie (2003) stipulate that there exist “a plurality of fields, thus a plurality of logics, a plurality of commonplace ideas, and a plurality of habitus” (p. 324). Yet, fields intersect and overlap with each other. It can be said that there is an interdependency between them, in spite of a distinct quasi-independency. In other words, there is a certain hierarchy among them, particularly with economic and power-related fields (arts, politics, administration, university, to name a few) shaping other fields like education. This alludes to struggles for domination, for power, for legitimacy among these power fields (meaning among individuals and agencies within the fields) throughout the social order as fields are in themselves permanent sites of struggles, of

contestation where agents try to preserve or modify their fields' specific resource allocation (Bourdieu, 2001, 2003; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Another notion related to the field is *doxa*. It encompasses the set of fundamental beliefs and presuppositions, unproven, which each field is constituted of, and that are specific to each field. It is a set of beliefs widely shared, opinions and rules accepted, and informal knowledge that are endorsed within/by any given field. In certain way, social agents implicitly accept the *doxa* within the fields they evolve in, simply by being a part of them. Thomson (2008) argues that:

Social agents who occupy particular positions understand how to behave in the field, and this understanding not only feels “natural” but can be explained using the truths, or *doxa*, that are common parlance within the field. The *doxa* misrecognizes the logics of practice at work in the field, so that even when confronted with the fields' social (re)productive purpose, social agents are able to explain it away [emphasis original]. (Thomson, 2008, p. 70)

### Capital

The notion of *capital* is particularly useful for this study as the ELs are social agents in possession of, and maintaining, different amount of capital. Capital is an acquired and accumulated labour which, “when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241). Capital thus differs from one actor/agent to another. In sum, the possession of capital delineates what is possible or doable for individuals, and what is not.

Capital takes various forms and varies in quantity, structure, and value. Bourdieu differentiates between *economic*, *social*, *cultural*, and *symbolic capital*. *Economic*

*capital* refers to wealth, material riches, money, gains, and estates. It also refers to mercantile exchanges that represent means to an end such as profit, interest, salary, etc.; and, thus, do not have any intrinsic value.

*Social capital* is about the social networks, social obligations, connections and relationships, useful and/or prestigious, that social agents possess. Bourdieu (1980) defines it as such:

*L'ensemble des ressources actuelles ou potentielles qui sont liées à la possession d'un réseau durable de relations plus ou moins institutionnalisées d'interconnaissances et d'inter-reconnaissance ou, en d'autres termes, à l'appartenance à un groupe, comme ensemble d'agents qui ne sont pas seulement doté de propriétés communes [...] mais sont aussi unis par des liaisons permanentes et utiles [emphasis original]. (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 1)*

[The sum of current and potential resources which are linked to possession of a network of lasting relations, of more or less institutionalised shared acknowledgement and recognition: or in other words, belonging to a group, as the sum of total agents who not only share the same characteristics [...] but also joined by permanent and useful connections]. (Grenfell, 2009, p. 20)

In other words, it represents the amount of current and potential assets that come from having a network of lasting relations that share acknowledgement and recognition, in a more or less institutionalized form; or also, belonging to a group of agents who, through similar characteristics, are connected by permanent and useful connections (Grenfell, 2009). Therefore, one of the characteristics of social capital relates to the resources that are available to agents through their relations or networks. In fact, social capital is about the relations between the individuals, and the resources they have access to through their connections.



With culture viewed as a determinant factor in how individuals react to their environment (Greenfell, 2009), *cultural capital* represents cultural attributes and is itself divided into three forms. The first form is the *embodied state*, “long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243), referring to embodied, incorporated, inculcated dispositions/practices that become integral part of the agent, such as form of language, language pronunciation and intonation, body language, style, posture, poise and stance, taste, clothing, to name a few. The second form is the *objectified state* that includes cultural goods like books and collections, collections of pictures and paintings, museums and galleries, instruments, machines and cars, concerts, among others. Transcending their individual will, agents with enough strength can yield profits from objectified cultural capitals if mastered. The third and last form is the *institutionalized state* –a form of objectification of cultural capital– which encompasses formal academic/educational qualifications, diplomas, knowledge, and skills.

Cultural capital can be located in many settings, but is found primarily within the family (family backgrounds) and school settings (curricula and pedagogy). In fact, schooling is recognized as “a system of cultural transmission and reproduction which serves to simultaneously maintain, disguise and legitimate the interests of particular groups within the social system” (Bates, 1980, cited in Prunty, 1985, p. 185). This is explicable considering that ELs, with teachers and staff, not only know how to engage in or with the schooling game but also are in charge of transmitting specific knowledge to their students (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003).

*Symbolic capital* refers to forms of capital –economic, social, and cultural (Greenfell, 2004)– that are legitimate and have become powerful. Swartz (2011) defines

it as “the social authority that individuals and groups can accumulate through public recognition of their capital holdings and positions occupied in social hierarchies” (p. 3). In other words, symbolic capital’s power stems from the honours, prestige, recognition, competence and authority that individuals have within a field –as well as the structure of the field. The possession of symbolic capital has value in proportion to agents’ position in their field, and their field’s position within the broader social fields.

Consequently, symbolic capital varies across fields where it also varies in forms. It can be objectified or embodied; developed and assimilated through time and systemic processes of inculcation (Moore, 2008). For example, education (cultural capital) and the ensuing qualifications/diplomas are often perceived, by individuals and families, as a symbolic capital because conjointly they work with other capitals “to advantage and disadvantage, and to position social agents in multiple fields” (Thomson, 2008, p. 76).

Lastly, it is worth noting that all forms of capital are convertible, interchangeable under certain conditions, depending on the fields, on the cost of transformation which is essential for its efficacy in the field. To some extent, it can be said that all forms of capital are exchangeable and convertible into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1980, 1986, 2003).

### Strategy and practice

According to Bourdieu, *strategy* represents actions, moves that are undertaken without conscious rational thinking, without knowingly reflecting on them. It refers to these *practices* that are achieved through experience. In fact, strategy comes from a ‘feel for the game’ that social actors incorporate, assimilate, and even embody. As such, it

becomes second nature to them. In other words, strategy consists in social actors mastering the logic of the game, the “intuitive product of ‘knowing’ the rules of the game” (Mahar, Harker & Wilkes, 1990, p. 17), a ‘doing-what-needs-to-be-done’ attitude and practice. Yet, it has a purpose which leads to notions of strategizing, to social actors setting goals and having interests which positions “their practice in their own reality – their practical sense or logic” (Jenkins, 1992, p. 72). In sum, strategy/practice can be seen as a product of a process that is neither completely conscious nor completely unconscious.

Strategy is actually the enactment of habitus (habitus in action), as the former refers to the regulation, the practices of the social actors’ predispositions (habitus). Practices are therefore viewed as playing-out of roles and implementation of game plans. These moves are also closely linked and related to the field and the social space within which they take place. In other words, strategy refers to social actors’ practices acquired through experiences, part of their habitus where power struggles and social changes exist. Moreover, it connects individual agents’ actions to the broader social spaces within which they evolve, and where the struggles and changes effectively occurred.

Strategy relates to actions that are constrained and improvised, that require multiple skills, and that are ambiguous. It does not adhere to a ‘one-size-fits-all’ model as it is deeply rooted in the contexts. These actions involve innovation and constant interactions with others. Thus, a concurrent analysis of the macro-, meso-, and micro levels yields more insights into social agents’ moves, into what they do, going beyond mainstream perception of strategy as synonymous to school planning (Bourdieu, 1990),

reinforced with CPS and policy enactment approach that also focus on these three contexts from a policy standpoint.

Having explained in detail Bourdieu's thinking tools, what he means when discussing habitus, field, capital, and strategy/practice, it is imperative to now make these concepts work for this study. Consequently, in the next section I operationalize all these concepts alongside the main ones from CPS and policy enactment framework. What this last section aims to do –and what Bourdieu's conceptualization allows for– is to discover and find ways in which all these key concepts relate to each other, interconnect, and intersect in places and fashion where they are least expected (Le Hir, 2000).

### III. Operationalizing the concepts

Operationalizing Bourdieu's thinking tools and critical policy concepts is about making them work for this specific research about educational leadership (and its practices); a research located within school settings –viewed as fields– as well as within the broader education field. Essentially, it entails conceptualizing how all these concepts relate to each other, interconnect, and intersect. It is about how they affect, and relate to, educational leaders in their own settings and contexts. In this section, I explore the following components/themes, applying them to educational leadership: thinking relationally, habitus and values, positionality and positioning, fields and contexts, practices and strategies, and mapping.

## Thinking relationally

Both ideas framing critical policy analysis and Bourdieu's concepts work in a relational manner. They are intertwined and inter-related between one another. Put differently, one impacts the other; and/or another one results from the enactment of another. This implies that a concept cannot be fully understood if it is not in relation, in connection with the others; not in isolation nor decontextualized. With respect to critical policy analysis, this relationality is portrayed in the relations between texts and context considering the fact that social actors' localized setting and/or circumstances influence the nature of the practices related to policy texts. However, the emphasis on thinking relationally is clearly seen within a Bourdieuan framework. Maton (2008, p. 51) proposed this equation that neatly summarizes this connectedness:

$$[(\textit{habitus}) (\textit{capital})] + \textit{field} = \textit{practice}$$

This means that *practice* is the product of actions and interactions (*strategy*) that are moulded, concurrently and equally, by social agents' (meaning ELs) *habitus*/dispositions and forms of *capital* in their specific *field*(s). In other terms, these actions and interactions also result from the context and dynamism created by the agents' mutual participation/play in a common 'game' within a social arena (field).

Habitus is involved within the field(s) as it leads to practices. By analyzing ELs' (agents) practices, it is possible to analyze the structure of their habitus, given that the latter derives its significance in its relations with the former (Maton, 2008). Moreover, as Eacott (2013b) explains,

These dispositions, or *habitus*, establish what is important (e.g. *capital*) and by virtue, the conditions of entry, a condition which members buy into. Therefore, the *habitus*, which is required to enter and play the game of the social movement, means that the orthodoxy of current practice speaks to the individual, creating an *illusio*, or a fundamental belief in the interest of the game and the value of the stakes which is inherent in that membership [emphasis original]. (Eacott, 2013b, p. 181)

Capital is thus considered as the field's currency: "capital belongs to the field and it is the field that sets its value, but it is individuals who possess it" (Grenfell, 2009, p. 20). This means that ELs' forms of capital are at the basis of what is included and/or excluded in the field, what is valued and/or not valued. For instance, their social capital and cultural capital are intertwined as they "work in and across the relations of other fields" (Lingard & Christie, 2003, p. 324). In effect, ELs' forms of capital fuel their manoeuvres and are the "medium of communication between field and habitus" (Grenfell, 2009, p. 19) as they represent "the "energy" that drives the development of a field through time" (Moore, 2008, p. 105). In sum, educational social actors' leadership practices "sit at the intersection of, or [are] caught between, different social fields" (Eacott, 2011b, p. 48), habitus, forms of capital, and strategy/practice.

Another way of explaining this notion of relationality is through this short hypothetical story applying Bourdieu's thinking tools to real life social contexts; thus, making more sense and having a better grasp of the relation between these concepts. This story talks about Emme's life trajectory viewed through these thinking tools. She started with preschool very early in life, 2 years-old. By the time she turned 6 years-old and entered grade 1 in a private school (*economic capital*), she had acquired the ways of schooling, its *habitus*, the taken-for-granted assumptions, the expected but not written behaviors, as well as an understanding of the rules of that specific game (the *doxa*).

Therefore, with this appropriation, her actions (*strategy*) helped her navigate and negotiate the school (*field*), as the *practices* were familiar and did not require much thoughts/reflections (if at all). Also by then, Emme was already multilingual (*linguistic cultural capital*) which provided her with the *linguistic habitus* needed to evolve in this *academic field*; for example, knowing the proper way speak (choice of words, pronunciation), being able to switch from one language to another, knowing what language to use in different situations and with whom. Furthermore, this 1<sup>st</sup> grade student came to this new school with her own group of friends from kindergarten, thus having her own *social network (social capital)* that allowed her to better deal with all these new *fields*. Moreover, she also benefited from her parents' *social and cultural capital* as she was frequently (almost immediately) recognized as being part of a *social network* (her family), and the heritage and history attached to it.

### Habitus and values

Analyzing the habitus of the educational leaders (ELs) in the field(s) is concerned with analyzing the development of their habitus, based on forms of pedagogical actions that in fact assist in the (re)production of the habitus itself (Eacott, 2013b). Examining these developments entails paying attention to ELs' biography, trajectory, life, and professional history insofar as they relate to the field, not just the particularities of each agent. The fact is that their habitus is as much linked to their biography, trajectory, life, and professional history, as the latter group is moulded and affected by the field within which they evolve. Ultimately this leads to analyzing their strategy and practices that are the results of their habitus in conjunction with the various forms of capital they use.

Therefore, analyzing ELs' habitus is about "engaging with the habitus of agents within the school... to move beyond the narratives and, by virtue, directly observable features, of individuals' biography and trajectories and engaging with the underlying generative principles of such dispositions" (Eacott, 2013b). It is also about recognizing how ELs' leadership habitus is shaped by particular/specific discourses and structures, often independent of their will.

In a sense, these ELs' habitus is a reflection of the values, assumptions and beliefs that also permeate the policy processes that CPS looks into as part of ELs' dealing with the various policies at play in their school settings, especially the internal ones. Furthermore, it can be said that ELs' habitus and values which are shaped by their experiences also determine their priorities and engagement with certain policies; thus, affecting the enactment of said policies.

### Positionality and positioning

This framework looks at the positionality and positioning (P&P) of ELs, not the researcher's (my own positionality was presented in the introduction chapter of this dissertation). In fact, ELs' positionality within their own educational field, at a specific point, is about them positioning themselves in this field that acknowledges a pluralism in leadership (in contexts and in individuals), and where the precept of 'one-size-fits-all' is rejected. Although, it might be argued that school leaders in general represent a fairly homogenous elite group that, on some level, follows a certain similar pattern to reach that leadership position (Eacott, 2010; Lingard et al., 2003).



This P&P looks into ELs' previous dispositions, own histories, trajectories and background, schooling, and professional developments (study, internship, mentorship, promotion) as they are linked to the various forms of capital they have developed and accumulated throughout the years; hence, shaping and increasing their current leadership habitus which enables them to keep progressing within the field(s) through various positions. Through that process, ELs have developed a sense of their own place within the structure, the field, as well as the place of other ELs within that same structure, that same field (Lingard et al., 2003; Thomson, 2010).

It is that sense of one's place and position within the field, their situatedness that speaks to ELs' take on policy processes and enactment. It also speaks to the different levels of influences that affect every level of the policy process; thus, prompting Maguire, Braun and Ball (2015) to assert that "where you stand depends on where you sit" (p. 485) and vice-versa.

### Fields and contexts

ELs' position in their own field is located within other fields, primarily the broader education field that is "stratified vertically in levels of formal schooling and training, each of which has greater kudos and cachet by virtue of the capitals involved" (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003, p. 382). Given that their individual schools are fields in themselves, conceptualizing that positioning of field among fields means being aware of, and analyzing, the interconnections between their field and other educational fields, and between educational fields (which include their own) and other fields (not necessarily educational). It also implies pointing out the diverse hierarchies and logics of practice at

play within the larger educational fields. These relations are complex, ambiguous, and not fixed. As such, this positioning looks into how other fields infiltrate, affect, and impact ELs' field through political rhetoric, economy, policy, specific language, to name a few. Therefore, policies entering these settings are also affected by these relationships. Policies are thus impacted at various levels, which is what a critical analysis intends to point out.

The school fields where ELs evolve, where their leadership takes place, and where policies are enacted, are social places and specific contexts that are not only sites of pressure from various other fields, but are also sites of interconnectedness, of inter-relationships between them. As a matter of fact, they are done in dynamic and shifting contexts, meaning complex educational systems and environments that are not hollow spaces. And this can be observed through which policies, actions, strategies, and practices are undertaken, sidelined, and/or ignored (not even on these leaders' agenda).

ELs have to deal with diverse power dynamics and struggles, power relationships either within their own field and/or in relation with other fields, or regarding internal and/or external policy enactment processes. That is significant to this educational leadership research considering the fact that "the context of leadership [is] becoming more central to education policy discourses, and performative regimes, and of importance as the work of education is increasingly being discussed in economic terms" (Eacott, 2013b, p. 185). Therefore, this conceptualizing and analyzing trace the fluidity and the workings of these relationships, as well as their unobserved, underlying, and unnoticed facets.

## Strategies and practices

Their position as ELs pushes and compels them to act in certain ways. And recognizing that allows for an analysis of not only their localized strategy and practices, but also the underlying principles, values, habitus, influences that permeate their decisions (conscious or unconscious) to act and the acts themselves. This analysis also points out to ELs negotiating the various logics of practices as they navigate various fields, various changing relations of power within their own field as well as in relation with other fields (Blackmore, 2010).

It is concerned with understanding how and why one educational leader's actions, strategies, and enactment of certain policies produce results perceived 'more effective' whereas those of other leaders are viewed as 'less effective'. This entails examining what is it about their "timing and implicit factors of those behaviors that differentiate" (Eacott, 2010, p. 272) them from the other 'less-effective' ones. Stated differently, it explores the different contexts/factors (situated, professional, material, and external), and forms of capital that are at play (available) within each school setting. This also looks into the multifaceted relations between decisions, plans and policy, practices and strategies. In fact, from a critical policy perspective, practices as policy effects vary in accordance with the contexts and the different influences (macro, meso, micro). Ultimately, how ELs position themselves within their own field can shed light into what actions, strategies, or moves they chose to enact, and those they do not, and why. As such, it might be in their interest to retain power and try to gain more within their field, as they are working within their individual school (a field in itself), with other fields,

institutions, or entities within their field and within other broader fields (Thomson, 2010), and considering they have their own agenda and policies to implement and enact.

On the one hand, with ELs' intuitive 'feel for the game', timing, and space can be an asset to them since they have mastered, through experiences, the rules of the leadership games (be they policies, politics, programs, strategies, responses, and everyday routine) as they intuitively know when, where, and how to act and react to various situations and influences. On the other hand, time and space –which ELs' practices are bound to (Jenkins, 1992)– can be a constraint for or to ELs that can seriously limit and/or restrain the scope of their actions.

## Mapping

Mapping out the relations, the relationships, and the connections between ELs and others within the field(s) takes into account how both parties relate and interact to adopted strategies, practices, and policies. This relates to identifying and exploring, within the schools, not only the relations that are visible and observable, but also the ones that are not so visible, the “underlying generative principles” (Eacott, 2013b, p. 184).

This is also about detecting, mapping out, and examining the different forms of capital used by ELs in their leadership practices, their specific configuration and distribution, how they impact ELs (and their practices), and how they are combined in these settings –the school fields– and are associated with other fields. Consequently, it looks into the struggles integral to the field(s) that ELs have to deal with, as their habitus and capital are highlighted in connection with the field(s). Therefore, it is about

recognizing, mapping, and analyzing the relationships, the interconnectedness, and the synergy of each field while being aware of their competing agendas.

Moreover, ELs have developed an ability –through the enactment of their habitus and usage of their capital– to deal as much with the school in its entirety as with the whole education system, by considering them both as fields with various levels of influences, of contexts. This draws out how these social agents “literally embody the amount and kind of knowledges and credentials” that are needed for this endeavor, and furthermore how they “impart that specific knowledge and particular ways of behaving to students, some of whom are already ahead of the game” (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003, p. 383).

In summary, this *Bourdieuian Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework* is essentially about analyzing the various dispositions/habitus of Haïtian ELs as they produce particular leadership practices within their primary and secondary school settings/fields. It is also about navigating and drawing out Haïtian school leaders’ diverse relationships and their effects, within their micro-, meso-, and macro-level fields and contexts. It is concerned with how their positions/positioning, and ultimately their strategies, practices, and relations, evolve and are shaped by the presence and/or impact of other fields as well as that of various forms of capital accumulated and developed throughout the years. Ultimately, this is about how Haïtian educational leaders demonstrate their unique practical sense or ‘feel for the game’ of leading specific, complex, and challenging schools in a fragile and developing country by understanding that the diverse and multiple contexts of their own practices are messy, constructed, and dynamic, not fixed nor static.

## Concluding summary: Implications of drawing on French social theory in a French post-colonial context

### How does Haïti fit within this?

A theoretical framework based on a French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, elaborated for a study about a former French colony, Haïti, may appear, to some, like a neo-colonial resurgence where another form of colonization or imperialism is at play. From a post-colonial standpoint, and even a social justice perspective, this would signify a lack of critical dimension.

Yet, in a certain paradoxical way, this choice was not only sensible but on point. Haïti, in many aspects, still has residual elements from its colonial past. In fact, the whole structure of the educational system is very much similar to that of France. One of the country's official languages is French which carries a great weight in Haïtian society (and schools are sub-systems of society), its *habitus* and *cultural capital*. As I looked at how Bourdieu conceptualizes his 'thinking tools' for his own surroundings, it was like reading about situations that very much occur in Haïti as well. The ways he frames them mirror closely what Haïtians, myself included, might experience (and have experienced) on a daily basis, on our everyday personal life, in our social and professional *fields*. To me, at some level, drawing on a French social theory for a particular study on/about Haïti felt 'right'.

In essence, this *Bourdieuian Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework* allows me to acknowledge the multiple and complex dimensions that impact educational

leaders' efforts towards student learning and achievement. Moreover, this theoretical framework specifically built for this case-study with a Bourdieuan approach represents, in and of itself, a contribution to the *field* as this framework is rarely applied to discuss educational leadership issues and practices within the Haïtian context. As Eacott (2011a) states, “understanding the *what* of strategic leadership is essential, but without a rich understanding of *how* and *why* leaders do and think what they do, it is difficult to help other school leaders to think about and improve practice” (p. 44). And that is precisely what this theoretical framework and, ultimately, this study aim to accomplish.

Developing the means to analyzing school leaders' practices in the country is one aspect; how to collect all that data is another one. How did I go about it to uncover what Haïtian educational leaders actually do to foster student learning and achievement? The next chapter, Methodology and Methods (Chapter 4), will lay out in details the nuts and bolts of the research design.

## CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

### Introduction

This study's main purpose is to describe the leadership landscape in Haïtian educational settings in order to inform policy makers of the reality and lived experiences of educational leaders (ELs), their relevance, and importance as they enact their understandings/interpretations of student learning and achievement (SL/A) in their schools, particularly now that reforms and changes that will impact their work, in one way or another, are being made and implemented at the national level. With that in mind, it was important for me to design a study that allowed me to probe deeply into these school leaders' different positions, perspectives, and perceptions regarding educational leadership and SL/A, as I strived to make sense of their everyday practices, their surroundings, and their realities.

Therefore, in this chapter, I describe in detail the methodological design elaborated for this study that aims to understand "*How do educational leaders (ELs) interpret student learning and achievement (SL/A), and translate their understandings/interpretations into leadership practices?*" I explain the chosen methods and their relevance for the study, as well as the research protocol and procedures. The data analysis processes are then discussed. And lastly, I acknowledge the research design's limitations and challenges, and how I addressed them and/or worked around them.



## I. Research field: Comparative and International Education (CIE)

This research relates to the Comparative and International Education (CIE) field for three main reasons. First, this study is an international educational research that looked at educational issues in a specific setting, Haïti. That, in and of itself, adds to the body of knowledge regarding that country and specifically about the research focus, educational leadership. It used analytical lenses and perspectives that can be viewed as global, and that were not elaborated for the Haïtian context but, at the same time, was mindful of the context's distinctiveness. In essence, I am a researcher from Haïti, doing my doctoral studies in a Canadian university, conducting my study on/about Haïti, and employing theoretical/conceptual frameworks from other countries. This aspect of my positionality which partly stems from Phillips and Schweisforth's (2014) CIE framework was explained in greater detail in the introductory chapter of this dissertation.

Secondly, this field encouraged me to expand my understandings and to think broadly about the possible links between what is happening locally with regard to Haïtian educational leadership, and how these issues are picked up regionally and globally. Thus, it allowed me to explore the overlaps (the issues that transcend borders) and the differences (those that are unique to each setting) that underpin these educational systems, areas of long-standing concern to researchers within the CIE field (Hayhoe & Mundy, 2008; Kubow & Fossum, 2003).

Lastly, following that last point, comparative studies are undertaken because, on a daily basis, researchers like myself – same as ordinary people – make comparisons and/or judgements (judgement calls) based on past experiences and the personal knowledge we

bring to the studies (Grix, 2004). Therefore, situating my research within the broader field of CIE compelled me to think carefully about how I view Haïti, my home country, from an outsider perspective as an international student-researcher. That, among other things, represents one of the many reasons why a qualitative research approach was selected for this study.

## II. Research approach: Qualitative inquiry within an interpretivist paradigm

A complex field in constant growth and expansion, qualitative research can be described as an inquiry that values and focuses on meaning, taken and put in context (Glesne, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Shank, 2002). It is based on a need to access, explore, and gain deeper understandings of individuals, phenomena, issues and events, with an open mindset to the multiple viewpoints that will arise (Barbour, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Glesne, 2011). Newby (2010) clearly illustrates it for us: although certain approaches to research can tell exactly the number of people living in poverty or the causes of poverty, only qualitative research can help us describe what it is like to be poor or live in poverty.

Similar to any endeavour, a research study needs a strong foundation upon which to build its structure. For this qualitative research, another way at understanding its nature is by looking into its philosophical assumptions that shape and “influence not just

how the research is conducted but rather more importantly what is research and how the evidence is interpreted” (Newby, 2010, p. 33).

The *interpretive* paradigm upon which this study is built allows us to understand and/or explain the social world through the subjective experiences of its actors. In this instance, my study aims at understanding and explaining the Haïtian education leadership landscape through the experiences of its educational leaders (ELs) with regard to their perceptions of student learning and achievement (SL/A), given the fact that these actors construct their social (and practical) world which is reproduced through their continuing activities (Blaikie, 2007; Hammersley, 2013). As Burrell and Morgan (1979) suggest, the social world of these ELs is an on-going social process that emerges from their creation, living in it and concerned by it.

These different actors offer multiple perspectives that “are at play” simultaneously (Torrance, 2010, p. xxix) and are constantly changing, evolving and being revised (Grix, 2004). Further, they differ greatly from one another as multiple voices and images are allowed and encouraged regarding the variety of situations and contexts the actors face. As such, knowledge –or our understanding of the educational leadership landscape in Haïti– is thus constructed through each individual school leader’s lived-experiences and their interactions with each other within the society they live in, as well as their interpretations of the world around them (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Weber, 2004). Thus, we see how ontologically, leadership practices are understood through relations.

The data thus generated by the participants depend on their own frameworks. In other words, multiple realities exist in Haïtian ELs' social world; realities that are locally and specifically co-constructed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Scotland, 2012). This co-construction alludes to the notion of mutual knowledge creation (Blaikie, 2010). It refers to background knowledge social actors have that, although unarticulated and unspoken, is used, modified, on a regular basis, in their interactions and negotiations with each other and their surroundings. In a sense, this relates to the Haïtian school leaders' shared culture, customs and beliefs, and networks (to a certain extent) that enable them to not only understand each other but also work together (to a certain point).

Another appealing aspect of the interpretive paradigm for this study relates to its concern with social actors' agency (Grix, 2004). As a qualitative interpretive researcher, I seek to understand the interactive process that is shaped by participants' personal history, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). I look at how they showcase agency in their day-to-day working lives. I look for what drives these passionate participants forward while encouraging them to be more reflective of their practice (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011).

Lastly, as critical policy reserachers would argue, a qualitative inquiry is not value-free. Values are included in a formative way as they personally relate to participants, permeate every facet of their lives; therefore, need to be understood. Individually taken into account and honoured, they are negotiated among social actors. In fact, they are 'inseparable' from the investigation process as well as the conclusions reached (Creswell, 2013; Guba, 1990). Moreover, researchers like myself should also "acknowledge [our] own subjective contributions to the process" (Springer, 2010, p. 20)

as co-constructors. Because, as the researcher, I participated in the process of knowledge production with the participants, in order to ensure that the outcome is as much reflective of their reality as possible, my personal and subjective opinions, values, attitudes, biases, and assumptions need to be explicitly stated as they, too, impacted the study. In other words, I gained an ‘insider’ view of this reality through a certain interdependency between me and the participants’ social world that affects, and is affected by, one another (Weber, 2004). This, then, provides the justification for the articulation of my own positionality, including my values, as stated in Chapter 1.

In summary, the qualitative approach presents critical elements that align neatly with this research such as description, understanding, and interpretation of human behavior; dynamic, fluid and changing; holistic; systematic; exploratory; variety of data in their natural settings; in-depth study; nonlinear; and pivotal role of researcher (Barbour, 2014; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Lichtman, 2013; Shank, 2002;). Keeping all this in mind, and considering the need for a strategy that leaves room for a proper dialogue between the researcher (me) and participants, this study adopts a case-study design, the focus of the following section, as it relies strongly on naturalistic methods and allows for interaction and collaboration among those involved.

### III. Research methodology design: Qualitative case-study

Qualitative interpretive research is concerned with the perspectives of participants. Therefore, choosing a methodology that allows for these perspectives to emerge was essential. I have thus opted for a qualitative case-study for various reasons that align well with what this study aims to accomplish. Employed in several disciplines with various paradigm stances, case study is widely used in education research, including leadership studies (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Freebody, 2003). There is no clear consensus as to how to classify/categorize it: strategy, methodology, genre, method, or approach (Creswell, 2013; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Hence, I viewed this qualitative case-study as a methodology design as it allowed me the flexibility to plan, adjust, and modify if needed; which was particularly relevant to a setting such as Haïti (Aaltio & Heilmann, 2010; Barbour, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Several definitions of the term case-study have been proposed based on the research's purpose, intent, methods, or participants. But in essence, a case-study is “an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 37) that:

Provides a unique example of real people in real situations... investigat[ing] and report[ing] the real-life, complex dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique instance... enabling [us] to understand ideas more clearly... to understand how ideas and abstract principles can fit together. (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 289)

As I considered and deliberated on this methodological design, there were key features and characteristics that made sense and proved to be relevant for this research. First, as a *bounded system*, it looks at the ‘*what*’ being studied. It is the single entity surrounded by boundaries, regardless of the interest. Consequently, it is a preferred methodology design for this study because of its focus on bounded units, single units. Therefore, choosing that approach was suitable given the research focus on educational leaders (people) and their leadership practices (activity) (Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Springer, 2010; Stake, 2010).

Although it is never easy to define what the study is all about, this ‘bounded system’ refers to another aspect of case-study that made it a sensible choice for this research: the unit of analysis. The unit of analysis represents ‘what to study?’ and ‘who to study?’ In essence, the unit of analysis is ‘the case’ under study/investigation. Defining, determining, and bounding what that unit is enabled me to place boundaries within the case, which then helped to maintain the focus on what was deemed important and vital (Stake, 2010). It is determinant of case-study and characterizes it. Units of analysis can be very inclusive, ranging from a concrete to a less concrete entity (or entities), on a variety of topics; for example, individual/people, groups, settings, institutions, events, activity, time periods, organization, community, policy, specific project, relationship, decision process, programs, to name a few (Creswell, 2013; Freebody, 2003; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Schweisfurth, 1999; Yin, 2014). In this study, the main/primary unit of analysis is ‘educational school leaders in a small, fragile and developing state’, and the subunit –other unit of analysis embedded within the primary one– is their leadership

practices (Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Yin, 2014). Consequently, this study presents an embedded design, as Yin (2014) describes, where subunits are identified within a unit, while being cautious that one is not neglected at the expense of the other. Furthermore, I was particularly interested in examining how the following factors influence the practices of ELs in Haïti: the role of policy, that of the government, especially the ministry of education, and the impact of ELs' habitus.

Secondly, the case-study provided *in-depth understanding, and rich, thick, vivid description*, in details, of accounts and meanings of the Haïtian leaders' leadership, their intentions, their discourses about SL/A, and the observable phenomena (strategies, actions and practices). In other words, this case-study documented the story of Haïtian ELs, in action, through information collected *in situ*. Therefore, it increased the knowledge on the topic, educational leadership in Haïti, and enhanced our understanding on the contexts, individuals, and communities (Aaltio & Heilmann, 2010; Cohen et al., 2011; Freebody, 2003; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Lichtman, 2014).

Therefore, the case-study offered *practical knowledge* about the setting. It not only described Haïtian ELs, their characteristics, and social situations, but also determined “the nature of the patterns of the relationships, or networks of relationships, between these characteristics” (Blaikie, 2007, p. 9). More precisely, it helped uncover the various networks and relationships these ELs tapped into to carry out their work. In fact, the case-study went in depth in its quest to represent the complex, actual, and often controversial relationships at play, and to understand the context and process of this phenomenon, as well as their interdependencies (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Stake, 2006).



Stemming from that, case-study is viewed as *responsive to the environment* as it is firmly rooted within a specific context/setting, Haïti, and with participants facing challenging issues on a daily basis. They thus are operating in complex, complicated, and multifaceted situations that are shaping their practices. To get to the core of these leaders' practices, one has to understand their environment and its potential impact on them. A case-study being rich in details offers the "tools for capturing the different elements that contribute to peculiarities of the phenomenon under investigation" (Timmons & Cairns, 2010, p. 2).

This leads to accounts of actual, accurate, in real-time, *real-life, contemporary, real-world context*. Each case is viewed within its internal and external contexts that, described, help to better ascertain the mechanism and functioning of the case. As such, Haïti's contextual conditions (general and educational) are important as ELs' realities are observed, analyzed, and deeply probed. This was particularly useful given that the researcher had limited, if not at all, control over the courses of the events happening in these real-life contexts (Creswell, 2013; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Lichtman, 2014; Schweisfurth, 1999; Yin, 2003, 2009).

In order to get to all this information, case-study allows for the use of *multiple sources of information*, meaning multiple methods or tools which offers a certain flexibility and adaptability to evolving and shifting situations. This methodological eclecticism represents one of its strengths. The methods include interviews, observations, documents, notes, reflective journals, to name a few. In this study, multiple sources of information also meant they were coming from different/multiple perspectives from the mosaic of Haitian school leaders who participated in the research (Cohen et al., 2011;

Freebody, 2010; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Among the various types of case-study (instrumental, intrinsic, collective, reflective, to name a few), this research is viewed as an *intrinsic single case-study*. As such, it looks at a particular case for itself, focusing on what makes it special and worth pursuing. An intrinsic case-study aims to grasp at the entire case holistically in order to fully understand all the elements that constitute it. In essence, this research has ventured to learn more about, and to describe in great detail, the Haitian ELs and everything that makes up who they are and what they do. However, arguments can also be made that while being an intrinsic case-study, it could potentially be perceived as an instrumental one. Considering that participants in this study can be seen as a holistic entity with their inner workings, they (each specific case) are also part of the more general phenomenon which is the educational leadership landscape in the country. It thus offers an illustration of the larger picture, which is the educational leadership of small, fragile, and developing states, particularly in the Caribbean, as much as it describes and explains what is actually happening in the field of leadership studies (Barbour, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Freebody, 2003; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

In sum, this research is about educational leadership using a case-study methodology. It allows for an in-depth study where boundaries are set and defined by space and time. It focused on particular educational settings and showcases the complexity of conceptualizations and enactments. It communicates to others the findings

gathered based on the level of trust the researcher achieved with the participants (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014).

The research design detailed in this section showcased the dynamism underlining the selected case-study approach as it allowed me to probe deeply (Timmons & Cairns, 2010), its holistic aspect that concentrated on the whole picture of Haitian school leaders evolving in their specific, real-life contexts (Johnson & Christensen, 2014), and the constant interactions and communications between, not only the participants and me (the researcher), but also between participants and the broader world (Aaltio & Heilmann, 2010; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). In Section IV, I lay out the multiple sources of evidence (methods) needed to richly describe this case-study, followed by the research procedures and protocol (in Section V).

#### IV. Research methods and tools

Creswell (2013) states that “a hallmark of all good qualitative research is the report of multiple perspectives that range over the entire spectrum of perspectives” (p. 151). Simply put, qualitative research is marked by a certain eclecticism. Arguments are therefore made for the use of multiple data collection tools that can answer the same and different research questions while offering a variety of perspectives in diverse ways. Basically, it is about employing research methods that will most assuredly assist in achieving the research aims and objectives. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) clearly sum it up: “There is no single prescription for which data collection instruments to use;

rather the issue here is of ‘fitness for purpose’” (p. 235). On that premise, research within a qualitative interpretive paradigm relies strongly on naturalistic methods such as interview, focus group, open-ended questionnaire, observation, document analysis. And considering the multifaceted social reality of Haïtian educational leaders, distinct from one another, it required the use of several inquiry methods (Blaikie, 2010; Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Cohen et al., 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011; Scotland, 2012).

In this section, I present the data collection methods/tools needed and explain the rationale behind their choice as sources of evidence upon which this study was built. They included semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations and field notes, and document analysis. Researchers have noted that combining these three methods informs and addresses different research questions (Cohen et al., 2011; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2014).

### Semi-structured interviews

Given the fundamentally social nature of the environment in which the school leaders in this study are evolving and the relationships built from that, *interviews*, one-on-one (face-to-face), represent one of the best ways to appreciate these situations and their dynamism. They allowed me to gather information directly from those involved, without an intermediary. This was about carefully asking these school leaders pertinent questions in order to understand what they were thinking and how they are feeling about the educational leadership in their settings (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). It was also about gaining interesting, relevant, and specific insights about their knowledge, personal views, and the meanings they made regarding this particular topic (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014;

Lichtman, 2013; Yin, 2014). For that to happen, trust had to be established between the researcher and the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). That represented a challenge considering the fact that the former did not know most of the school leaders; a challenge that was addressed through the recruitment process (discussed later on in the chapter).

Although time-consuming, *semi-structured* interviews were chosen mainly because of their flexibility. With their pre-determined open-ended questions serving as guidelines, they offered us both, participants and researcher, some latitude to expand on what is being discussed, and on our own individual responses. They also provided the school leaders participants with the venue to articulate freely and openly their perspectives of their world; thus, producing in-depth rich data (Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2008, 2013; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). Considered central to educational leadership research, the semi-structured interviews in this study were the means of obtaining information about the participants' leadership experiences, their perceptions of their roles in their specific contexts as well as their understanding about SL/A, and their responsibilities towards it (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Roth, 2005). Furthermore, the use of analogies in the interviews offered insights about knowledge that educational leaders may not be able to express otherwise, meaning through common language of the field (Eacott, 2010).

There are practical considerations to take into account (be aware of) while conducting semi-structured interviews. An interview protocol (or guide or schedule) is needed containing date, place, interviewee name (or code), research questions, and interviewer's notes. With no set rule for that, the number of questions and categories

mainly depends on the study's objectives and the research questions. Informed and signed consent should be obtained from each participant. Audio-recording the sessions requires participants' agreement, who should be guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. This also allows to accurately recollect this large amount of conversations, and transcribe them later for analysis (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

### Non-participant observations and field notes

Complex and challenging, yet flexible and methodical, *observations* entail “the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, interactions, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting” (Marshall & Rossman, 2016, p. 143). Therefore, they provide firsthand accounts of the physical, human, interactions, programme settings, and subtle factors. These accounts are possible because the observations are done in real-life, in real time, and in the participants' natural settings. Naturalistic, these observations helped gain deeper, richer, and detailed information regarding the issues under study; in this instance, the leadership practices of Haitian school leaders (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Yin, 2014).

In addition to the interviews, this research used *semi-structured* observations. They followed a pre-determined/elaborated observation agenda while at the same time offering the possibility to gain more information on the issue in a less structured fashion (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Cohen et al., 2011). This semi-structured approach allowed me to look for, and note, any critical incidents –“particular events or occurrences that might typify or illuminate very starkly a particular feature of a [...] behaviour or a [...]

style (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 464). These critical incidents thus revealed important and insightful aspects of the participants and/or their situations.

The observations conducted in this study were *non-participative* in nature. More precisely, the researcher (me) did not take part nor get involved in any activities whatsoever. Granted the researcher that I am was perceived as an ‘outsider’, to a certain extent, one at the periphery that only watches, this non-participative approach also permitted me to garner additional information, new dimensions about the issues under study (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Creswell, 2008; Fraenkell & Wallen, 2003; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Furthermore, regardless of this non-participant nature, researchers such as myself must identify, address, and mitigate their biases, their prejudices, and their effects as they are the ones gathering the data (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

These non-participant observations helped me gain a deeper comprehension about how educational leadership (EL) is played out in Haitian schools, particularly with regard to leaders’ enactment of student learning and achievement discourses. In fact, these week-long observations aligned with Eacott’s (2010) argument that EL scholarship requires them to be conducted over an extended period of time as a “single drop-in observation is not sufficient” to “acquire an understanding of the history of events” (p. 277).

Researchers discussed the need to follow certain procedures when conducting observations. Informed and signed consents are required from the participants being observed and those in authority while assuring them that any information collected will

be kept confidential and anonymous. An observation protocol (guide or grid) should be elaborated as it records data from the field, complemented by the researcher's personal observation field notes (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Creswell, 2008, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

### Document analysis

Documents constitute another data collection tool that is used alongside the other abovementioned methods, particularly in case-studies. As Brundrett and Rhodes (2014) state, they become “part of the evidence base... use[d] to advance an argument and draw conclusions” (p. 105). They are valuable as they provide more information and different perspectives on the topic under investigation. Documents are stable, specific, unobtrusive, nonreactive, and broad as they are not affected by the researcher's presence. Furthermore, not only are they generally free but also they help reduce time and effort that would have been required to gather that large amount of information. They are grounded in the contexts within which, and for which, they are produced. As such, they offer a rich portrait of the values and beliefs permeating the settings (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014).

Documents encompass a wide range of materials, from written and physical to visual and digital. They are either public domain (open to all), private records (restricted access), or both; available onsite, online, or both. Regarding the private sources, authorization to use them is required, anonymity assured as they may contain sensitive information. Documents' sources can also be primary (direct experiences/accounts) or secondary (relayed accounts from someone else). In various formats, they include, *inter*



*alia*, books, journals, agendas, government publications, newspapers, policies from individual organizations, websites (Creswell, 2008; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Merriam, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). And, in educational leadership research, they further comprise of school policies, professional development records, mission statements, to name a few (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014).

Therefore, doing document analysis is primarily about analyzing the motivation, purpose, and intention of a document given its history and context (Australian National University, 2009). Aside from the positive gain for this study, in doing document analysis, careful attention/caution was paid to the authenticity, the accuracy, the quality, the credibility, and the trustworthiness of the documents used. It was important to assess the condition, intent, and context of the writing/production of the various texts as they might contain built-in biases, and may not be totally transparent (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

In a nutshell, documents are “recordings of events and perceptions at a particular time that are set within and produced against a backdrop of the prevailing cultural, socio-economic, political and policy environment” (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014, p. 105). In this study, they provided relevant insights about, and new understandings of, the educational leadership landscape in this specific setting and the school leaders’ various micro units.

## V. My research protocol and procedures

Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) rightly say that data is “not something that is collected but something that is *given* [by participants]” (p. 60). And as such, it should be treated with great care, competence, and integrity. With that in mind, in this section, I expand on all the protocol and procedures that enabled me to get the study done, meaning the sampling methods, selection criteria, and recruitment process, as well as a brief presentation of the actual participants and the sites. I also outline the different sequence of events for each source of evidence. The study’s research ethics protocol was reviewed by the University of Western Ontario’s Non-Medical Research Ethics Board; and approval was granted on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015 (NMREB File Number 107133) (see Appendix G for the NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice).

### Sampling methods, criteria, and recruitment

Sampling refers to the process of selecting who will participate in a study and from whom the information is obtained. Samples allow for in-depth understanding and more accurate/targeted data. There are no set rules about the sample size in qualitative research. It is mainly a judgment call at the researcher’s complete discretion which should aim to meet the goals of the research study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Lichtman, 2013; Thomas, 2006).

Ideally, after ethics clearance, the researcher generally starts the recruitment process through a series of sampling methods, based on a set of selection criteria. Once they receive the invitation, potential participants would have contacted the researcher

(me) about wanting to participate in the study. However, having worked, for over a decade, in the country where the research is taking place, I know its inhabitants and its system. First of all, in Haïti, there are no middle levels of management in the education system such as district school boards –although schools are divided into zones– that could have forwarded an invitation to participate. Secondly, I knew how they would have dealt with such invitation. I was aware that it could have taken months before any potential participants eventually reply to distant (impersonal) invitations. And I also knew that they would be more open if I contacted them directly with a referral. This was why I opted for purposive and snowball samplings as recruitment methods for this study.

*Purposive or purposeful* sampling is, at its simplest, hand-picking participants for specific reasons. Either they are knowledgeable of the topic under investigation, or they have experience, or they represent a typical or atypical sample of the rest of the group. In a sense, they constitute a core sample for the study. Whereas *snowball* or *chain* or *network* sampling –often perceived as a variation of purposive sampling– is fundamentally social, based on strong interpersonal connections/relations. In fact it constitutes on asking the core sample to identify, recommend, and refer the researcher to other potential and qualified participants (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Cohen et al., 2011; Merriam, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

First of all, to recruit participants, I posted publicity flyers in my social media pages, LinkedIn and Facebook, to invite my networks within the Haïtian education community to put me in contact with educational leaders that would be interested in the research. In fact, the whole process of purposive sampling was initiated using my own social capital, meaning through educators and researchers I know who are working in the

country, as well as my own personal social network. This recruitment network made the initial contacts, explained the study, and passed along the invitations to participate in the study (verbally and/or the formal letter). In some cases, I personally contacted potential participants by email and telephone numbers obtained from the recruitment network. In other instances, I directly contacted some participants who met the inclusion criteria.

Potential participants then set initial meetings where I further detailed the purpose and objectives of the study. I gave them the official invitation letter, explained the tenure of their involvement in the project, and formally requested their participation. Those who accepted to participate in the study received the letter of information and consent, and another meeting was set for the interview. Once identified through the recruitment process, the participants who were finally selected and included in the study were those individuals who fulfilled the following inclusion criteria:

1. Occupy leadership positions such as principals/directors, vice-principals/assistant directors, directors of study, pedagogical directors;
2. Be located in Port-au-Prince, Haïti or the West department;
3. Work in primary schools and/or secondary schools;
4. Have schools that are either private secular (non-denominational), private congregational (religious), or public (state funded);
5. Offer the Haïtian curriculum in their schools;
6. Agree to be audio-recorded.

Through snowball sampling, the selected study participants were later asked to refer me to other potential participants, and so on and so forth. They provided me with access to their social and professional networks. Put it differently, given the Haitian cultural context, participants were more inclined to take part in the study, and gladly did, because they received referrals from mutual acquaintances that made the introductions. In this way, my initial participants were tapping and drawing on their own social capital to direct me towards other potential participants for the study.

In total, 30 participants took part in the study across 28 sites. They were all interviewed at least once; and five among them agreed to participate in the observations. There were eight public schools (3 primary<sup>2</sup> and 5 secondary<sup>2</sup>), 10 private secular schools (1 primary, 3 secondary, and 6 primary/secondary), and 10 private and state-funded religious schools (1 primary, 2 secondary, and 7 primary/secondary). Table 4.1 provides a glimpse of the participants, their gender by school type and level (more detailed accounts in Chapter 5).

**Table 4.1** *Participants by gender*

School level \ School type	Public secular		Private secular		Religious		Total	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>Primary</b>	2	1	1	–	–	1	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	1	4	2	2	1	1	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Primary &amp; secondary</b>	–	–	5	2	4*	3	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total (by gender)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>12</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>30</b>	

\* *Although these schools have both levels, some participants were ELs in only one level, primary or secondary*

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 5 will provide more details regarding the naming of the different school levels in the Haitian education system. But for now, I use these general terms that reflect the reality, to a certain extent: primary school (grades 1 to 6) and secondary school (grades 7 to 13).

## Interviews: Settings, duration, questions

All the interviews were conducted in the country's capital, Port-au-Prince, in the West department. They took place at a location that was convenient for each participant, which was their respective schools where I went at a scheduled time set by the participants, depending on their availability. The rounds of interviews, 33 in total with 30 participants (28 initial and five follow-up), lasted five months. They started on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 (the first initial) and ended on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016 (the last follow-up).

These semi-structured interviews lasted from 26 minutes to 1 hour 44 minutes, and occurred before any observations were done. They were conducted with individuals in a variety of leadership positions, precisely with 28 principals, called *directeurs* in Haïti, and two pedagogical directors who would be the equivalent of vice-principals in Western countries. Moreover, in some of these schools, the educational leadership structure included a consortium of two or three principals. Other schools had one or two pedagogical directors. In the former group, one or two principals took part in the interviews; whereas in the latter case, only one pedagogical director was interviewed. All these school leaders came from primary and secondary schools: some primary only, others secondary solely, and most from schools that had both levels, primary and secondary. Their schools were private secular, religious (private and state funded), and public (state funded) (see Table 4.2).

**Table 4. 2** Interview participants

<b>School level \ School type</b>	<b>Public secular</b>	<b>Private secular</b>	<b>Religious</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Primary</b>	3	1	1	<b>5</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	5	4*	2**	<b>11</b>
<b>Primary &amp; secondary</b>	–	7*	7***	<b>14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>30</b>

\* *Schools with group of leaders*

\*\* *Religious school that is also publicly funded, or public school that is also Congregational*

\*\*\* *Although these schools have both levels, some participants were ELs in only one level, primary or secondary*

Approval (informed consent) was sought directly from participants. And consent forms were signed by everyone, although provision was made for those who might feel reluctant to sign a somewhat official document (the consent form). As per the signed agreement, all participants were audio-recorded using digital recorders. The interviews were conducted in French, Creole, and/or English, depending on the participants' choice as in Haïti people tend to switch from one language to another during a conversation.

These initial semi-structured interviews explored the following themes: the school's background and history, ELs' background (training, career trajectories), their conceptions of leadership and of SL/A, as well as their roles and responsibilities, those of others, the practices and strategies they put in place, and the policies impacting them (see Appendixes E and F for instruments – interview protocols).

Participants were given two options. First, they had the choice to take part in the interviews only; in that case, they were interviewed once. Twenty-five participants chose that route. In the second option, they could be involved in both the interviews and

observations. In this instance, they were interviewed twice: five participants agreed to that.

For those five who opted for the second choice, the second follow-up interview occurred immediately at the end of the observation period, on the last day. Generally, they were based on the observations and focused on the themes/categories observed: practices/strategies, schedule/routine, ELs' agenda, interactions, social associations, obstacles/challenges, support/enablers, resources, events/critical incidents, leadership by others, and school surroundings/location (see Appendixes E and F for instruments – interview protocols). This second round permitted me to ask for clarification and probe for more details on certain aspects noted during these five-day observations.

#### Observations and field notes: Settings, duration, grid

The observations also took place in the capital, Port-au-Prince, from December 2015 to March 2016, for a total of five weeks of observation spread over four months. They were conducted in five primary and secondary schools that offer the Haïtian curriculum: private secular, private congregational (religious), and public (state funded). The reason to incorporate all education providers is that, in doing so, I was able to obtain a broader and more accurate picture of the reality of the education system; that is, a system where private schools have a substantial presence. One of the components that was taken into account during the schools' selection was insuring that schools represented a whole spectrum of student achievement, perceived by some as results obtained in official state exams, a theme explored in the literature review. Therefore, the



observations occurred in five different settings. Table 4.3 gives an overview of the sample distribution in terms of school level and type.

**Table 4.3** *Observation participants and schools*

<b>School type</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Religious</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Primary</b>	–	–	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	1	–	1	<b>2</b>
<b>Primary &amp; secondary</b>	–	2	–	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>

The ELs in these selected schools were interviewed first, as mentioned earlier. After the interviews, they were asked if they wanted to participate in the observation component of the study; to which five participants accepted. As such, approvals and signed consents were sought directly from these principal-participants.

Each observation happened during one (1) week, over a period of five school days. I used an observation grid that I elaborated based on the research questions (see observation grid in Appendixes E and F about instruments). Although a 10-day observation was intended, I had to adjust the timeframe for various reasons. First, the political situation (presidential and legislative election period) and the overall climate in the country were highly tense at the time the data collection process started –with the threat of it increasing at any moment. That made the school leaders and me particularly cautious as nobody knew what could happen the following day, when unrest may erupt. Secondly, when some participants saw a 10-day observation period as noted in the letter of information, they were not too eager about it for the reasons stated earlier, and also because they were not too keen on having someone following them during that lengthy period, based on my own perception. However, and that is one of the strength of case-

study research –its flexibility– I proposed a shorter period of observation and received full cooperation and enthusiastic agreement. Subsequently, regardless of the planned 10-day observation, all participants when initially approached about taking part in the observation process were informed that the latter will actually only last five days.

Therefore, each five-day observation occurred during regular school days and school hours, with the exception of one setting that allowed me to attend a parent-school meeting (held during a holiday) as part of the process. The observation days were divided into periods. These observation periods allowed me to observe the participants at different times/moments in their daily routine. There were, in total, four different sequences: a morning, a mid-day, an afternoon, and an all-day observation. With the exception of the all-day sequence, the others lasted from two to four hours.

The participants agreed to allow me to observe their leadership practices in their schools. These semi-structured observations looked at various aspects of these ELs' leadership practices as well as broader leadership practices occurring in these settings. A pre-set grid was used covering themes that were determined based on the objectives of the study, the research questions, and the literature review: practices/strategies, schedule/routine, ELs agenda, interactions (ELs and others), obstacles/challenges, support/enablers, resources, events/critical incidents, leadership by others. Doing the initial interviews beforehand allowed me to customize certain sections of the grid for each school based on what the ELs conveyed during that first interview. Given the nature of the study, these observations noted on ELs' interactions, encounters with other people in the school as part of their day-to-day life (who initiates these interactions, their purpose).

Sometimes during and sometimes at the end of an observation day, I debriefed on the day actions and events in a field note journal that let me review and note what stood out, what needed clarification, what required further observation and probing during the following days.

Another aspect of the observations relates to the social nature of the work of these school leaders. As per ethical agreement, for everyone who entered in contact with the ELs, I was required to provide them with the letter of information and obtain full written consent. Considering it was not practical to obtain such consent, and given the number of people they interacted with on a regular basis, to address this concern, I had a brief blurb and/or summary explaining my presence there and the nature of my observations. Then, as outlined in the ethics protocol, I asked for their verbal assent and understanding that I could continue with the observations. In all the cases, their answers were positive and I was able to continue with the process. However, as the observations progressed, I noticed it was not always feasible to ask for even verbal consent. Therefore, I opted to observe the participants from a distance where I could not hear what was discussed but still be able to take notes on what was happening. Nonetheless, the participants were very forthcoming and filled me in, later on, regarding the nature of these encounters.

A section of the observation protocol permitted ELs to ask me to cease observations at any moment of any day, particularly for sensitive issues they may feel that should not be included in the research; and then resume the observations later. However, none of the participants asked for a halt in the process. On the contrary, they invited me to attend to everything they were doing, although I myself made the decision

to step aside when I thought certain issues were best dealt with without a third party present.

### Documents obtained

Yet another data source for this study providing insights into other aspects of these principals' leadership, documents were obtained directly from the ELs or from their school's official websites. The documents included school schedule, student agenda, mission statements, regulations for students and for parents, enrolment procedures, action plans, and strategies. They were elaborated by the school leaders themselves or by a specific team under their leadership.

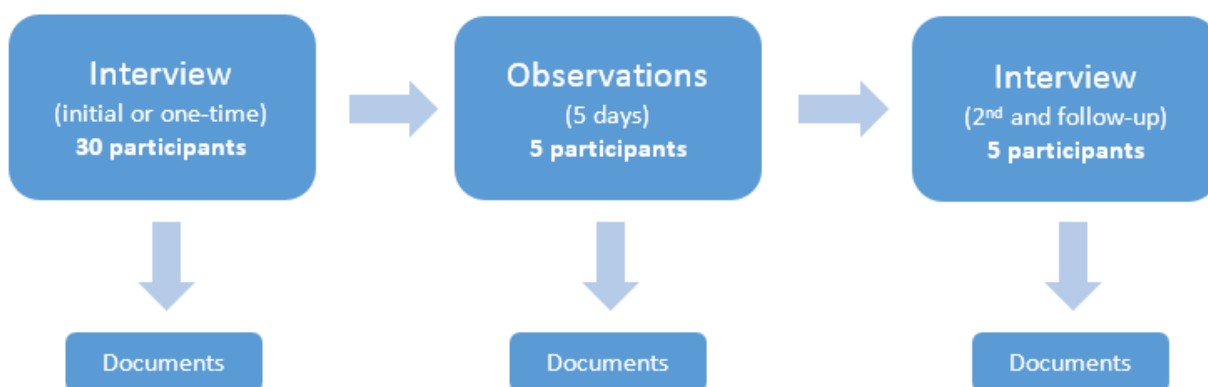
Other documents that participants referred to during their interviews or that were relevant to the education context were collected when available. They comprised national documents such as government (Ministry of Education) policies, reforms, programs/curricula, standards guide: for example, *Document d'accompagnement du nouveau programme de mathématiques – Première année du secondaire*; *Manuel de gestion des lycées de la République*; *Généralisation encadrée du Secondaire I*; *Cirulaire portant sur la tenue des examens de 6<sup>e</sup> année A.F. et du bac 1*; *Plan Opérationnel 2010-2015* (Haïti MENFP, 2010, 2011d, 2015a, b, c; Haïti Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports [MENJS], 2002).

### Confidentiality and anonymity

In the Letter of Information and Consent, participants were assured that their anonymity will be protected and that everything they said during the interviews would be

kept confidential (see Letter of information and Consent in Appendixes C and D). To respect that agreement, all identifiable information –names and locations– contained in the transcriptions were removed and stored in a separate master list (password protected and encrypted). All the identifiers were replaced in the transcriptions, in the analysis, and in the actual thesis reporting by unique ID codes: pseudonyms for participants and ‘Site #1’ for settings.

This research protocol and procedures section highlighted the dynamic at play, the flexibility required, and the messiness involved in collecting the data from various sources of evidence, particularly in a fragile country like Haïti. Figure 4.1 provides a snapshot of the sequence of the research process.



*Figure 4.1 Snapshot of sequence of events*

## VI. Data analysis process

The data analysis process encompasses actions like transcribing and coding, to clarifying the triangulation process of the different data sources.

The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed by simply listening and reporting, and by using softwares like MaxQDA 12 and InqScribe 2.2.3.258. After that was done, all the interviews and transcriptions were reviewed (double-checking) a second time to ensure that all the transcribed data was accurate and true.

Coding –tags allocating connotations to various chunks of words, sentences, and/or paragraphs– represents the key component of analysis. In a sense, coding is analysis. I did it manually and by using MaxQDA 12. There were several stages in this coding process. A first series of pre-set codes were identified based on the research questions, the literature review, and the conceptual framework –*deductive coding*. Then throughout the data collection stage, the transcribing stage, and with the final transcribed interviews/observations and gathered documents, another series of codes emerged from the data –*inductive coding*. During an initial data analysis, more themes were examined in relation with the deductive and inductive codes. And as the analysis progressed, pattern codes, categories, and themes were revisited and revised, and sub-categories were created to expand the analysis (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014).

Another aspect of the data analysis process that was critical for this qualitative study was triangulation. It is an approach to data collection and analysis that supposedly proves that findings collected corroborate, are in agreement, or at least not in contradiction, as they come from a combination of various independent measures (Creswell, 2013; Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014; Rothbauer, 2008). Done throughout the analysis process, I triangulated by data sources (participants from various school levels and types), and by methods (interviews, observations, and documents). In sum, I

cross-checked information from different vantage points in order to not only explore different dimensions of the topic under investigation, but also to obtain a clear and meaningful picture of the phenomenon under study (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006; Rothbauer, 2008; Stake, 2006).

## VII. Research design's challenges and limitations

The design of this research presented certain limitations and challenges that are discussed in this section. They related to certain ethical, methodological, and conceptual issues, as well as the challenges one faces in conducting research in a small, fragile, and developing country such as Haiti.

### Ethical and methodological issues

First of all, although tools like transferability, dependability, and credibility enable researchers to showcase the value of their studies, in a qualitative case-study within an interpretivist paradigm, they are problematic (Bassegy, 1999; Given & Saumure, 2008). This study is not intended to be generalized nor transferred to other settings, although thick descriptions, full accounts of contexts, participants, and research design are sometimes used to gauge a research's degree of transferability (Jensen, 2008). In essence, this study's relevance comes from its uniqueness that, by rejecting generalization, allowed for more accurate and in-depth pictures of Haitian educational leaders' realities as they put their conceptualizations of SL/A into practices. Crossley and Vulliamy (1984) clearly state this point of view:

Given the epistemological foundations of case study... no attempt is made to extrapolate general laws or universal applicable recommendations.... Rather, at its broadest, this study attempts to offer... insights and critical perspectives on the process... to generate increased awareness and understanding of the factors that influence the functioning of such change strategies... through research grounded in the realities of practice. (Crossley & Vulliamy, 1984, p. 201)

This last point alludes to cautious statements made by scholars about research in small states. Arguments were made that, as much as lessons can be learned from studies on small states, contextual differences make it “unwise... to seek policy blueprints for dissemination, borrowing or uncritical international transfer” (Brock & Crossley, 2013, pp. 397-398). And I would add that this warning against policy borrowing or transfer goes both ways; that picking up and implementing policies and programs from elsewhere is also unwise and uncertain as small and fragile states’ circumstances differ from those of other countries (Brock & Crossley, 2013; Brundrett & Rhodes, 2014).

As for dependability or reliability, it is somewhat of a challenge because research settings are social entities, and as such evolve and change constantly. Therefore, repeating this study’s findings is not so much an issue given this case-study’s originality and singularity. As for credibility, this study can be considered credible as accurate and rich descriptions reflecting the data gathered was provided (Given & Saumure, 2008).

However, with regard to this qualitative research, the notion of trustworthiness is more important and relevant as it is primarily concerned with the study’s overall rigour. And in this case-study, it referred to:

- The transparency of the process (detailed accounts of processes, procedures, and findings),



- The data generated for a purpose (understanding the educational leaders' practices as they relate to SL/A),
- The search of diverse perspectives (interviewed and observed participants from various school levels and types, and occupying various leadership positions),
- The change in the researcher (my positionality and how I addressed the challenges and difficulties) and in the participants' practices (detailed report of their everyday life from different sources), and
- The ensuing results that are valuable and meaningful (shedding light into these leadership practices and drawing out insights that can impact future policies) (Lichtman, 2013).

### Conceptual limitations

This study being a qualitative piece did not sample a large number of participants. The focus was placed on collecting in-depth, comprehensive and rich data from a small number of participants in only one department (West) within its metropolitan urban area, instead of going broadly at a superficial level across the country's ten departments (provinces).

### Challenges in conducting research in small, fragile, and developing countries like

#### Haïti

Conducting research in small, fragile, and developing countries like Haïti can present challenges and difficulties to/for researchers. This can happen because they are

not familiar with the setting, or because of the actual conditions and situations of the setting itself. While doing data collection, there were particular challenges I had to face and deal with.

The first challenge came while preparing the research protocol. I am a citizen of Haïti where the study was taking place. Having lived and worked there prior to starting my graduate studies in Canada, I am very familiar with the setting, its customs, and circumstances. At the onset, I acknowledged and understood that certain participants may not be comfortable, or may be reluctant, to sign a consent form. Culturally speaking, such action is cautiously and circumspectly perceived. Signing consent forms is not always culturally appropriate or required to establish a trusting relationship and rapport with participants. In fact, some people do sign documents when they do not trust; which goes against what this study was aiming to accomplish. In spite of this fact, some of these participants may have wanted to participate in the study. Provision was therefore made for such case where I would clearly explain the letter of information to them, answer their questions, and then get their verbal consent to fill out the consent form in their presence. Actually, during the data collection, only one participant was in fact reluctant to sign the consent form. After s/he explained her/his reasons, I informed her/him that I had also anticipated such scenario, and that we could still proceed with the interview. Then, the participant relaxed and finally agreed to sign the form.

Another challenge was related to the recruitment process. As stated earlier, reaching potential participants was challenging in the sense that there are no central offices that could forward invitation emails and/or letters. Therefore, I had to rely on my own networks, personal and professional (my own social capital) to put me in contact

with potential participants. And from there, the snowballing started. It worked out well because, as I was referred by mutual acquaintances, participants welcomed me with a level of trust and were more open and forthcoming.

Choosing a fragile country as a study site entails that one might have to deal with prolonged crises, post-conflict or political transition, high security risks, to name a few. And that was precisely the case in Haïti during the data collection period. The political climate was very tense due to the presidential and legislative election processes that occurred in three rounds. The first two rounds took place in August and October 2015, and the third one was scheduled for December 2015 but never happened. What that entails was that protests, unrest, and high security risks were growing as the data collection started in the midst of all that, in November 2015. In other words, tensions increased, became part of the environment, and were felt everywhere, including the schools. That affected the study participants and myself as we had to plan and re-plan our meetings depending on the state (the ‘feel’) of the streets. But, being a native of the country and having lived there, I was also able to navigate these tensions, and knew when and how to adjust to changing circumstances.

## Concluding summary

With the main research question in mind “How do educational leaders (ELs) interpret student learning and achievement (SL/A), and translate their

understandings/interpretations into leadership practices?”, this chapter has provided a detailed and thorough account of every step taken to answer that question.

This qualitative interpretive research set within the field of comparative and international education sought to access, explore, and gain a deeper understanding of individuals, phenomena, issues, and events, with an open mindset to the multiple viewpoints that arose. In other words, it was concerned with the perspectives of participants such as Haïtian school leaders as they enacted their conceptions of SL/A into leadership practices.

A value-laden qualitative inquiry, this case-study provided in-depth understandings, rich, thick, vivid descriptions, and practical knowledge of the real-life, contemporary, real-world context of these educational leaders, thus being responsive to their environment. In this bounded system relying on multiple sources of information, the main/primary unit of analysis is ‘educational school leaders in small, fragile, and developing states’, and the subunit, their leadership practices.

This qualitative case-study is marked by a certain eclecticism in terms of methods. It used naturalistic tools such as semi-structured interviews with 30 participants, non-participant observations with field notes in five sites, and document analysis of various policy documents.

Although there were ethical, methodological, and conceptual issues to deal with, as well as challenges in conducting research in a small, fragile, and developing country like Haïti, this journey allowed me to witness and experience first-hand the dynamic, fluid, changing, and messy process of conducting a qualitative case-study. But more

importantly, it gave voice to Haïtian educational leaders and brought to light their complex reality and their leadership practices. However, before presenting these rich data, in the next chapter, Chapter 5 –Setting the stage– I will provide a detailed description of the context and the setting in which the study took place; which will allow my readers to better understand the findings and results later on (Chapter 6).

## CHAPTER FIVE: SETTING THE STAGE

### Introduction

This research is a case-study that aims to “provid[e] a unique example of real people in real situations” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 289). This case-study, thus, seeks to document each educational leader’s (ELs) story with regard to their leadership journey. Therefore, it is critical to provide an in-depth description of the context in which these real people live and evolve. This chapter intends to do exactly that: offer rich, thick, and contextualized accounts of the setting. The first section expands on the education system in Haïti, presenting some background knowledge regarding its history, structure, school providers, funding schemes, training programs, reforms, and current issues. The second section introduces all the ELs who participated in this study. It gives a general overview of their profiles and settings. The third and last section gives more details about the five ELs who were involved in the observations. It thus provides more information about their specific contexts and circumstances, as well as their professional background.

### I. Education context and background: Facts about the education system in Haïti

In order to fully comprehend the results and findings of this study, as well as the ensuing analysis, understanding the education system itself is important. Because only

then can one really grasp and make sense at what is happening. And that is even more relevant for this specific setting, as Haïti's history, evolution, struggles, and challenges, in sum its journey in education, is unique and paradoxical, as much as it may present common traits with other small, fragile, and developing countries. In this section, I highlight key elements of the education system, especially for those who are not at all familiar with the Haïtian context.

### History of the education system and Ministry of education

Haïti's education system has a long and hectic history. Since its independence, the newly independent government held the firm belief that instruction/education was a mean towards emancipation as well as opening/openness and light (Joint, 2006). To achieve this mission, Haïti's first *Ministère de l'Instruction Publique* [Ministry of Public Instruction] was created in 1844 (Nelson, 2015). Throughout the years and centuries, it has evolved, changed, taken up different names, and been structured and re-structured. Today, it is labeled *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle* (MENFP) [Ministry of National Education and Professional Training (own translation)]. This Ministry, like any other ministries in the country, is continuously affected by what is happening economically and on the political scene (instability, conflicts). In fact, from its creation until today, the length of a minister's stay in office has varied from 2 days to 7½ years. And since the conception of this study in 2013 (4 years ago), there have been four different ministers of education: (1) August 2012 to April 2014; (2) April 2014 to March 2016, (3) March 2016 to March 2017, and (4) March 2017 until today June 2017 (Haïti MENFP, 2016a, b, 2017).

Haiti has had many laws and much legislations aiming at providing education for all Haitian children. That goal has been a continuous struggle, and was not always a top priority considering the many other challenges and issues the young nation has faced (Nelson, 2015). The 1987 Constitution and the 1989 Decree-Law granted the ministry sole decision-making power regarding major education-related matters. In sum, it has the responsibility to elaborate, implement, evaluate, and update the government's general policies regarding education, literacy, and professional training (Haiti MENFP, 2007).

From the beginning, the Haitian education system has been impacted by foreign influences such as French values, culture, materials, and methods, the British education model, and the Roman Catholic Church as a consequence of centuries of colonization (1492-1804). In fact, in March 1860, the government signed a Concordat with the Vatican which was revised in 1983. This agreement enabled and facilitated the Roman Catholic Church to implement Catholic education by opening and operating Catholic schools throughout the country. Further, this delegated the task of schooling to local Catholic parishes in rural areas. Some of the consequences of this Concordat included: deeper establishment of the French education system brought in by French Catholic missionaries; hegemony of the Catholic Church in education, given the quality of their schools; increased gap and disparity between congregational and public/national schools (Joint, 2006; Nelson, 2015).

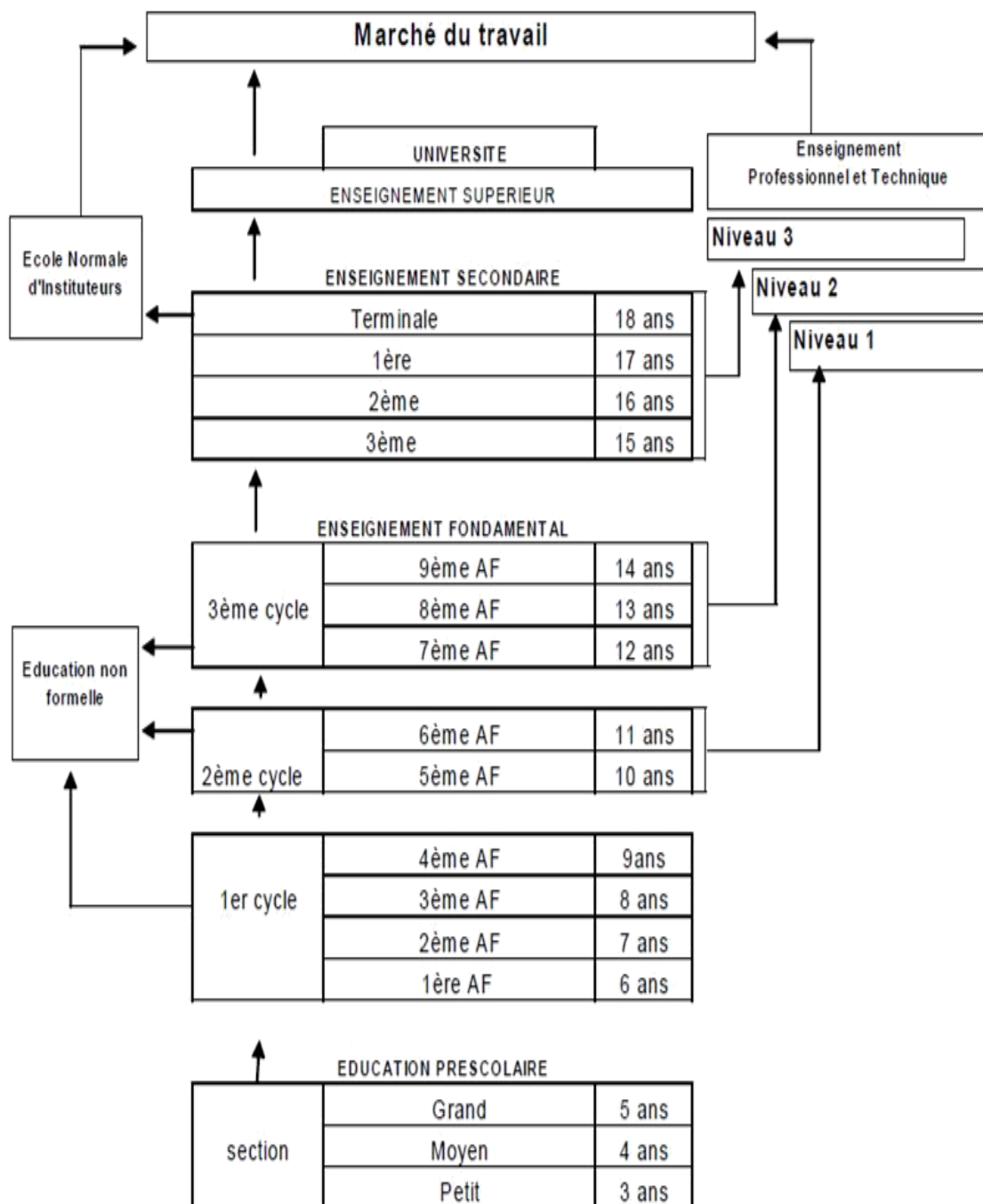
Internally, the MENFP works in a decentralized manner. This means that, aside from the Office of the Minister and the Office of the General Director, there exist 12 various departments in charge of different aspects of the education system, as well as associated institutes. Externally, the system, its structure, and governance are centralized



and hierarchized, in the sense that the Ministry is in charge of producing decrees, policies, guides, and norms (Fallon, 2016), with regard to school curriculum, training curriculum, official exams, school inspection, school calendar, school licensure and accreditations that all Haïtian schools must follow and abide by. Furthermore, there are sub-units in charge of conducting school inspections and relaying information: departmental directorates, school district offices, and zone inspection offices. However, as the study will showcase, things are not always black and white: there are several shades of grey within the system.

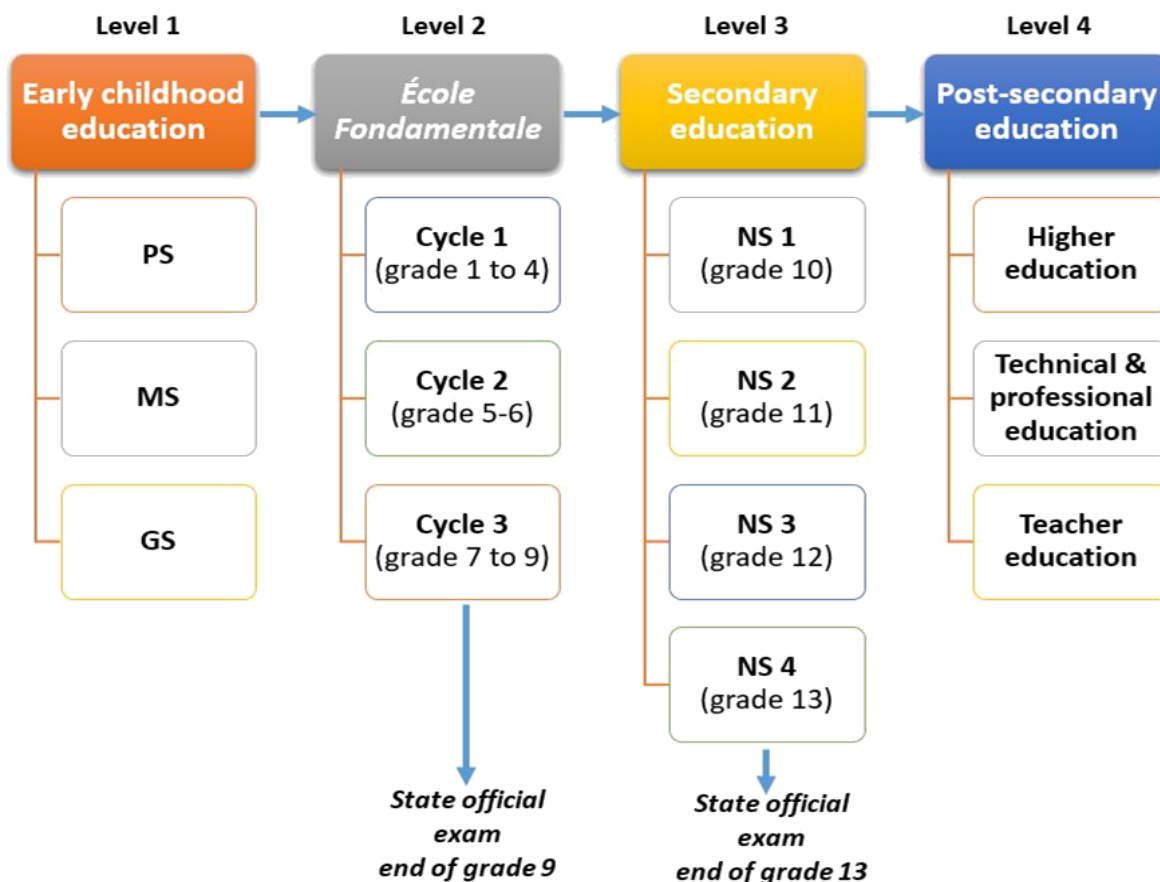
### Schooling structure and levels

In Haïti, there are four levels of schooling established. The first level refers to the early childhood education, *l'enseignement préscolaire*, with three years of schooling (3 to 5 year-olds). The *Réforme Bernard* (1979) and another reform, the *Plan National d'Éducation et de Formation* (1997), separated the primary and secondary education into two levels. The second level, *l'enseignement fondamental* or *école fondamentale* (EF), is divided into three cycles: cycle 1 (grades 1 to 4), cycle 2 (grades 5, 6), and cycle 3 (grades 7 to 9). The third level, *l'enseignement secondaire* (ES), comprises the last four years of formal schooling (grades 10 to 13). Lastly, the fourth level is the higher education and/or post-secondary education, *l'enseignement supérieur*, with university and technical degrees. Teachers' education, *École Normale*, is included in this last level with its two- to five-year programs that lead to a teaching diploma (see Figures 5.1 and 5.2).



Source: MENFP (2007, p. 13)

Figure 5.1 Structure of the Haitian education system, from the Réforme Bernard to 2015-2016



**Figure 5.2** Changes in Haïti's schooling structure after the last reform in 2015-2016

Since their inception (and even before then), two official state exams were administered in the second level (EF): one at the end of grade 6, and another one at the end of grade 9. But as of 2014-2015, the grade 6 exam was eliminated; only the grade 9 exam remains, thus concluding that second phase. Additionally, up until recently, schooling in Haïti ended with two official secondary state exams: one in *Rhétô* (grade 12, *Bac 1*) and another one in *Terminal/Philo* (grade 13, *Bac 2*). 2015-2016 saw the removal of the grade 12 exam. Presently, high school students only have to pass the grade 13 state exams that grant them the official secondary diploma (Haïti MENFP, 2015d).

At this point, it is important to note that, even though the Haïtian education system is structured in that particular way today, most participants (such as Haïtians in general) spoke about/of it using terms that are reflective of the system before the *Réforme Bernard*. In other words, they referred to the structure and processes of the system using language, words, and terms from the past, oftentimes blending them with new terminologies. Regardless of that fact, as Haïtian schools, all school leaders comply with the new models/reforms, or are in the process of transitioning as they send their students to the mandatory official state exams at the end of grade 9 and grade 13 (Haïti MENFP, 2011c; IHFOSED, 2007).

### School providers and school choice

Considering the scope of the study regarding ELs' leadership practices in relation to their understandings of student learning and achievement (SL/A) within the country's school system, it is critical to understand the whole spectrum of school types that exist. Put differently, with expected years of schooling reaching 9.1 out of 13 years, hence, an average of 5.2 (UNDP, 2016, 2017b), access to schooling in Haïti is largely based on a variety of school providers. Parents and guardians, in fact, have the choice between public and non-public providers. The public schools are state schools, funded by the government. And the non-public sector includes various types of private institutions. Broadly they fall into two categories: private for profit and private not-for-profit schools. These schools include secular, Catholic congregational, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Protestant, missionary, community, and municipal, as well as schools run by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or associations. It is important to note that, although

most public schools are secular schools, there are a few Catholic congregational, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Protestant, missionary, community, and municipal schools that are state-funded (Haïti MENFP, 2007, 2011c).

The fact is that the non-public private sector is very predominant in the education system. It can be argued that there is a quasi-privatization of the system, with almost 90% of non-public schools –among which close to 75% do not have a licence to operate– versus 10% of public schools (Haïti MENFP, 2010, 2011a, b, c) (see Chapter 1 for further details on problematic educational issues). Tables 5.1 and 5.2 give detailed accounts of the distribution by providers, in terms of school enrolment and number of schools.

For clarity and simplification purposes, from this point on and throughout the rest of this document, I will refer to the publicly-funded schools as *public schools*, to the Catholic congregational schools (private and public) as *religious schools*, and to the private secular schools as *private schools*.

**Table 5.1 School enrolment by provider (2010-2011 census)**

	<b>Private/Non-public</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Preschool</b>	–	–	<b>544 474</b>
<b>Fondamentale 1 &amp; 2</b>	1 723 601 (77.98%)	486 620 (22.02%)	<b>2 210 221</b>
<b>Fondamentale 3 &amp; Secondary</b>	456 393 (73.12%)	167 702 (26.87%)	<b>624 095</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 179 994 (76.91%)</b>	<b>654 322 (23.09%)</b>	<b>2 834 316 3 378 790 (with preschool)</b>

Sources: MENFP (2011a, b, c)

**Table 5.2 Schools by numbers (2010-2011 census)**

	<b>Private/Non-public</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Preschool</b>	8 754	601	<b>9 355</b> <b>1 175 (with preschool only)</b>
<b>Fondamentale 1 &amp; 2</b>	11 911 (87.59%)	1 688 (12.41%)	<b>13 599*</b>
<b>Fondamentale 3 &amp; Secondary</b>	3 049 (87.69%)	428 (12.31%)	<b>3 477</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>23 714 (89.72%)</b>	<b>2 717 (10.28%)</b>	<b>26 431</b>

\* More details/breakdowns

<b>One level</b>	<b>With 2 other levels</b>	<b>All 3 levels</b>
4 494	7 851	1 254

Sources: MENFP (2011a, b, c)

### Education finances, economics, and funding

In Haïti, in most private schools, students –their parents and/or guardians, to be exact– have to pay annual school fees and monthly tuition (Assié-Lumumba, 1993). Each school sets its own fees. Moreover, like anywhere else around the world, there are additional expenses that parents/guardians have in order to send their child/children to school: uniform, books, school supplies, transportation, lunch, tutoring, to name a few. This, added to limited resources, constitutes an obstacle which, Assié-Lumumba (1993) contends, is serious to children’s schooling. For many parents, that prevents them from sending their child/children to school (La Banque Mondiale, 2015b). It is also worth mentioning that private schools do not receive subsidies from the ministry. As for public schools, there is a one-time annual fee that is required from students in order to offset certain expenses.

Between 2001 and 2010, the government's allocation to education went from 17% to 10% of its budget. In that budget, while 80% is used for management, the distribution is not even throughout the country: 80% goes to urban centres, whereas only 20% reaches rural areas, home of 70% of the population (Nelson, 2015; World Heritage Encyclopedia, 2017). Given the fact that this budget is insufficient to cover all the education-related expenditures, the ministry relies on international aid and assistance. In 2012, the total aid to education reached 94 million dollars US. It also has partnerships and agreements that fund certain projects and programs (Affaires Étrangères, Commerce et Développement Canada, 2015; EFA-GMR, 2015; La Banque Mondiale, 2015a, b).

### Principals and teachers: Training, appointments, and termination

In Haïti, there is no formal initial training (education) that prospective principals have to undertake before stepping into the role. Prospective and in-service principals, particularly those in the public sector, attend seminars before or during their tenure (Rigaud, 2009). However, a few institutions and universities offer certification in educational administration<sup>3</sup>, although they do not cater specifically to principals. Some prospective and active principals who can afford it chose the university path to obtain, at least, a bachelor degree in education. Furthermore, the ministry has elaborated frameworks to assist, guide, and set out the duties and tasks of principalship, like the Management guide for the Republic's public high schools.

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<sup>3</sup> Certification programs in educational administration can be obtained in institutions and universities such as: Université Quisqueya, a minor in school administration (<http://uniq.edu/fr/pages.php?id=185>); Institut Haïtien de Formation en Sciences de l'Éducation, a certificate in school administration (<https://ihfosed.org/programmes/certificat-en-administration-scolaire-cas>); Institut Universitaire des Sciences de l'Éducation–CREFI, an advanced training diploma in educational administration (<http://crefi-edu-ht.wixsite.com/crefi/diplomes-cycle-court>)

Regarding appointments, in the public sector, principals are nominated by the ministry who decides in which school to appoint them. This is considered as a promotion and can be obtained after having served as a teacher, then as a *censeur* or pedagogical counselor (in charge of discipline and studies). In that same logic, only the ministry can remove a principal from her/his functions, and/or transfer her/him to another school. Additionally, secondary schools (*lycées*) principals are assisted by *censeur* appointed also by the ministry.

In the private sector, the situation is different. In private schools, principals are more often than not the owner of the schools. The issue that arises then is in their succession. Usually, after the founder retires or passes away, some of these options are considered for the succession: (a) a family member or a close friend or a former student becomes the new principal; (b) the family hires someone to run the school; or (c) the school closes its doors.

In religious schools (private or public), the head office of the religious order appoints a nun, a brother, or a priest (depending on the order) as principal. In some cases, it is a mandate with a timeframe; in other instances, it is open, unlimited, and renewable. Depending on the structure of the school, principals are assisted by pedagogical directors.

Teachers' education training in Haïti is offered either at universities or in various institutes, centres, or *Écoles Normales* (EN). The training occurs in two- to five-year programs, with a mean of 3 years. The training programs given at the university level cater to teacher candidates from early childhood education (ECE) up to secondary



education; whereas in the other institutes, centres, and EN, the programs are mostly for the first two levels, ECE and *fondamentale*. These institutions are both public and private, accredited, non-accredited, and/or with special license (renewable annually): an unofficial total number of 85. Again, the private sector represents the majority of providers (IHFOSED, 2007).

The curricula used in these training programs vary from one institution to another. Although several attempts were made by the ministry to update its latest curriculum elaborated in 1989, some training programs still use it; others employ an even earlier version; few of them have their own curricula; and a small number combine all curricula. Most training centres modified the 1989 curriculum to make it more relevant to their current situations; whereas some use it without changes (IHFOSED, 2007). Moreover, existing training programs are not enough to cover the high demands for quality teacher education. Yet, the teacher training institutions do not attract many high school graduates because other fields like medicine, law, business/management, and agriculture are considered far more appealing (IHFOSED, 2007).

Regarding recruitment, the process for teachers in public schools is fairly similar to that of principal. The ministry is in charge of nominating (see in that hiring) them and appointing them to the school of their choice. It is also in charge of their transfer from one school to another. Although principals cannot terminate teacher's contract, they can put in requests for a transfer. In private and religious schools, principals are the ones in charge of hiring teachers and all staff personnel. They are also the ones that decide on teachers' promotion as well as the termination of their contracts.

Teacher shortage represents one of the most pressing issues affecting the system, and more directly principals (see Table 5.3). There are also serious concerns about the quality of their training, initial and continuing, which affects the quality of their teaching. As Edmé (2016) states, they cannot give what they did not learn. Furthermore, particularly in public schools, it is noted that teachers have often been absent from their classrooms for extended periods, either due to unpaid salaries, or due to strikes organized by their unions demanding better work conditions (Rigaud, 2009). In addition to this teacher crisis and shortage, current lack of infrastructure and resources (various amenities and labs), educational and school supplies (mainly books), teaching materials, among other things, can help explain and understand issues pertaining to students' retention rates (at 14.5% in levels 1-2 and 10% in levels 3-secondary) and completion rates (at 68% in levels 1-2 and 33% in levels 3-secondary) (Haïti MENFP, 2011a, b, 2014g).

**Table 5.3 Teachers in numbers**

		<b>Preschools</b>	<b>Fondamentale 1 &amp; 2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	19 851	70 009
	<b>Private</b>	–	58 976 (84.24%)
	<b>Public</b>	–	11 033 (15.76%)
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Female</b>	18 253 (91.95%)	28%
	<b>Male</b>	1 598 (8.05%)	72%
<b>Urban education level</b>	<i>École Normale</i>	53.2%	–
	<b>University</b>	11.22%	–
<b>Rural education level</b>		21.34% Grade 9 & below	–
<i>École Normale</i> education level	<b>Private</b>	–	13.05%
	<b>Public</b>	–	26.73%

Sources: MENFP (2011b, c)

## Reforms and improvement efforts

In spite of the global trends on educational system reforms and standardization policies, the country did not keep up as its last whole-system reform, the *Réforme Bernard*, was initiated, elaborated, and implemented in 1979 (as referred in Chapter 1). There have been subsequent reforms in 1998 (the *Plan National d'Éducation et de Formation*) and in 2010 (*Plan Opérationnel 2010-2015*), and a strategic plan in 2007 (the *Stratégie Nationale d'Action pour l'Éducation pour Tous*), that have been less visible, if not totally unknown to the general public, including the education sector, unlike the 1979 *Réforme Bernard* one that is still in effect, to a certain extent (Haïti MENFP, 2007, 2010; IMAO, 2008).

However, during the past three decades, other efforts were made to address some of the educational issues mentioned before. These projects mostly pertained to administrative and structural matters such as start and length of school year, state examinations in new grades, professional development training for principals and teachers, materials and resources, subsidy programs for pupils like PSUGO<sup>4</sup>, to name a few. The impact of some of these efforts were limited as they were done on small scales, and were not systemic nor regular. Some were funded by international organizations, or through partnerships and agreements; which means that once the funding ceased, there was a great chance that the programs came to a halt as well, having not, most of the time, been conceived to be sustainable (Affaires Étrangères, Commerce et Développement Canada, 2015; Étienne, 2008; Haïti MENFP, 2014g; La Banque Mondiale, 2015a).

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<sup>4</sup> Programme de Scolarisation Universelle, Gratuite et Obligatoire (PSUGO) is a subsidy program launched in 2011 by the MENFP to school access for all students (Haïti MENFP, 2014g)

Recently, certain reforms have been initiated: not a whole-system turnover but pertinent enough to concern educational leaders at all levels. On the one hand, starting 2014-2015, two official state exams were eliminated, in grades 6 and 12 (as previously mentioned), which leaves only the ones in grades 9 and 13. Furthermore, a new testing format for grade 4 was then introduced. On the other hand, the secondary level was restructured. In 2015-2016, after pilot projects were conducted during eight years in both public and non-public schools, a new system was implemented gradually throughout the country (Haïti MENFP, 2014a, 2015c, d). Now labelled *Nouveau Secondaire* (NS), this new level is still a four-year cycle but changes were made in the curricula with new teaching/learning approaches and new subjects added.

It is in this specific educational scenery that my study takes place. How, if at all, these changes affect and impact school leaders remains to be seen, especially given the early stage of these policies (agenda stage, according to Howlett & Ramesh, 2003), and taking into account the political climate (presidential and legislative elections at the time of data collection). If so, it will be reflected, in one way or another, in the leaders' discourses and practices.

## II. Context and background for participants and sites

Thirty educational leaders (ELs) from 28 different schools participated in this study. They came from a variety of school providers: private secular, private congregational, public secular, and public congregational. The participants occupy two

leadership positions: most were principals (called directors in Haïti) and a few were pedagogical directors. And they were involved in the semi-structured interviews and the observations. Tables 5.4 and 5.5 provide an overview of this distribution.

**Table 5.4 School sites distribution**

School type / School level	Public secular	Private secular	Private religious	Public religious	Total
<i>Fond. 1 &amp; 2</i>	3	1	1	–	5
<i>Fond. 3 &amp; Secondary</i>	5	3	1	1	10
<i>Fondamentale &amp; Secondary</i>	–	6	7	–	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>28</b>

**Table 5.5 Participants' distribution**

School type / School level	Public secular	Private secular	Private religious	Public religious	Total
<i>Fond. 1 &amp; 2</i>	3	1	2	–	6
<i>Fond. 3 &amp; Secondary</i>	5	4	4	1	14
<i>Fondamentale &amp; Secondary</i>	–	7	3	–	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>30</b>

The school sites' distribution and the participants' distribution vary for two reasons. First, four of the seven complete (*fondamentale* and secondary) religious private schools have separated the leadership and administration of the whole school into two distinct offices: one principal is in charge of *fondamentale* 1-2, and another principal has *fondamentale* 3 and secondary. In this study, although their school is a complete one, some participants are principals in either one of these two sections. Secondly, in three of the private schools, the principalship is assumed by a team of two or three principals. And in each site, one or two principals participated in the interviews.

Table 5.6 gives an overview of the principals' profile with information about their gender, age, position, and education level, as well as their years in the profession and in this specific school (when provided). It also includes the schools' type and level. In order to protect their anonymity and prevent any risk of identifying them, each participant was given a pseudonym.

Overall, the study participants' initial training varies broadly: teaching diploma (with various subject options), bachelor degree in education, in engineering, and in business administration, medical degree, masters and doctoral degrees in education (in several disciplines).

The schools are all located in Haïti's capital, Port-au-Prince (the West department), in the metropolitan area (see Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1). They are spread out across four *communes* (municipalities): Port-au-Prince, Delmas, Carrefour, and Pétion-Ville. Each school can be considered as a landmark in its area/locality, and to some extent in the capital (and country), as each has been serving its community, and the education community at large, for decades and sometimes more. On average, they have been operational from 12 years to 100 years and more, and in between.

This is also reflected in their enrolment numbers. In the public schools, with their two vacations (service periods), the number of students varies in the thousands in the *lycées (fondamentale 3 and secondary)* and in the hundreds in most *écoles nationales (fondamentale 1 and 2)*, with one exception. In the religious schools, it fluctuates from several hundreds to thousands. As for the private schools, their numbers run mostly in the hundreds.

Table 5.6 provides the results of the official state exams for the 2013-2014, the last school year prior to the implementation of recent reforms. Although these results do not completely reflect the participants' take on student learning and achievement, they offer a partial view of that situation in these schools, with further detailed in the Findings chapter.

**Table 5.6 Official state exams result for 2013-2014 (in %)**

Site	Educational leader	Type	6 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>
1.	François	P	100	99	75.82	98.15
2.	Anaïs	P	–	89.13		
3.	Michael & Raphaël	P	–	100		100
4.	Joseph	S	87.93	–	–	–
5.	Olivia	P	–	76.47	28.57	63.16
6.	Claire-Emmanuelle	R	100	100	100	100
7.	Pénélope	S	100	–	–	–
8.	Marion	R	100	100		97.27
9.	Isabelle	P	100	–	–	–
10.	Janine	P	97.06	79.49	65.52	94.74
11.	Mélodie-Anne	P	100	100	69.23	100
12.	Jade	S	–	97.44	81.41	87.84
13.	Sébastien	R	–	98.99	93.57	97.27
14.	Thierry	R	100	100	100	100
15.	Jonathan	R	100	100	100	100
16.	Dimitri	S	–	86.78	27.03	61.64
17.	Grace	R	100	98.75	100	94.12
18.	Alain	R	100	–	–	–
19.	Alexandre	P	98.28	100	100	100
20.	Laurence	P	100	92.86	91.67	
21.	Christian	S	–	83.33	33.99	61.76
22.	Simone	R	100	93.33		
23.	Malik	S	–	75.60	33.33	65.44
24.	Catherine	RS	–	–	74.42	94.44
25.	Christie & Maelynn	P	97.22	100		
26.	Jean-Philippe	R	100	100	100	100
27.	Agnès	S	78.40	–	–	–
28.	Vincent	S	–	73.33	30.93	69.87

Sources: MENFP (2014b, c, d, e)

It is important to note that most of these schools were affected at some level by the January 2010 earthquake. While some buildings suffered minor damages, others

more substantive ones, and some were completely destroyed and had to be totally rebuilt, another challenge in itself.



Table 5.7 Participants' profile in 2015-2016

School site #	Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Position	School type	School level	Years in profession	Years in position	Educ. level	Participation in study	
										Int *	Obs **
1.	François	M	–	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo – Sec	26	26	Bachelor	✓	✓
2.	Anaïs	F	35-40	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo(3)–Sec	–	9	Bachelor	✓	
3.	Michael	M	50-55	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo(3)–Sec	–	–	Bachelor	✓	
	Raphaël	M	50-55	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo(3)–Sec	33	16	Bachelor	✓	
4.	Joseph	M	60-65	Princ/Dir	Pub SE	Fo (1-2)	20	2	École Normale	✓	
5.	Olivia	F	60-65	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo(3)–Sec	20	3	M.D.***	✓	
6.	Claire-Emmanuelle	F	45-50	Princ/Dir	Rel Priv	Fo – Sec	–	6	Bachelor	✓	✓
7.	Pénélope	F	50-60	Princ/Dir	Pub SE	Fo (1/2)	20+	10	É.N.****	✓	
8.	Marion	F	–	Princ/Dir	Rel Priv	Fo – Sec	–	8-9	É.N.	✓	
9.	Isabelle	F	40-45	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo (1-2)	23	20	Bachelor	✓	
10.	Janine	F	–	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo – Sec	41+	41	É.N.	✓	
11.	Mélodie-Anne	F	65-70	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo – Sec	23	23	Bachelor	✓	✓
12.	Jade	F	65-70	Princ/Dir	Pub SE	Fo(3)–Sec	44	16	É.N.	✓	
13.	Sébastien	M	40-45	Princ/Dir	Rel Priv	Fo(3)–Sec	15	3	Ph.D.	✓	✓
14.	Thierry	M	65-70	Princ/Dir	Rel Priv	Fo – Sec	48	17	–	✓	
15.	Jonathan	M	40-45	Princ/Dir	Rel Priv	Fo – Sec	–	6 months	Bachelor	✓	
16.	Dimitri	M	50-55	Princ/Dir	Pub SE	Fo(3)–Sec	25	3.5	É.N.	✓	✓
17.	Grace	F	40-45	Princ/Dir	Rel Priv	Fo – Sec	11	3	Bachelor	✓	
18.	Alain	M	30-35	Princ/Dir	Rel Priv	Fo (1-2)	10	6 months	–	✓	
19.	Alexandre	M	60-65	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo – Sec	–	33	Masters	✓	
20.	Laurence	F	50-55	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo – Sec	29	25	Bachelor	✓	
21.	Christian	M	–	Princ/Dir	Pub SE	Fo(3)–Sec	36	22	–	✓	
22.	Simone	F	40-45	Ped Dir	Rel Priv	Fo – Sec	20	5	Bachelor	✓	
23.	Malik	M	50-55	Princ/Dir	Pub SE	Fo(3)–Sec	23	10	Bachelor	✓	
24.	Catherine	F	40-45	Princ/Dir	Rel Pub	Sec	18	2	É.N.	✓	

25.	Christie	F	50-55	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo – Sec	31	21	Masters	✓	
	Maelynn	F	50-55	Princ/Dir	Priv SE	Fo – Sec	29	21	Masters	✓	
26.	Jean-Philippe	M	60-65	Ped Dir	Rel Priv	Fo – Sec	–	18	É.N.	✓	
27.	Agnès	F	40-45	Princ/Dir	Pub SE	Fo (1-2)	21	4	É.N.	✓	
28.	Vincent	M	40-45	Princ/Dir	Pub SE	Fo(3)–Sec	17	6	É.N.	✓	

Legends:

Fo : Fondamentale  
 Sec : Secondary  
 Rel : Religious  
 SE : Secular  
 Priv : Private  
 Pub : Public  
 Princ : Principal  
 Dir : Director  
 Ped : Pedagogical director  
 Int\* : Interviews  
 Obs\*\* : Observations  
 M.D.\*\*\* : Medical Doctor  
 É.N.\*\*\*\* : École Normale  
 – : Data not provided by participants

### III. Context and background for observations' participants and sites

The observation component of this research included five different sites, with five different principals. They come from private secular, private religious, and public secular schools. This section provides more details into each setting as each participant's leadership journey is contextualized and context-specific. See Table 5.8 for an overview of the observation sites.

**Table 5.8**    *Observation sites*

<b>School type</b> <b>School level</b>	<b>Public secular</b>	<b>Private secular</b>	<b>Private religious</b>	<b>Public religious</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Fond. 1 &amp; 2</i>	–	–	1	–	<b>1</b>
<i>Fond. 3 &amp; Secondary</i>	1	–	1	–	<b>2</b>
<i>Fondamentale &amp; Secondary</i>	–	2	–	–	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>5</b>

As mentioned in the previous chapter (Chapter 4), each observation lasted five days and occurred between December 2015 and March 2016.

#### Site # 1

François, a 50+ year-old principal, has been occupying this leadership position in Site #1 for 26 years, which represent the same number of years he has been in the education profession. His initial training was a bachelor degree in engineering.

Located in the Port-au-Prince municipality, Site # 1 is a private secular school that includes the *fondamentale* and the secondary levels, catering to students of both genders. The school has different areas like administration, accounting and infirmary bloc, principal office/quarters, teacher and staff room. The amenities include: running water/water fountain, snack-bar, library, courtyard, computer lab, natural science lab, washrooms, electricity, fans (in some classrooms), generator. Lastly, François' school is surrounded by other schools, universities, private residences, business offices, churches, and is located on a very busy road.

**Table 5.9 Profile of François and Site # 1**

<b>François</b>	Position	Principal
	Years in profession	26
	Years in position	26
	Education level	Bachelor degree in engineering
	Age	50+ years old
<b>School</b>	Type	Private secular
	Level	<i>Fondamentale</i> & Secondary
	Location (municipality)	Port-au-Prince
	Enrolment number (range)	–
	Student gender	Mixed
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Building structure	Multiple stories, concrete

### Site # 6

Claire-Emmanuelle, a 40+ year-old religious nun principal, has been occupying this leadership position in Site # 6 for six years. Although the school has all three levels, she is in charge of the preschool and *fondamentale 1-2*. She obtained a bachelor degree in education.

Located in the Port-au-Prince municipality, Site # 6 is a private Catholic school that caters to girls only. Claire-Emmanuelle's school has different areas like secretary office, principal office/quarters. The amenities include: copy room, library, snack-bar, courtyard, playground/play area, computer lab, natural science/chemistry lab, washrooms, infirmary, polyvalent room (multipurpose). Lastly, Site # 6 is surrounded by other schools, private residences, business offices, churches, and is located on a very busy road.

**Table 5. 10 Profile of Claire-Emmanuelle and Site # 6**

<b>Claire-Emmanuelle</b>	Position	Principal (preschool & <i>Fondamentale</i> 1-2)
	Years in profession	–
	Years in position	6
	Education level	Bachelor degree in education
	Type	Religious private
<b>School</b>	Level	Preschool, <i>fondamentale</i> & secondary
	Location (municipality)	Port-au-Prince
	Enrolment number (range)	1000-2000 (whole school), with 800-900 (for her section)
	Student gender	All girls
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Building structure	One story, temporary wood construction

### Site # 11

Mélodie-Anne, a 60+ year-old principal, has been occupying this leadership position in Site # 11 for 23 years, which represent the same number of years she has been in the education profession. Prior to that she has worked as an engineer, in which field she obtained her bachelor degree.

Located in the Delmas municipality, Site # 11 is a private secular school that includes the preschool, *fondamentale* and secondary levels, catering to students of both genders. The school has different areas like principal office, head/administrator office, music room. The amenities include: snack-bar, library, courtyard, tables and benches, sport courtyard, computer lab, washrooms, generator. Lastly, Mélodie-Anne's school is surrounded by other schools, private residences, business offices, churches, gas station, and is located on a very busy road.

**Table 5. 11 Profile of Mélodie-Anne and Site # 11**

<b>Mélodie-Anne</b>	Position	Principal
	Years in profession	23
	Years in position	23
	Education level	Bachelor degree in engineering
	Type	Private secular
<b>School</b>	Level	Preschool, <i>fondamentale</i> & secondary
	Location (municipality)	Delmas
	Enrolment number (range)	–
	Student gender	Mixed
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Building structure	Multiple stories, concrete and iron

### Site # 13

Sébastien, a 40+ year-old religious principal, has been occupying this leadership position in Site # 13 for 3 years, while he has been working in the profession for 15 years. His initial training was at the seminary, then he moved on to obtain his doctoral degree in education.

Located in the Port-au-Prince municipality, Site # 13 is a private Catholic school that includes the *fondamentale* 3 and secondary levels, catering to students of both

genders. Sébastien’s school has different areas like administration bloc (principal, assistant-director, infirmary, secretaries, conference room), teacher and staff room, bookstore, music/arts room. The amenities include: copy room, library, computer labs, snack-bar/cafeteria, sport courtyard, computer lab, washrooms, generator, outdoor sound systems (for events). Lastly, Site # 13 is surrounded by other schools, universities, private residences, business offices, churches, gas stations, and is located on a very busy road.

**Table 5. 12 Profile of Sébastien and Site # 13**

<b>Sébastien</b>	Position	Principal
	Years in profession	15
	Years in position	3 (with a 3-year leave in between)
	Education level	Doctoral degree in education
	Type	Religious private
<b>School</b>	Level	<i>Fondamentale 3 &amp; Secondary</i>
	Location (municipality)	Port-au-Prince
	Enrolment number (range)	1100-1200
	Student gender	Mixed
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Building structure	Multiple stories, concrete

### Site # 16

Dimitri, a 50+ year-old principal, has been occupying this leadership position in Site # 16 for 3 years and a half, while he has been in the education profession for 25 years. His initial training took place at a teacher’s college where he obtained his licence to teach.

Located in the Port-au-Prince municipality, Site # 16 is a publicly funded secular *lycée*, a school that includes *fondamentale 3* and secondary levels, and it caters to students of both genders. The school has different areas like principal and secretaries

office/quarters, prefect/supervisor office. The amenities include: infirmary, washrooms, one multi-media projection room. Lastly, Dimitri's school is surrounded by other schools, universities, private residences, business offices, gas station, and is located on a busy road.

**Table 5.13 Profile of Dimitri and Site # 16**

<b>Dimitri</b>	Position	Principal
	Years in profession	25
	Years in position	3.5
	Education level	<i>École Normale</i>
	Type	Public secular
<b>School</b>	Level	<i>Fondamentale 3 &amp; secondary</i>
	Location (municipality)	Port-au-Prince
	Enrolment number (range)	2000-2500
	Student gender	Mixed
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Building structure	1-story, partly concrete, partly temporary wood construction

## Concluding summary

This chapter offered an overview of what constitutes the Haïtian education system, its history, ministry, structure, providers, funding scheme, training programs, issues, and reforms. It was important for me to present a bigger picture in order to contextualize the study and provide a better understanding of its workings. The second section of this chapter introduced the thirty educational leaders who participated in the study, either through the interviews alone, or through both interviews and observations. And the last part of this chapter expanded on the school of each of the five principals who agreed to participate in the five-day observations, thus giving actual and factual information and knowledge of their leadership journey.



Having set out the stage and provided with context, the next chapter, Chapter 6, will present the findings and results from the interviews, observations, and documents gathered. It will, thus, give voice to these Haitian ELs, acknowledging their work, their viewpoints, their successes, as well as their struggles and challenges.

## CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS

### Introduction

At the heart of this research project are Haïtian educational leaders (ELs), their understandings of student learning and achievement (SL/A), their perceptions of their role as leaders as they enact these interpretations through leadership practices and strategies. In sum, it concerns their leadership journey in their individual school within specific local and national dynamics. This chapter, thus, sets out to describe exactly what these leaders thought, said, described, and did. In other words, it presents the findings from 33 semi-structured interviews with 30 participants in 28 different schools, from five observation sites, and from various policy documents that the ELs provided and/or referred to. These results are regrouped into themes based on both the study's research questions and on the topics that emerged from the participants. They include student learning and achievement, roles and responsibilities, leadership strategies and practices, leadership challenges and obstacles, networks and associations, and policy. I end this chapter with ELs' philosophy, vision, and values that impact their work and their perception of educational leadership itself. Additionally, within the themes, other subthemes are explored and described.

At the onset, it is important to point out that I categorize these themes for the purpose of this dissertation and for clarity. But throughout the interviews and the school leaders' discourses, throughout the observations, these themes intertwined and

overlapped. This means, for example, that something ELs considered a strategy can also be a challenge or an obstacle at some level, or that their roles as ELs meshed with their understanding of educational leadership. Furthermore, what I saw during the observations mirrored what these school leaders said during the interviews. In other words, their discourses were not in contradiction with their actions.

## I. Student learning and achievement

### *“How do ELs understand SL/A?”*

Through this theme, I showcased how ELs understood and conceptualized SL/A. In essence, what was their stand on SL/A? It was, in fact, perceived differently by the various ELs who participated in the study. Their conceptions of these two notions, student learning (SL) and student achievement (SA), ranged from being quantitative (all about the numbers) to being holistic (all encompassing), as well as anything and every nuance in between.

Student learning was perceived as dynamic. ELs talked about it as a student’s quest for perfection and achievement, as well as her/his capability and responsiveness to learning. François-P<sup>5</sup> referred to that as students’ “engouement” (personal communication, November 30, 2015), meaning their drive, passion, and enthusiasm for

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<sup>5</sup> To provide a sense of who said or did what, of where s/he is situated, three different letters were attached to each participant’s name based on their school type: P = private secular, R = religious (private and public), S = state-funded/public.

learning which, according to other principals, should be based on their lives and needs on many levels. As such, ELs asked of their students, as part of their learning, to openly question, discuss about, and reflect on everything by themselves. One principal, Alexandre-P, went further and said to his students: “*si vous ne doutez pas de ce que nous vous disons, vous n’êtes pas des élèves*” [if you do not doubt what we are telling you, you are not students (own translation)] (personal communication, February 22, 2016). By that, principals aimed to mobilize them, raise their awareness, and transform them into the instruments of their own learning and achievement processes. In other words, SL/A was essentially made by the students themselves, with them at the centre of their learning. ELs’ objectives were for students to participate in the creation and production of knowledge, to broaden their horizons in order to integrate what they learned in their lives, and to become competent/able and free in their own decisions and reflections. “*C’est vraiment la formation intégrale... permettre à l’enfant de découvrir elle-même*” [It is really a comprehensive education... allow the child to discover herself (own translation)], stated Claire-Emmanuelle-R (personal communication, January 26, 2016), a complete education encompassing the physical, moral, spiritual, social, and intellectual. However, ELs did admit that it was not always easy, nor did they always achieve such holistic education with their students.

From that logic, principals challenged the notion that there are children who cannot learn: to them, every child can learn. The key was to find their strength(s) and to work on it. The process of learning and achieving, according to these ELs, was primarily concerned with developing students’ confidence and self-esteem, a lack of which can

lead to poor achievement. Thus, ELs argued for structures that not only boosted their confidence and self-esteem, but also enabled these students to bloom and thrive, and to realize that they were competent and able. Some principals insisted that using the students' own language and going to their level represented efficient means of achieving that: of getting the message across and moving them forward. Nevertheless, ELs also alluded to some issues that can prevent students from learning such as psychological and mental problems, disruptions, and distractions. But, regardless, principals such as Christie-P and Maelynn-P believed that every child had the right to an education.

Although some principals acknowledged that student achievement can be viewed as a matter of grades in exams in their school and state-wise, they also mentioned that there had to be a steady progress (increase in grades) over time. Others ELs added a caveat to this, stating that learning taking place in school should not be just for the exams, that SL/A was not just a matter of grades, of what/how much students knew. What mattered more to these ELs was going to the essentials, to the basics: the various and multifaceted skills and tools that their students had developed throughout the years and possessed at the end of their schooling, which enabled them to be functional in, and integrate, the world, outside of school. Because, according to them, SL/A ought to be a learning for life, for the students' future and success in life. Some believed that SL/A, in essence, was about students' perceptions, evolution, and positioning. It was Jonathan-R who pressed that SL/A was about how they have grown in their understanding of, and reflections about, reality and in the manner in which they described this reality, and how they positioned themselves within that reality.

Furthermore, for certain ELs, mostly in private and religious schools, obtaining 100% of success in exams, state or local, was a given. Claire-Emmanuelle-R maintained that it became the norm that did not surprise anymore: their students will pass the exams. Therefore, this was not a priority to them anymore, which allowed them to focus on other aspects of their students' development and evolution. In fact, these ELs were aiming at students' autonomy, self-efficacy towards themselves, society, and the world. Principals like Jonathan-R and Laurence-P delved deeper by interrogating the meaning of that 100% of success. They questioned the whole evaluation process, considering the fact that some students who did not pass in their schools actually succeeded at the state level. They also wondered if all students who passed these state exams had what it took to succeed in life. In any event, several school leaders were challenging a whole system that was constantly demanding 100% of success rate in state exams.

Another component of SL/A was the schools themselves. School leaders recognized that certain school settings did not always work for every student and their type of intelligence. They conceded that the rhythm, the workload, and the intensity of one school may be too much for a particular student. Consequently, they made sure that everything was done in terms of support, resources, assistance, and meetings with parents. And when/if all that was inconclusive, they had to come to terms with the notion that their school was most likely not the right match for that student; thus, recommending to parents a change of environment to help that student thrive.

Lastly, attitudes, values, decency, deportment, manners, life skills, and social skills represented other facets of SL/A that ELs aimed to develop in their students within

the school or outside of its walls. To them, it mattered that students used them in their family, in their community, in their lives, and for their country. From principals' viewpoint, students had really learned and achieved something when, beyond the school, they kept their principles. They became stable, well-developed, well-balanced, and well-adjusted individuals that understood that "*dans la vie, c'est toi qui choisis ton rôle... c'est à toi-même de dire où est-ce que tu vas te mettre*" [in life, it is up to you to choose your role... it is up to you to decide where you are going to position yourself (own translation)], as Marion-R declared (personal communication, January 27, 2016), and aiming at becoming "*acteurs de changement dans leur communauté*" [change actors in their community (own translation)] (Alexandre-P, personal communication, February 22, 2016). In other words, ELs worked at developing their students' capability of being agents of change in their community, knowing their role and where they wanted to go.

As Anaïs-P summed it, this notion of student learning and achievement was really an all-encompassing package that included everything. But most importantly, ELs believed that SL/A should be a pleasure for students and should make them happy.

## II. Roles and responsibilities

*"How do ELs perceive their roles and responsibilities within that field?"*

Participants believed that everyone involved in the school had her/his "partition" (François-P) to play. Responsibilities towards SL/A were shared, according to most

principals, between the school (principal and staff), teachers, parents (and community), and even the students. This section focuses on two main categories. On the one hand, it looks into ELs' own perceived and actual roles and responsibilities towards SL/A as leaders in the field and in their school. On the other hand, it acknowledges the roles and responsibilities (R&R) of the school's staff and teachers. As stated previously, ELs often blended their roles and responsibilities, and their staff's and teachers' with their perceptions of leadership and/or strategies in their schools.

### Roles and responsibilities of ELs

ELs' roles and responsibilities were multileveled and multi-faceted, revolving around moral, social, psychological, pedagogical, administrative, and sometimes financial aspects of the school. As they stated and as I observed, it was not surprising that most of them had to multitask in order to run the school, get things done, and move forward. Principals claimed that among their roles and responsibilities, creating a safe and trusting environment, setting principles and guidelines, maintaining cohesion/harmony within the school, reflecting on, questioning, and re-evaluating practices to generate positive changes, planning, and finding solutions were as equally important, giving that ultimately they were in charge of the whole school. They accomplished that by attending to various daily tasks and dealing (as noticed, on the spot) with arising issues both internally and externally, preventing them as much as possible.

Stemming from that, some participants viewed themselves, as Isabelle-P termed it, as an intermediary between all school members, as well as the interface between their



school and the outside world. The latter component implied that, on a regular basis, their work put them in contact with parents, the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle* (MENFP, Ministry of Education) and/or government officials, various contractors, other school leaders, private or public institutions and organizations, and professionals, to name a few.

Another aspect of the participants' roles and responsibilities referred to instruction, pedagogy, and teaching. ELs mentioned how their position pushed them to think and innovate. To achieve that, they researched, proposed and piloted new projects/approaches, and looked at alternatives that aimed at improving or solving issues regarding both teaching and learning. Some also encouraged their teachers to do so as well. On the one hand, regarding students, ELs acknowledged, as was observed, that, essentially, their roles and responsibilities entailed guiding and accompanying, supervising, monitoring and disciplining, mentoring, encouraging, and motivating them. They revealed how they insisted, and demanded even, that their students gave their best and kept improving. Joseph-S summed it up: "*Ede timoun nan. Ede l' devlope kapasite ke li genyen*" [Help the child. Help her/him develop the capacities that s/he has (own translation)] (personal communication, January 21, 2016). In other words, ELs' roles and responsibilities were to help students develop their potentials. On the other hand, concerning teachers, school leaders discussed how they had to motivate and mobilize, assist and support, guide and suggest, supervise and evaluate them, their work, actions, and even discourses. They did all that to help teachers progress and go the extra mile. Yet, for both students and teachers to actually be able to work, ELs insured that

everything was in place and in order, in terms of materials, resources, infrastructure, programs and supports.

Therefore, to school leaders, particularly in religious and private schools, careful recruitment represented one of their decisive roles and responsibilities for two main reasons. First, teachers, administrative and support staff and personnel were people they had to work with, and who, with ELs, established the tone for the schools. As such, hiring was conducted through a meticulous process and was based on assessing each individual from different angles: values, pedagogies, ideas, organization and communication skills, among other things. ELs, mostly those in religious and private schools, also talked about a difficult side of their work: terminating contracts (firing) if/when they deviated from the school's values, standards, and protocols. And secondly, teachers, administrative and support staff were critical to ELs as the latter gave considerable thought about their succession. To school leaders, it was about preparing and encouraging those who will replace them to develop their skills, knowledge, and abilities. It was about ensuring that they had what was required to take over the position. However, as Mélodie-Anne-P and Michael-P stated, there was still this lingering worry that their successors will not follow in their footsteps and/or continue in the same direction.

### Roles and responsibilities of staff and teachers

ELs talked about staff and teachers as being a motor driving the school, and without which there would be no school. They asserted that these members were usually

aware of their specific tasks and responsibilities based on pre-determined contracts and/or explicit instructions. Furthermore, when discussing their staff and teachers' roles and responsibilities towards SL/A, principals viewed them as leaders as well, as mentors and role models to students. Working individually, in a committee, or in a department, these people were there to reassure students, encourage, coach, discipline, monitor, and assist them when needed. Therefore, it was important to ELs that staff and teachers were professional and responsible, with a strong value system. As Janine-P asserted, their roles and responsibilities consisted of being educators.

### III. Educational leaders' characteristics and traits

While participants in this study stated characteristics and attitudes considered important, they also demonstrated them as observed in them during the observation sessions. These characteristics have helped them fulfill their role as educational leaders, and live up to their responsibilities. On the one hand, these traits included being calm and patient, social and friendly. On the other hand, ELs talked about having observation skills and being disciplined, which allowed them to be efficient in what they did. They also hinted to this capacity to adapt and adjust to circumstances. Olivia-P referred to them as being chameleons. All these attitudes thus implied school leaders being firm and soft at the same time. Dimitri-S clearly explained this as having an iron fist in a velvet glove.

ELs further indicated that being a confident communicator was vital. That meant being understanding of, being open and attentive to, and being available for others, especially students. These traits were enacted through their open-door policy where everyone was welcome and anyone had access to them. Claire-Emmanuelle-R and François-P were always nearby; their students came and talked to them at any moment without any fear or apprehension. They always made time to exchange a few words.

Last but not least, they mentioned moral values that ELs should embrace such as humility, empathy, tolerance, and compassion. Olivia-P and Michael-P, for example, would ensure that some students had a free lunch when needed; or Joseph-S would buy, out-of-pocket, books for students who did not have them or could not afford them. In essence, it was about school leaders being and remaining human in spite of everything that occurred in their settings and beyond.

#### IV. Leadership strategies and practices

*What strategies/practices, including forms of capital (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic), do ELs use to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices?*

This section expanded on the diverse leadership strategies and practices that ELs put in place to foster SL/A in their respective schools. These strategies and practices revolved around the following themes: culture, administration, human resources, relations

and humanity, students and pedagogy, teachers and teaching, parents and communities, materials/resources, technology and infrastructure, and finances and economy.

Essentially, ELs had to simultaneously work on multiple fronts. Therefore, multi-thinking and multi-tasking were evident in their individual settings. It is important to keep in mind, as I mentioned previously, that some of these strategies and practices were perceived by ELs as both a strength and a challenge, depending on the circumstances.

## Culture

Cultural practices referred to those that were context specific, meaning that they related to Haïti and the schools functioning in the country. ELs talked about cultural practices concerning family, language, patriotism, and faith. For nearly all private school ELs (11 out of 12), their close collaborators and administrative staff were family members such as mother, children, siblings, spouse/partner, cousin, or very close friends. Although such a situation could become challenging, to ELs, that was a strength and a support because, as Mélodie-Anne-P said, when things got tough, they were the first persons to assist them and stand by their side.

With regard to languages, mainly the two official ones, Creole and French, Jonathan-R pointed out that Haïtians had this ability and facility to easily switch from one language to another. This was detected throughout the interviews with all the participants as well as in the schools' observations. ELs, staff, and teachers spoke Creole and French among themselves. Towards students, they used both languages. Among students, both languages were employed. However, it must be noted that, depending on the schools'

type, one language, French or Creole, was more favoured over the other. For example, in private schools, students equally spoke in both languages. The same thing happened in religious schools, but with a leaning towards French. Whereas in public schools, students talked mostly in Creole.

Two of the practices that ELs insisted on having in their schools related to patriotism and faith. In their schools, students had to sing the national anthem while hoisting the national flag, every day, before starting the day. Similarly, prayers were said every morning, regardless of the students' religions. For those whose faith differed from that of the school, ELs asked that they had a moment of meditation or silence. Alexandre-P claimed that these values will allow youth to positively integrate themselves in their community, and by extension, in society.

### Administration

Strategies in this section pertained to all those ELs put in place from an administrative standpoint. They included wide range of actions, from conceptual to managerial and organizational. In most of the private and religious schools (17 out of 20), ELs functioned with a directive council, a governing board, or a consortium of leaders. In each setting the composition of such group differed. Besides, for religious schools, the congregation board constituted another level of governance (and accountability) to their structures.

School leaders discussed how discipline was highly valued and promoted in their settings. On one side, discipline for students was related to attitude, manners,

department, uniform, school work, and internal rules. In order to enforce that discipline, ELs talked about constantly keeping watch over students at any moment throughout the day. And any breaking of rules led to either detention, dismissal, and/or expulsion. On the other side, ELs debated on how discipline was also valid for, and applicable to, their teachers and staff in terms of regularity, punctuality, and professionalism.

On a daily basis, I observed that ELs attended to numerous administrative tasks, paperwork, and planning, often arriving early, staying after school, and/or coming on weekends to complete their work. They systematically handled any arising issues or referred them to the appropriate personnel/department. Furthermore, meetings represented an important component of ELs' routines. Discussions were frequent and ongoing, formal and/or informal, between ELs and their staff at various levels, with interactions initiated by both parties. These meetings revolved around issues, dossiers and projects, students, and teachers. Certain principals even requested weekly reports and sent out weekly bulletins.

On that same vein, certain ELs planned recurrent reunions/gatherings with parents or guardians (from once a year to once a month), whereas others preferred meeting with them individually, when necessary. They maintained contact with parents through student memos, agenda, and reports to sign and/or pick up. Additionally, some school leaders explained that seminars and training sessions were often organized for parents on a variety of useful topics.

Principals asserted that one of their strategies consisted of unceasingly reflecting on, and questioning, what was happening in their schools, in the classrooms, with teachers and students. Involving staff and teachers at different levels of the process, ELs examined what needed to change and/or improve. In sum, they were in charge of revising the school's educational project.

Lastly, another aspect of these administrative strategies related to the ELs themselves. Most ELs mentioned constantly following training sessions, seminars, and conferences, online or onsite. Anaïs-P expounded on this: "*Je participe souvent à ce genre d'activités-là pour me mettre à niveau, pour que je puisse avoir une meilleure contribution dans le cadre pédagogique de l'école*" [I often take part in these activities to improve myself so that I can make a better contribution to the school's pedagogical structure (own translation)] (personal communication, January 12, 2016). In other words, ELs taking part in continuing training sessions did so in order to better contribute to their school's development. Because, as Jonathan-R stated, running a school is another, different reality, compared to anything they had learned previously. And by learning more and staying informed, they acquired and developed the necessary tools to do their work.

### Human resources

ELs stated that they cannot do this work alone. As such, they collaborated with and relied on their teams. In essence, a wide range of people assisted ELs at various levels of the school. And each of these human resources had specific roles and



responsibilities. Not all schools had everything or everyone, but collectively they had: other ELs, vice-principal, administrator, assistants, administrative staff, secretaries, pedagogical counselors/directors, accountant, psychologist, department heads, maintenance and security personnel, discipline prefects, general supervisors, monitors, supply teachers, teachers, librarians, nurse. All these people were, in some cases, regrouped in different departments or units such as pedagogy, discipline, psychology, student affairs, cultural activities, to name a few.

From that same logic, school leaders indicated reaching out to people outside of the school, namely professionals from diverse sectors or fields. They asked them to give talks, conferences, and sessions at the school, for students, teachers, staff and parents, on diverse topics deemed important and useful. Similarly, some principals acknowledged consulting with specialized institutions and/or professionals, and also referring parents to them when necessary.

### Humanity and relationships

*“C’est un métier de l’humain”* [It is a profession on/about mankind and of humanity (own translation)], asserted Sébastien-R (personal communication, February 3, 2016). This means that principalship was based on human interactions. As seen in the observations and alluded to during the interviews, ELs maintained cordial, respectful, and professional working relationships with staff, support staff, teachers, and parents, even if they disagreed on certain issues. And in their constant interactions with students, ELs said they had to be firm and just as they learned to read between the lines and attitudes.

Some also believed in being approachable and close to students to a point where the latter trusted them enough to confide in them. They were able to achieve this by creating a safe environment. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that although all ELs were addressed to with respect and courtesy, there was an added deference towards religious principals due to their status of Catholic nuns, fathers, and/or priests, that was not always present for other ELs.

Furthermore, ELs spoke about opening their schools and students to other schools and students for school-related and community-based activities and/or sport events. In essence, these formed communication and links between the schools, the students, and their surroundings. For examples, Thierry-R and Jonathan-R talked about their students participating in literacy programs for their neighbors; Joseph-S, about allowing youth from his neighborhood to use his facility for study groups; and Claire-Emmanuelle-R, about her students hosting sports events.

### Students and pedagogy

Strategies and activities ELs employed pertaining students combined academic, extracurricular, socio-cultural, religious, and even financial ones. All these diverse programs, according to ELs, not only helped students academically by boosting their confidence, but also provided them with a sense of belonging and an attachment to the school, especially with the extracurricular and social activities as observed in some settings.

Academic strategies school leaders reported varied widely. They included: annual reflection theme, automatic promotion from grade 1 to grade 2, emphasis on French as second language, focus on reading, focus on citizenship education, focus on information and communication technologies (ICT) as tool and subject, focus on evaluations and preparation time, increased instruction time, personalized rigorous support, individual/small group tutoring sessions, schoolwide display of grades, students grouped by academic strength during exams, honour roll, weekend classes, music and physical education included in curricula, educative field trips, subject teachers, foreign books and methods for certain subjects, prevention instead of sanction, classroom ratio, and entrepreneurship classes. In sum, these strategies touched on a number of aspects, from conceptual to pedagogical to organizational.

On the one hand, school leaders referred to extracurricular programs that aimed at boosting students' self-esteem. They encompassed, among other things: sports (soccer, basketball, volley ball, martial arts, tennis, ping-pong), ecology and environment groups and projects, theatre and dance troupes, music department (with at least 10 different instruments and/or orchestra), art and couture classes, videography, journalism, news journal and radio station, foreign languages classes (in addition to the mandatory English and Spanish), reading clubs, vocational training courses, and chess/checkers club.

On the other hand, ELs identified others actions that concentrated on the social and personal development and well-being, religious growth, creativity, and leadership of students. They mentioned activities such as personal development training, reading day/fair, student community day, catholic sacraments, carnival expositions and fairs,

science fairs, cultural groups, cultural and art day/fairs, family fairs, inter-cultural and inter-school exchanges, school dances, sports championships, recreational field trips, literacy projects, students tutoring students, CPR classes, and contests. But, regardless of the type of strategies, some ELs emphasized the need for students' personal planning, tracking of progress, and individual work.

In terms of learning strategies, ELs spoke about promoting (at least, trying) a student-centered-adapted approach where students got involved in their own learning process, where they thought, talked, and questioned anything and everything, where they applied concretely what they learned, and where knowledge was not solely in books. Yet, some admitted that it was hard and took time to achieve and get their teachers to move past their traditional methods of teaching.

School leaders further referred to other student-related strategies that were put in place in their schools. They elaborated regularly revised rules, regulations, and codes of conduct for students that they had to sign, alongside their parents –a contract between both parties. However, as Anaïs-P acknowledged, a shift was needed: to go from a 'what-not-to-do' to a 'what-to-do' framework. Some formed classroom committees as a means of developing their students' leadership and sense of civic duty, and of sharing the leadership. These committees had various responsibilities and authority that were discussed with the administration. In fact, they represented a link between the latter and the classrooms. Dimitri-S, for example, took this a step further. In order to promote transparency and boost students' confidence in the system, he created a verification system for exam results, conducted by the student committees and supervised by his

administrative staff and himself; and at the end of which process, the committees reported back to their classmates.

Moreover, certain ELs revealed setting their benchmarks for promotion to the next grade higher than the ministry's requirements, whereas others put it at the same level after years of being higher. But they also developed reward and award systems (scholarships, field trips, certificates, honor board, gifts, public recognition) aimed at acknowledging efforts and encouraging students to work harder. Based on that same idea of helping students, some school leaders discussed the importance of providing free school meals. These ELs agreed that the latter represented one of the ways of not only fulfilling students' physical needs, but also of keeping them more focused in school.

### Teachers and teaching

ELs asserted that teachers' quality and competencies were essential to SL/A. Therefore, recruiting worthy teachers up for the task was one aspect (as stated previously), while providing guidelines, code of conduct, and regulations was another one. From that, they ensured teachers and department heads had a basic level of initial training and attended continuing training, seminars, and conferences on a breadth of topics, although the frequency of these sessions varied from school to school, with a minimum of once per year to a maximum of twice per month. And in some cases, they were mandatory and constituted a condition to keep working at the school.

Another aspect that was important to ELs related to classroom and teaching organization. They mentioned how they insisted on things like class journals, pedagogic

journals, weekly reports, progression plans, lesson plans, monthly and yearly planning, evaluation and supervision grid for students, to name a few. In addition to that, principals talked about having constant discussions with classroom and subject teachers, and department heads. In these meetings done formally, informally, or impromptu, one-on-one or in group, they touched on a variety of topics such as rules, regulations, programs, practices, issues, concerns, challenges, students' progress and/or difficulties, among others. Lastly, they explained how they conducted regular, daily, and/or spontaneous classroom visits to keep in touch with, and stay informed of, what was happening.

Along with everything else, ELs talked about continuously researching for, proposing, and experimenting with new teaching approaches, methods, theories, and resources to assist teachers in class. They also encouraged their teachers to do so as well, to take initiatives, and to create their own programs and/or planning for the year. In that same line of thought, certain ELs went beyond the requirements and contents of the ministry's official curricula; whereas others only used the official programs. Alexandre-P stated that with all the programs and activities in place in his school, they can cover these official programs in less time (5 months, to be exact). And Isabelle-P clearly summed it: "*On voit plus, mais on ne voit pas moins*" [We cover more, but never less (own translation)] (personal communication, February 1, 2016), meaning that they saw more than was required by the ministry, never less.

## Parents and communities

In terms of strategies, ELs considered parents' participation to be important. They talked about being able to do their job and obtain better results from students when parents were involved in the child/children's lives, academically and otherwise. They argued for parents to reinforce values and principles at home, follow up, supervise and support, provide school materials, and set working environment at home. In fact, some school leaders referred to that as an engagement between the school and the parents, often written and stated, often implicit. Be that as it may, the percentage of involved parents varied from school to school. This meant that some ELs had the full collaboration of all their parents, whereas others received little. Regardless, other principals noted that parents came to the school to discuss issues regarding their child/children, either by themselves or when requested by a teacher or the administration.

Another strategy several ELs put in place related to parent committees. In the schools that did have one, they acknowledged how valuable these committees were in assisting them, the school, and the students at different levels. According to these ELs, they advised, suggested improvements, supported students and schools, assisted in projects, planned activities and events, and dealt with other parents. Olivia-P stated that she would recommend to all schools to have a parent committee.

As for the communities where they evolved, some ELs agreed that they too played a significant role in the school. These community members did assist them in their work in various ways. They kept watch over the students when they were in the

streets and reported any suspicious individuals and activities to ELs; thus, providing a different form of control and protection to the school.

### Materials, resources, technology, and infrastructures

When talking to ELs about what students and teachers had access to, resources varied greatly depending on the school. Some had more than others: more in terms of quantity, options, and variety. That included computer/ICT lab, mobile ICT units, chemistry and science lab, research centre, library, music instruments and rooms, sports equipment, multimedia lab (projector, television, audio units), language lab, art room. Furthermore, in certain schools, some amenities were put in place to accommodate staff and teachers, as well as students, such as teachers' lounge/staff room, infirmary, fans in classrooms, generator, and bookstore on premise.

ELs also mentioned how they made sure (or tried, at least) that students and teachers had the materials they needed for their daily work –basic for some, but more advanced for others– like books, notebooks, chalk, computers, tablets, interactive board, among other things. In some instance, some ELs encouraged their teachers to create their own teaching materials. Last but not least, school leaders took their students' and school's security very seriously. In all 28 schools in this study, there was a security guard and/or team at the front gate. And some schools even invested in surveillance cameras.



## Finances and economy

In most private and religious schools, ELs claimed that their primary and main source of income came from students' tuition and fees that enabled them to pay teachers', staff's, and personnel's salary, and to function daily. Whereas in public schools, ELs mentioned that, aside from the (late) allocation they received from the ministry, they relied heavily on the annual fees requested from students. However, ELs sought out and offered grants, scholarships, and sponsorships; which not only allowed them to have school materials but also to assist students with their tuition. Some ELs like Olivia-P used them also as motivating tools to encourage students to work, while others like Raphaël-P reflected on the fact that they were often given to students not on the basis of academic achievement but simply because their parents could not afford to pay. Aside from all that, some principals set up an internal system to financially assist students in small situations such as lunch and work materials.

On one hand, ELs looked for contributions, gifts, and donations to sustain the school, sometimes even requesting parents' support (material acquisition, events, labs set-up, and infrastructures). On the other hand, they also found means of financially supporting themselves. Furthermore, private and religious principals also facilitated, for teachers, the purchase of materials (tablets and laptops) through financing with a repayment plan established over time. Principals like Claire-Emmanuelle-R and Alexandre-P elaborated on how that had made their work easier and more convenient for research, paperwork, and planning. However, Mélodie-Anne-P admitted that her teachers did not accept such an offer, but rather used the ICT lab at the school when necessary.

ELs also reported other financial strategies like 13-month salary in public schools, signed employment contracts in private schools, and financial notices on school notice boards.

In sum, Table 6.1 provides an overview, by school type, of the diverse and multiple strategies and practices school leaders employed to foster SL/A in their respective settings.

**Table 6.1 Strategies & practices by school type**

	<b>Private secular (10 schools)</b>	<b>Private &amp; public religious (10 schools)</b>	<b>State-funded/public secular (8 schools)</b>
<b>Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Languages*: Creole and French</li> <li>• Prayers in the morning</li> <li>• Flag and national anthem</li> <li>• Fidelity to school</li> <li>• Family member as collaborators/ administrative staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language*: Creole and (mainly) French</li> <li>• Prayers in the morning</li> <li>• Flag and national anthem</li> <li>• Fidelity to school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language*: (mainly) Creole and French (mostly when addressed)</li> <li>• Prayers in the morning</li> <li>• Flag and national anthem</li> <li>• Fidelity to school (from the 2 oldest)</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discipline</li> <li>• Administrative tasks</li> <li>• Meeting with staff</li> <li>• Meeting with parents</li> <li>• Reflection, questioning and improvement plan</li> <li>• Continuous training for ELs</li> <li>• Directive council, governing board or consortium of ELs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discipline</li> <li>• Administrative tasks</li> <li>• Meeting with staff</li> <li>• Meeting with parents</li> <li>• Reflection, questioning and improvement plan</li> <li>• Continuous training for ELs</li> <li>• Directive council or governing board, and congregation board</li> <li>• Weekly bulletins to teachers and staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discipline</li> <li>• Administrative tasks</li> <li>• Meeting with staff</li> <li>• Meeting with parents</li> <li>• Reflection, questioning and improvement plan</li> <li>• Continuous training for ELs</li> </ul>

		<b>Private secular (10 schools)</b>	<b>Private &amp; public religious (10 schools)</b>	<b>State-funded/public secular (8 schools)</b>
	<b>Human resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching for outside professionals</li> <li>• Staff and support: other ELs, vice-principal, accountant, psychologist</li> <li>• Department of student affairs, of cultural activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching for outside professionals</li> <li>• Staff and support: vice-principal, accountant, psychologist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching for outside professionals (mentioned by 1 principal)</li> <li>• Staff and support: <i>censeur</i> (pedagogical director), supply teacher</li> </ul>
	<b>Humanity &amp; relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cordial, respectful, and professional</li> <li>• Firm and approachable</li> <li>• Opening school to others</li> <li>• Open-door policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cordial, respectful, and professional</li> <li>• Firm and approachable</li> <li>• Opening school to others</li> <li>• Open-door policy</li> <li>• Added deference towards religious ELs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cordial, respectful, and professional</li> <li>• Firm and approachable</li> <li>• Opening school to others</li> <li>• Open-door policy</li> </ul>
<b>Students &amp; pedagogy</b>	<b>Academic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on French</li> <li>• Honour roll/board</li> <li>• Foreign books and methods</li> <li>• Personalized support</li> <li>• Educative field trips</li> <li>• Music and PE classes</li> <li>• Subject teacher</li> <li>• Focus on ICT</li> <li>• Display of grades</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship classes</li> <li>• Focus on citizenship education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on French</li> <li>• Honour roll/board</li> <li>• Foreign books and methods</li> <li>• Personalized support</li> <li>• Educative field trips</li> <li>• Music and PE classes</li> <li>• Subject teacher</li> <li>• Annual reflection theme</li> <li>• Automatic promotion (mentioned by 1 ELs)</li> <li>• Focus on reading</li> <li>• Focus on evaluation</li> <li>• Group tutoring session</li> <li>• Prevention instead of sanction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on French (from 2 ELs)</li> <li>• Honour roll/board</li> <li>• Increase instruction time</li> <li>• Weekend classes</li> </ul>

		<b>Private secular (10 schools)</b>	<b>Private &amp; public religious (10 schools)</b>	<b>State-funded/public secular (8 schools)</b>
<b>Students &amp; pedagogy</b>	<b>Extra-curricular</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports</li> <li>• Music department</li> <li>• Foreign languages classes</li> <li>• Theatre/art</li> <li>• Ecology group</li> <li>• Videography</li> <li>• Journalism</li> <li>• Vocational training courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports</li> <li>• Music department</li> <li>• Foreign languages classes</li> <li>• Theatre/art</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports</li> <li>• Music department (only in 1 school)</li> <li>• Chess club</li> <li>• Reading club (only in 1 school)</li> </ul>
	<b>Social &amp; other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholic religious sacraments</li> <li>• Sport championships</li> <li>• Contests</li> <li>• Recreational field trips</li> <li>• Cultural/art fair</li> <li>• Science fair</li> <li>• Community/family day/fair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholic religious sacraments</li> <li>• Sport championships</li> <li>• Contests</li> <li>• Recreational field trips</li> <li>• Cultural/art fair</li> <li>• Reading day/fair</li> <li>• Literacy projects</li> <li>• Students tutoring students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholic religious sacraments</li> <li>• Sport championships</li> <li>• Contests</li> <li>• Recreational field trips</li> <li>• Reading day/fair</li> </ul>
	<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules, regulations, codes of conduct</li> <li>• Classroom committee</li> <li>• Free school meals (only in 1 school)</li> <li>• Grade benchmark</li> <li>• Reward/award system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules, regulations, codes of conduct</li> <li>• Classroom committee</li> <li>• Free school meals (only in 1 school)</li> <li>• Grade benchmark</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules, regulations, codes of conduct</li> <li>• Classroom committee</li> <li>• Free school meals</li> <li>• Reward/award system</li> </ul>

	<b>Private secular (10 schools)</b>	<b>Private &amp; public religious (10 schools)</b>	<b>State-funded/public secular (8 schools)</b>
<b>Teachers &amp; teaching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELs teaching or supplying</li> <li>• Regular to constant continuous training</li> <li>• Guideline, codes of conducts, regulations</li> <li>• Frequent discussions and meetings</li> <li>• Lesson plans, monthly/yearly plans, class journal, pedagogic journal, weekly report</li> <li>• Classroom visits</li> <li>• Teach beyond official curricula</li> <li>• Teachers take initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELs teaching or supplying</li> <li>• Regular continuous training</li> <li>• Guideline, codes of conducts, regulations</li> <li>• Frequent discussions and meetings</li> <li>• Lesson plans, monthly/yearly plans, class journal, pedagogic journal, evaluation grid</li> <li>• Classroom visits</li> <li>• Teach beyond official curricula</li> <li>• Teachers take initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELs teaching or supplying</li> <li>• Sporadic continuous training</li> <li>• Guideline, codes of conducts, regulations</li> <li>• Frequent discussions and meetings</li> <li>• Lesson plans, class journal, yearly plans</li> <li>• Classroom visits</li> <li>• Teach only official curricula</li> </ul>
<b>Parents &amp; community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent committee</li> <li>• From full to little collaboration</li> <li>• Contact with community (only in 2 schools)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent committee</li> <li>• From full to little collaboration</li> <li>• Contact with community (only in 2 schools)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent committee</li> <li>• From full to little collaboration</li> <li>• Contact with community</li> </ul>
<b>Materials, resources, technology &amp; infrastructures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security guard/team</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Computer/ICT lab</li> <li>• Music instruments and room</li> <li>• Sports equipment</li> <li>• Chemistry/science lab</li> <li>• Multimedia lab</li> <li>• Art room</li> <li>• Staff room</li> <li>• Generator</li> <li>• Bookstore</li> <li>• Research centre</li> <li>• Language lab</li> <li>• Fans in classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security guard/team</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Computer/ICT lab</li> <li>• Music instruments and room</li> <li>• Sports equipment</li> <li>• Chemistry/science lab</li> <li>• Multimedia lab</li> <li>• Art room</li> <li>• Staff room</li> <li>• Generator</li> <li>• Bookstore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security guard/team</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Computer lab (few)</li> <li>• Music instruments (only in 1 school)</li> <li>• Sports equipment</li> </ul>

	<b>Private secular (10 schools)</b>	<b>Private &amp; public religious (10 schools)</b>	<b>State-funded/public secular (8 schools)</b>
<b>Finances &amp; economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income: student’s annual fees and tuition</li> <li>• Finance teachers’ computer/tablet</li> <li>• Support materials and for lunch</li> <li>• Grants, scholarships, and sponsorships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income: student’s annual fees and tuition</li> <li>• Finance teachers’ computer/tablet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income: student’s annual fees and ministry’s allocation</li> <li>• Support for materials</li> <li>• 13-month salary</li> </ul>

\* Specifically noticed during observations

## V. Leadership challenges and obstacles

*“What constraints and challenges do ELs face in translating their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices?”*

The challenges and obstacles ELs faced on a regular basis varied in nature, in scope, and in perspective. And it is important to note that what were considered as such in schools in a small, fragile, and developing country like Haïti may be different, irrelevant, and/or non-existent in more developed settings. Similar to the strategies and practices, these obstacles and challenges revolved around notions like culture, administration, human resources, students and pedagogy, teachers and teaching, materials/resources, technology and infrastructure, finances and economy. However, were added those linked with the Ministry of Education (MNEFP) and the country. The problems were extensive but as Dimitri-S stated, *“tout est prioritaire”* [everything is

priority (own translation)] (personal communication, February 16, 2016), meaning every issue was important and must be addressed.

## Culture

Some ELs expressed concerns over the fact that students did not have access to open intellectual, cultural, recreational, and artistic spaces where they could express themselves and learn. In the meantime, some pointed out that students were frustrated when they attended schools they did not perceive as good and worthy. And that was due to a culture that categorized schools based on many factors like international programs, social standing, achievement, to name a few.

In that same idea of perception, some principals, particularly in the private sector, disclosed having to often deal with various external (mis)conceptions from parents, ministry/government, and society regarding the nature of their school. Some misconceptions were that their school was a business; that they, ELs, were making a lot of money; that affordable tuition did not equate to quality school; that schools with high tuition were ripping off parents; or that schools were only as good as the parents' socio-economic status (SES). In addition to that, internally, ELs also had to face parents' local and cultural folk beliefs, superstitions, ideologies, mentalities, and subsequent practices, which oftentimes hindered their work with the students and affected the students themselves. They talked about parents' views regarding psychologists (their kid is not crazy), folk-dances in school (school is having voodoo ceremony), or child's sudden illness (mystical influences). Moreover, in terms of cultural practices, certain ELs

discussed that now physical punishments are prohibited and considered illegal by the ministry. They stressed how hard it was to get that point across with certain people, and how they had to repeatedly remind parents and particularly teachers for which there could be consequences if they resorted to physical punishments in their schools.

Another challenge that came out of the interviews with certain principals related to the mixed feelings they had towards religious schools. On the one hand, some decried their approaches, methods, and views such as sending students back home or withholding their report cards for tuition unpaid, *inter alia*; whereas, other ELs viewed these religious schools as models to follow. Moreover, parents held religious schools in high regard to a point where these religious ELs had a hard time convincing them that their school was not always the right match for their children; that it was not a matter of staying in the school, but rather ensuring the students' development, well-being, and progress. Marion-R recalled how some parents thought her school can 'save' their children. Nonetheless, a few ELs reflected on the fact that nowadays many parents of middle and upper class were not putting their children in Haitian schools. They preferred alternative or foreign schools that functioned on their own terms and logic, thinking that this education was good/better since it was alternative and/or foreign.

### Administration

An obstacle principals noticed was that, while they were open to such possibility, other school leaders did not like to share their practices, methods, and/or experiences with others. Participants felt like it bothered people that they would want to share with



them. ELs referred to a certain competition and rivalry between schools. This, therefore, made collaboration with other ELs very difficult. Furthermore, they noted that, in some associations of ELs, the main interest of others for being in the group was closely linked to monetary compensation.

Some ELs pointed to the fact that their initial training was not in school leadership or administration: therefore, they learned on the job, through experiences, often taking seminars. And for those who held a degree in education, they asserted that the complexities and intricacies of the job was not covered in their training. And talking about the job, some principals mentioned working in other schools and universities as teachers or department heads. Nearly half of the religious ELs interviewed revealed assuming other obligations and/or leadership positions within their congregations.

Part of the administrative challenges ELs faced were related to students and teachers. One of them referred to students' expulsion from the school. They mentioned reaching such conclusions usually based on various factors and circumstances, or occasionally due to institutional pressures. Principals also expressed concerns regarding classrooms that were not reaching the learning requirements nor meeting the official standards. Their (re)actions to such situation were multi-leveled: with focus on students, teachers, and parents. Additionally, public school ELs worried about how classroom ratio and school building capacity were having an impact on both teachers and students. Some of these principals also talked about the poor working conditions, and the lack of materials and assistance to state-funded schools. With regard to teachers, school leaders argued over the fact that they were constantly monitoring teachers' and staff's actions,

and reminding them of their duties verbally or in writing. And if it was not properly done, they would have to redo it themselves, which increased their workload. Lastly, a few female ELs complained and deplored that some of their male teachers did not take kindly to being led by a woman, nor did they like receiving instructions from one.

### Human resources

ELs complained about a shortage of qualified staff and teachers, and about their ethics and the quality of their work. They also reflected on how some of their staff and teachers were afraid to take risks and initiatives. Furthermore, ELs deplored a lack of intellectual curiosity, enthusiasm, and drive from those they employed, worrying about keeping them motivated and inspired. All these issues not only affected their students but also impeded their own work since they were every so often forced to make extreme decisions like terminate contracts.

Some school leaders expressed concerns over their senior administrators and staff having a hard time working together, especially when there was a generational gap between them. Michael-P reported that each side felt either cast aside, or imposed on without any discussions. Such situations had led to frustrations, tensions, and frictions among the group. In that same line of thought, ELs worried about their succession, asking themselves if their successors had what it took in terms of values and vision, capacities and skills.

## Students and pedagogy

A challenge for ELs was putting everything in place to assist students with difficulties. Consequently, they went against an education system that did not make these pupils a priority but instead favoured straight-A students. Principals also reflected on students being afraid of being labelled (dumb or stupid) based on their grades. Claire-Emmanuelle-R, for example, remembered having to literally beg parents to stop comparing their child(ren) to others, especially to siblings (who worked better), as the former reacted poorly to such judgement.

Some of the obstacles ELs faced in relation to students were academic and disciplinary. On the one hand, they commented on students having problems functioning with/in French: communicating, writing, reading, speaking. This situation worried ELs because they were observing and experiencing a push of one language over the other without effective harmonization or some conclusive evidence of the effectiveness of an all-Creole instruction. Anaïs-P asserted that for a bilingual country, the reality was that generally the education and language of instruction were done in French. That occurred regardless of the fact that in some schools (as seen in the observations), students mainly (if not solely) spoke Creole. On the other hand, school leaders had to deal with students breaking clearly stated rules and displaying attitudes, deportment, actions, and gestures that were deemed inappropriate for schools. Oftentimes, such actions resulted in disciplinary sanctions such as warnings, detentions, or even expulsion. Moreover, what Claire-Emmanuelle-R found worrisome and inexcusable was when parents witnessed such transgressions and did/said nothing, leaving it up her to discipline the students.

School leaders raised concerns about students being pulled in many different and opposite directions, which left them less and less interested in school; thus, not fully grasping the notion of education as a quest and a conquest. They noticed that through their lack of reasoning, critical thinking, and attention towards school-related things (homework, lessons, writing). Furthermore, ELs debated how students were so used to routine and memorization that they no longer learned to understand and acquire knowledge. In that same line of thought, principals remarked on some senior students' inability to determine their future career path after high school. François-P reported how they would apply to two or three different faculties and choose "*sa m' bon landan*" [the one I get accepted in (own translation)] (personal communication, November 30, 2015), either one without any real passion or desire. Similarly, Raphaël-P encountered more critical situations when students did not think education/studies worth pursuing when they witnessed the contrary from several public figures in the country.

Lastly, ELs discussed how economic adversity led to hunger, lack of nutritious meals, and even absence of meals altogether, and impacted students' learning and development. Students lost focus and/or fell sick which, in turn, affected teachers who could work for hours without any success and results. Olivia-P summed that by stating "*ventre affamé n'a pas d'oreilles*" [empty stomach is deaf to words (own translation)] (personal communication, January 21, 2016) as she recounted how, one morning, a student of hers fainted on the school yard because she had not eaten anything in three days.

## Teachers and teaching

When it came to teachers, ELs mentioned that recruiting competent and skilled teachers was hard and oftentimes problematic. They referred to three main issues. First, there is a brain drain affecting the country at many levels and on different fields. This implied that many qualified and experienced teachers left the country and/or the profession, especially after the 2010 devastating earthquake, as Michael-P and François-P noted. Secondly, according to many principals, teachers were entering the profession without any experience, real passion, conviction, motivation, or drive for education/teaching. Some considered it as a social springboard, while others viewed it as their last resort, having no other opportunities/options. And lastly, ELs argued that many teachers were not educators and were not qualified. They were usually faced with two major scenarios: either teachers knew the subjects but could not teach them and did not have the proper preparation; or they simply lacked basic reasoning, critical thinking, teaching and communication skills, regardless of their training and/or qualifications, if they had any. Jean-Phillipe-R pointed out that this was critical, especially with the New Secondary reform being implemented, as the new curricula required competent and knowledgeable teachers. Moreover, these situations made principals like Jade-S and Isabelle-P question the quality of teacher education schools and training programs. They deplored the fact that these schools were not being optimal, given that training was inadequate, and teachers were often inefficient when they reached the classrooms. Janine-P found a way to solve that issue: she opened her own teacher education school that catered not only to her own school but to others as well. Additionally, public school

principals argued for more emphasis being placed on their teachers' continuing training sessions that should be more diversified, more frequent, and include more teachers, particularly those who had been working for 5 years or more and those concerned with the new reform. Their comments were also valid for themselves and their pedagogical staff.

School leaders brought up other challenges related to teachers. Not only did they worry about lack of moral values which forced them to constantly be on the look-out, but they underlined some teachers' lack of professionalism. The latter was observed through their tardiness, absences, inaccurate reports, and distraction in class, to name a few. That represented a hindrance and a potential danger to students' learning, development, and achievement. ELs also disclosed that teaching methods, approaches, and practices were not always satisfactory to students and to themselves. Oftentimes some had to step in and teach the class; or hire supply teachers to work separately with students. Additionally, principals expressed concern over teachers' daily routines. According to them, teachers were so accustomed to doing things a certain way that they were reluctant to make any changes, nor were they happy with them. Further some teachers disliked reflecting on themselves and their practices. ELs divulged how some teachers went as far as agreeing to do something but did not implement it in their classrooms. They also touched on certain teachers' reticence towards professional development such as training and seminars. For example, Mélodie-Anne-P remembered a teacher telling her that s/he was doing the training for her profit (the principal), not realizing as that it was beneficial to all. François-P referred to them as a "*force anti-changement*" [force that is against

change (own translation)] (personal communication, November 30, 2015) that did not budge.

ELs talked about teachers working in several schools aside from their own school. That constituted a problem for them for diverse reasons. First, teachers were not 100% concentrated in one setting; thus, undermining their teaching in each school. Secondly, it was quite difficult to get them together for meetings and training as their schedules differed from one another. Certain school leaders even considered offering them full-time contracts, but realized that was not feasible due to the high cost of salary for only one teacher. Lastly, some public school principals indicated that some teachers who worked in their schools also taught in private and religious schools. That drove these ELs to ponder on what could be preventing teachers from teaching properly and behaving differently in state-funded schools. For example, Joseph-S recalled having to frequently remind them that, since they cannot (did not) arrive late in their other workplaces, they cannot do so in his school, which represented another form of unprofessionalism.

### Materials, resources, technology, and infrastructures

Most ELs talked about the challenges of using outdated and even obsolete learning materials that were not related to current realities; thus, unable to prepare students to function in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They also noted that many of the learning materials had spelling and grammatical errors, to which they did not want to expose their students. ELs further revealed that it was tough and trying for teachers and students to work with limited (to none) resources and materials because of financial constraints.

That affected and hindered teachers' practices as much as students' learning and progress. In that same vein, some expressed concerns about students who did not have access to appropriate learning materials and resources such as technology. According to Joseph-S, public schools had access to internet connection and system from the state's communication company. However, after countless requests, nothing had been achieved for his school.

ELs expanded on their school's structure and on the conditions of the building facilities. As Claire-Emmanuelle-R stated, schools' architecture and physical structure created a distance between everyone inside and the outside world. This implied that schools were in their own little island or cocoon. However, more concerns were expressed regarding the damage to the school building caused by the 2010 earthquake. That represented a major setback for many school leaders (17 sites out of 28), given the complete or partial destruction of their building during the January 2010 earthquake. Some ELs had just finished with renovation projects, with new labs. And everything was destroyed or severely damaged; which meant they had to start all over again. Certain ELs were able to rebuild, others were progressing, and some had not yet started the reconstruction process, still functioning in temporary structures.

### Finances and economy

With the cost of everything increasing in the country, providing a quality education and having quality schools came at a high cost. These economic insecurities/hardships affected them on many levels. In private and religious schools,



ELs relied on the students' tuition and annual fees (and on their congregations too) not only for their teachers', personnel's, and staff's salaries, and their schools' bills, but also for day-to-day materials and activities, given that most of them did not receive financial aids or supports from anyone; whereas in public schools, ELs depended on the ministry's yearly allocations that their schools did not receive on time, and on students' annual fees for their everyday functioning and materials. Nonetheless, ELs stated that they could not place all the burden of that on the parents by increasing the tuition fees (which public school principals were not allowed to do). In light of all this, it was not surprising to hear Anaïs-P assert that nowadays principals and their schools cannot survive for long without support and assistance, financial and otherwise.

Some private and religious ELs also conceded that, due to these monetary conditions, they sometimes had difficulties paying their employees and/or giving them a decent salary or a raise. Yet, regardless of their school type, they often purchased materials and supplies with their own money (out of pocket), or requested parents' contributions. In some cases, certain school leaders took big loans from banks and even mortgaged their private house to finance projects for their schools. And others still had serious difficulties with the reconstruction of their school building six years after the earthquake. Thierry-R put it that way: "*Pour l'instant, on n'a pas les moyens de le faire, à moins d'un miracle. On espère toujours*" [For now, we do not have the means to do it, unless there is a miracle. We are always hoping (own translation)] (personal communication, February 4, 2016). Basically, he said that due to financial constraints, they cannot continue with the reconstruction process; in essence, they were still hoping

for a miracle. Concurrently, ELs divulged that insufficient funds and/or increasing costs restrained them from offering certain extracurricular programs, or from buying materials and resources, or from doing certain (development) projects. Additionally, ELs expressed concern over the fact that not only did teachers and staff not have a high salary (compared to other sectors or fields), but also they did not have social security or social advantages, although they co-paid state-mandated insurances that most of them have no interest in. Similarly, public school principals worried over the fact that their staff and personnel did not receive their salaries on schedule. There were extensive delays. And in some cases, a few of these ELs paid some personnel out of pocket.

In that same vein, school principals noticed that parents also were having financial hardships. That prevented them from providing school materials to their child(ren) like books, supplies, uniforms, and even lunch. They also noted that sometimes parents not only were unable to pay the required fees for certain activities but mainly struggled to pay tuition and fees. Certain ELs, in these situations, admitted to withholding the students' report cards and summoning the parents; and inversely, the latter came to ELs to discuss their circumstances.

Another financial challenge that primarily private and religious school leaders faced included the many tax requirements, charges, and fees imposed on them by the government. From the public sector, there was mention of a percentage of students' annual fees that must be returned to the state. Regardless, most ELs declared they saw little to no value or benefit to these taxes, as much as they did not understand what they

were used for, especially given the state/quality of schools in the country. Thus, they argued for an exemption of certain taxes for schools.

### Parents and communities

According to ELs, the family structure has changed over the years. They came across a lot of single-parent homes, family issues, and students not living with their parents or living alone or constantly moving. These situations disturbed them and their work a great deal. Every so often and depending on their student body, principals encountered parents who were illiterate or barely knew how to read and write, and families where their students were the first generation to attend school. Consequently, there existed a number of things that parents would not think to do, or would not even know how to do. ELs therefore believed that it was up to them to offer the maximum they can in schools because, more often than not, that represented most of everything their students will learn. Furthermore, they thought that parents did not know what to ask for and demand from schools, yet easily refusing to accept changes and improvements. Either way, principals noticed that, for a lot of parents, the main focus remained on exams and results regardless of any real learning.

Some school leaders thought that parents were mistreating and neglecting their child/children for based on various accounts. According to them, they were leaving them unattended literally or figuratively, without guidance or references, exposed to any external influences. This had reached a point where principals often played the role of parent, which can be tricky because the values promoted by ELs can differ from those

parents conveyed to their children. Another issue ELs faced related to parents having less time to dedicate to their family/child(ren). Put it differently, they left everything up to the schools, were not involved enough in the students' lives, and did not follow-up on their school work/activities. For that reason, Anaïs-P proposed : “*on doit faire une école pour des enfants où les parents ont moins de temps... Maintenant, c'est s'ajuster, s'adapter*” [we have to create a school for students whose parents have less and less time. Now, it is time to adjust and adapt (own translation)] (personal communication, January 12, 2016). In other words, ELs had to plan in advance and adjust accordingly for a generation of students whose parents had less and less time.

On the one hand, principals remarked on some parents that consciously discharged themselves of their responsibilities, and literally handed the students over to them, stating “*Ou mèt fè sa w vle avè l' wi, ou mèt fè sa w vle avè l'. M' pa gen okenn kote m' prale avè l'*” [You can do what you want with her/him, yes, you can do whatever you want. I have nowhere I am going with her/him (own translation)] (Olivia-P, personal communication, January 21, 2016). As such, ELs had to find ways to cope with these situations: students without parents/adults. On the other hand, school leaders spoke about having to handle and tackle parents' multiple reactions regarding their child(ren)'s behavior. Some were fully aware and defended theirs (at times, aggressively) regardless of the facts, whereas others were in complete denial.

ELs noticed a mutual tension between parents and schools because each party had its own interest in schooling. Sébastien-R explained that such tension existed because schools gradually closed themselves to the outside world in an attempt to avoid being

invaded. As such, that left parents on the margin when they considered themselves as insiders. Another explanation came from public school leaders who said that parents expected everything from the government, that the latter owed them everything, considering the gratuity of schooling. Given that mentality, some ELs did not always get support from parents, especially if it required financial contributions.

Lastly, some ELs admitted that they did not have enough contact, and sometimes none at all, with their surroundings. Others advanced that the community discouraged or hindered their projects. And given the physical location of their schools, a few talked about the violent and dangerous nature of people in their communities, their antisocial tendencies, and promiscuity. To them, that constituted an obstacle and a challenge because, as Sébastien-R argued, the community and society at large should have embraced its schools and made them a priority.

### Ministry of education and government

School leaders asserted that the system in itself created problems and issues for them, especially those like Malik-S, Jade-S, Vincent-S and Dimitri-S working in state-funded schools. For example, government officials pressured public school principals to accept students, or public school teachers that were not nominated by the ministry but were working in schools, or those that were nominated but not budgeted for. Some of them disclosed how public school teachers who had not taught for months still received their paycheques at the central office, regardless of their reports and/or having their cheques blocked. Consequently, some ELs, regardless of their school type, did not view

the ministry of education as a reference or a compass because they considered their decisions and certain actions to be inappropriate, unethical, and corrupt, leading more towards a degradation of the quality of education. Alain-R pondered on this human capital deficit, asserting that it was not so much an issue with laws and regulations, but more an incapacity/failure to apply and/or reinforce the existing ones.

Another challenge ELs touched upon concerned the official state exams. They argued that their level and standards were lower than those they administered in their schools. Therefore, students were not making any efforts, knowing from the beginning they will pass regardless. That state of affair pushed several principals to actually question the whole evaluation system. They found it outdated as it had fallen into a routine pattern without any improvements to its core.

On the one hand, certain public school principals stated that they received very little (to none) support, assistance and follow-up from the ministry. A lot of what they did (infrastructure, human resources, materials) was with/through their own means, even when the ministry put a cap on annual fees. Moreover, some mentioned that they had to stand up to the ministry's actions they deemed non-pedagogical or detrimental to their students.

On the other hand, private and religious school leaders, for the most part, stated that they too had little to no contact with, or supervision from, the ministry and their officials/inspectors. Some talked about being neglected and not receiving any support; while others referred to their dealings with the ministry or its projects as unproductive. A

few commented on the ministry using their school's high visibility for their own agenda, trying to politicize it. Additionally, ELs claimed that they were not always aware (if at all) of what was happening at/in the ministry (meetings, decisions, policies).

Subsequently, they did not always receive the ministry's documents; to a point where some doubted they even knew what documents existed. It reached a level where certain ELs felt they were not concerned by certain reforms or policies. As some principals expressed, this sector was left to its own devices, unsupervised, and unchecked.

However, a very small number stated having constant contact with the ministry through the regular visits from their inspectors.

On a completely different topic, a few ELs noted the neglect of early childhood education. That was detrimental to the whole system because patterns and development starting at this age were beneficial to students later on. Olivia-P, therefore, cautioned that putting more emphasis on schooling at 5-6 years-old while overlooking the 1-5 years-old group was already too late.

### Country-related

These country-related obstacles and challenges refer to political, social, and environmental issues, as well as those related to security and safety that ELs, their students, and their staff had to deal with on a regular basis. Due to the current political tensions, climate of insecurity, and extreme violence, ELs reported they had to stop most of the field trips (educational or recreational), close their doors and call off events, and even cancel training sessions with teachers. Moreover, these situations affected and

impacted both students and teachers/staff, making them tense and nervous, especially if they had to deal with acts of violence. Claire-Emmanuelle-R recounted the time she and her staff witnessed the results of a gruesome act in their front door, during a holiday end-of-term party. She recalled how they had to reassure all her anxious students.

Unsurprisingly, they all carried all these worries and stress with them into the schools; and in the teachers' case, they brought that with them into their classrooms, which prompted some to ask who was taking care of them, which in turn urged a principal to provide counseling for her teachers.

Principals pointed out how society as a whole had not questioned them regarding what they were doing in their schools, what they were doing with/to the students entrusted to them. This lack of involvement, to them, indicated a fragmentation and disconnect within society itself, and between society and schooling. By that same token, ELs discovered that education projects that could benefit students on many levels did not interest most sponsors, companies, or institutions because they were not considered profitable. In other words, as Alain-R pointed out, people will not invest in education.



## VI. Networks and associations

*What support or enablers are available for Haitian ELs to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices?*

In Chapter 7, I elaborate further on all the forms of capital the ELs in this study draw to promote SL/A. Yet, in this section, I refer mainly to the social capital ELs tapped into in their leadership role. It describes the connections, the associations, and the networks, both formal and informal, ELs relied on, or not, to do their work and foster SL/A. It further outlines how these networks and associations came about, and their (ir)relevance to what the ELs were doing. These networks and associations are local (specific to the school), national, and international/regional. School leaders asserted that schools needed a broad support system in order to survive, especially if their aim was to provide quality education. They further believed that this was possible not only because networks and associations trusted them but because, as Michael-P and Raphaël-P put it, they actually used these contributions efficiently and for the benefit of students.

The multiple associations, organizations, partnerships, and networks of professionals and individuals that supported and assisted the schools in this study did so both formally and informally, on a regular and an *ad hoc* (occasional) basis. ELs mentioned that they were contacted by these groups, and they also made the initial contacts themselves. The local ones usually included alumni associations, networks of professionals and individuals, and congregations (for religious schools). The national ones were professional associations/networks, agencies, NGOs and institutions

(UNICEF, UNESCO, World Food Programme, FAES, FOKAL, Bureau Diocésien d'Éducation, Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie, Save the Children, Food for the Poor), and on occasion, foreign agencies and embassies in Haïti.

ELs admitted that they relied on them for various reasons. These networks and associations assisted them, among other things, with scholarships, school lunch/canteen programs, technical support, project executions, training, workshops and conferences, provision of materials and resources (computers/tablets, music instruments, labs, books). For some principals, they were instrumental in the reconstruction of their schools after the 2010 earthquake. Mélodie-Anne-P admitted that following the earthquake, she was able to get back on her feet because of the aid and assistance she received from UNICEF. In addition, some ELs pointed out that certain associations, organizations, and even individuals did not give away money. And those like Olivia-P and Joseph-S preferred it that way because they believed that receiving money from an entity or someone can push them to make certain demands. Human resources, technical assistance, and specific donations suited them better.

ELs disclosed being members of various national professional associations and specific networks based on their schools' particularities or their own academic focus, such as association of *lycée* principals, catholic school principals, private school principals, and higher education teachers, to name a few. They also partnered with local professionals, government/non-government agencies, and foreign schools. School leaders said that these professional associations created connections between them, and fostered discussions, exchanges, and planning, in some cases. Through these networks,

training sessions and conferences were organized for the ELs themselves and their teachers (and at times, for parents too), along with projects and events for their schools and students (educational, recreational, cultural, and sporting). In some instances, it was the schools themselves that were members. For example, they were part of sport associations which enabled them to take part in annual championships, and/or cultural/environmental networks that supported them in putting events together. Furthermore, ELs pointed to the fact that these associations expanded their reach by connecting them with other institutions/networks.

ELs talked about informal networks of other schools, institutions, professionals, and even companies working in education and other fields. They gave conferences and training for students and teachers, and invited them to participate in events, conferences, expositions, and competitions. And the reverse was also true: when ELs were organizing something, they would send out invitations to other principals for their students. However, Mélodie-Anne-P cautioned that not all principals would respond positively to such invitations or even be open to such connections.

Similarly, some ELs spoke about being part of international/regional professional networks. They used them to reflect on their practices and learn from their overseas counterparts, which can prompt them to make certain changes in their own settings. Certain ELs also made partnerships and pairings with schools abroad for specific projects or in specific domains. Laurence-P affirmed that this had allowed her to “think outside the box” (personal communication, February 23, 2016).

For some ELs in particular, these partnerships came to a stop either by decision of the organization or due to circumstances. They reported that several activities and projects supported by NGOs or institutions ceased in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. While a few principals mentioned not being attached or a part of any association or network, some revealed not being successful in securing support from any. Meanwhile, certain school leaders commented on their withdrawal from associations and networks for several reasons. They invoked a shift in direction and a divergence of interests, more political and monetary focus, superficial talks, no discussions of real issues affecting ELs and their schools, and no concrete actions. Paradoxically, while they withdrew from the national or local ones, some of these ELs remained affiliated with international associations.

## VII. Policy contexts

*“How are the strategies/practices used by ELs to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices influenced by the contexts within which they work?”*

ELs did not operate in an educational vacuum. Their daily lives and practices were guided, influenced, affected, and impacted by local, national, and international policies, regulations, and frameworks. This section outlines these policy landscapes, as well as the manners in which the participants were concerned by them (if at all).

### School-related, internal, and local policy contexts

Based on their philosophy, values, and visions (for religious schools, on their congregations' principles), school leaders developed their own missions, orientations, and priorities, and the school's education project. From there, they elaborated the school's internal rules and regulations that are given to both students and their parents; and they also revised them depending on circumstances and events. These protocols represented an agreement (to be signed) between the school and students/parents, and were renewed yearly. They encompassed, among other things, the school's objectives, schedule and attendance, student rights, rules, and responsibilities, code of conduct/ethics code, dressing code/guide, evaluation guidelines and benchmarks (pass, repeat), religious duties (for religious schools), and financial obligations. Some principals indicated that they also involved staff, teachers, and students in the process, while others sent out surveys to obtain input from parents. In that same logic, school leaders like Mélodie-Anne-P created codes of conduct, rules, and regulations for teachers as well (and for staff and administration in some cases). Additionally, they produced a planning document for teachers at the beginning of each school year that included new decisions/plans, reminders from the preview year(s), guidelines, and calendar for the new year.

With regard to policies from Haïtian other schools, few school leaders mentioned looking into their programs and practices, and even integrating that into their own curricula and programs. However, religious ELs disclosed that, as part of their network of congregational schools, they shared/aligned their planning and programs, as much as they harmonized their list of books.

## National and ministry policy contexts

As Haitian schools, ELs highlighted the fact that they had to follow and apply the ministry's policies such as laws, memorandum, (hand)bills (that did not always reach them), procedures, programs, curricula, calendar, and state examinations. Some admitted sifting through them, trying out the good ones, and amending a few. While certain principals stated using solely the ministry's curricula to build their own school curricula, others expanded and went beyond the ministry's curricula, programs, and policies which only served them as a baseline.

The ministry produced various handbooks, management guidelines, and standards for principals, that some did not possess. However, aside from the fact that these documents needed to be updated, Dimitri-S pointed out that there was a difference between these standards and the lived-experiences and realities of principals in their schools. One of the policy documents examined for this study was the 2002 management guide for public *lycées* (edition that Dimitri-S said that ought to be under revision). This professional standards hadbook was elaborated for principals working in state-funded schools; in that case, the *fondamentale 3* and secondary schools. These standards fixed the internal norms and rules of functioning of all public *lycées*. This allowed ELs to work in “*étroite collaboration avec le staff de l'établissement : les enseignants, les élèves, les parents d'élèves et les notables de la localité afin de rendre efficace la gestion de l'institution... que chaque entité du lycée joue sa partition dans un esprit de partenariat, afin d'aboutir à des résultats concrets et mesurables*” [close collaboration with the school staff: teachers, students, students' parents and notable members of the

community in order to make the management of the institution effective... that each entity of the school plays its part in the spirit of partnership, in order to achieve concrete and measurable results (own translation)] (Haïti Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports [MENJS], 2002, p. 3). In other words, ELs should choose participation, inclusion, and partnership with everyone involved in the school (staff, teachers, students, parents, community), as they proactively anticipate forthcoming issues. In this guide, the following themes were covered: principal's office composition, task description for the principal (administrative and pedagogical function), task reminders, accounting system. ELs were informed of their financial and moral/social role, the general rules and requirements regarding administrative and teaching personnel, students' obligations and duties, students' annual fees. Lastly, this handbook further outlined the roles, status, attributions, and functions of each actor in the school: pedagogical counselor, general monitor, supply teacher, secretary, teacher, students, classroom monitors, teaching staff, administration council, student committee, maintenance staff, property guardian, security guard. Although this guide envisioned the creation of an administrative council, public school leaders made no mention of having any. Those in *lycées* (*fondamentale* 3 and secondary) referred to members of their pedagogical and discipline teams; whereas principals in the primary years (*fondamentale* 1 and 2) only talked about themselves and their teachers.

School leaders brought up other recent policies/reforms from the ministry, although some stated that principals and main actors should be consulted and involved more systematically in the policy design process in the early stages. One of them related

to the standardization of uniforms throughout all publicly-funded schools. According to Joseph-S, this made it hard for students to find the fabric or materials because the market supply did not meet the high demand. Claire-Emmanuelle-R said that a similar notice was sent out to private schools (in her case, congregational) to standardize their uniforms among all schools, and to differentiate their *fondamentale 3* students from their secondary students. Principals also referred to the reforms concerning grades 4 and 6. They pondered and deliberated on the elimination of grade 6 state exams that had several consequences. First, students stopped making an effort and no longer took private lessons. Teachers in this exam class also started to let go, slacking a bit in their work. And finally, some ELs had used this test as a measure of how their school worked, and taking that away put them at a loss. Regarding grade 4, a standardized test was introduced, with exams being administered by ELs in each school. Some of them noticed that these tests contained many errors in various subjects, and that the whole process was not supervised by any ministry official(s).

School leaders expounded on the newly implemented reform of the secondary school that they considered as a very ambitious program. They believed that, while it is a good program, it could lead to a catastrophe as it requires the ministry to steadily assist and support schools. But, so far, schools did not have all the necessary structures and were not given the essential tools to implement this reform and reach these goals. Further, principals talked about the cost of this reform being very high in terms of materials, resources, and teacher training. Although some schools were already on board (or getting ready to do so), others were taking it slowly (meaning they did not enact it



yet) considering they were not fully prepared nor equipped. Concurrently, even though this reform concerned only secondary schools, Claire-Emmanuelle-R, a primary school principal, discussed how it had impacted her. It pushed her to learn more about this new approach, and to start training her teachers; she even talked about adjusting her current programs. For her, the end goal is to prepare, early on, her students who will later attend this reformed secondary school.

During the interviews school leaders were asked what they thought were requiring changes and reforms at a national level. Their answers varied and touched on diverse aspects of the education system. Collectively, ELs broadly suggested the ministry itself, the programs/curricula, the evaluation/testing system, the inspection and support system, the reinforcement of existing laws, the relationships between ministry and schools, regulations for teacher education programs, to name a few.

### International and regional policy contexts

When it came to international and regional policies, ELs argued that it was important for them to know what was happening abroad. They claimed they cannot stay boxed in and close themselves to the outside world. Their comparison of/with other countries' educational systems (France, United States, Canada, Switzerland, Belgium, cited) allowed them to notice diversity and similarities, to develop a broader vision for their own schools, to innovate and stay informed of current developments, and to evaluate themselves in order to move forward. School leaders talked about studying pedagogies, approaches, and strategies that yielded results, and adapting them to their

specific realities. Some of them further acknowledged using foreign school books as a means of connecting with international programs/curricula. Moreover, a few principals like Alexandre-P expressed their intentions of aiming towards more international standards, not country specific as the latter will create foreign citizens, not Haïtian citizens.

### VIII. Philosophy, vision, and values

The values school leaders promoted were expressed openly and/or embedded in their visions for their schools. Visions ranged from highly philosophical to concrete and practical: where they wanted to lead the school, what they had in mind for the school, what kind of human beings/citizens they were shaping, what legacy they were leaving behind, and so much more. Michael-P clearly articulated how ELs viewed their mission and purpose; both of which were sustained by their values and visions: “*Nous avons une mission d’accompagner les jeunes pour faire une société haïtienne forte*” [We have a mission; that is to guide young people in order to create a strong Haïtian society (own translation)] (personal communication, January 14, 2016). By that he meant that they considered it their goal –and even their lifework– to support and guide youth to not only be useful to themselves but also to be able to serve their community, society and country, and by extension, humanity/world. In other words, the future of the country relied on the education they were giving to children and youth. Therefore, it depended on ELs’ actions which aimed at creating global Haïtian citizens. As Joseph-S cautioned, if they got it bad

or wrong, they could literally jeopardize a country's functioning and development.

Alexandre-P took a step further; he believed and constantly reiterated to his students that society should not influence them, rather it was up to them to influence society.

In a sense, school leaders viewed education, consequently schooling and education leadership, as a dynamic service that should reach international standards and quality. As Sébastien-R put it, this service was also a means of giving back to society what they had received themselves. For this reason, they were committed to students and the quality of their education: a) take them as a whole (in their entirety) to help them grow, b) attend to their well-being, c) develop their autonomy and potentials, d) strengthen them, and e) guide them towards their success. Essentially, for principals, it was a quest towards excellence with the firm belief that every student was unique, with a wealth of potential to develop and channel, and with the ability to succeed, and that it was up to adults to give them that possibility and opportunity. ELs indicated that, in their journey, they worked on both, the students and the environment. Regarding the former, they promoted and fostered life-skills, social-skills, and manners, alongside knowledge. As for the latter, they believed in creating an environment and a climate that attracted everyone and made them happy, that was conducive to learning and teaching, and where collegiality was a foundation.

In that same line of thought, some principals revealed that there was a humanity in leading a school –the human side of it– that was very important. François-P made it clear: “*Tout, c'est sur une base de confiance*” [Everything is based on trust (own translation)] (personal communication, November 30, 2015). In other terms, it was based

on trust, compassion, morality and ethics (especially from staff and teachers in the classrooms with students), and honesty, with respect for everyone, at every level of the school: from administration to teachers to maintenance and security staff to students. It also extended beyond the school walls: parents entrusting schools with their child(ren), and ELs making sure that this trust was warranted.

Furthermore, ELs revealed their concrete projects for their schools (micro-level). Some dreamt of having a school band for the school, a real art department, interactive classrooms, fully-functional labs for ICT, chemistry, and (natural) sciences, to name a few. Others talked about their plans that would assist every teacher in getting at least a bachelor degree (in education), or that would establish partnerships with other schools in remote and rural areas.

With everything at stake, ELs expressed their concerns about the quality of the Haitian education system itself. On the one hand, it had produced many students capable of succeeding and evolving in any university, college, cegep, and *école* abroad. On the other hand, that success relied largely on traditional approaches (memorization, to be precise) that constituted the basis of the system. To that effect, principals like François-P contended that an education cannot be based solely on that: an equilibrium and balance must be found. Claire-Emmanuelle-R reflected upon this and advocated for a process of “*fidélité créatrice*” [creative fidelity (own translation)] (personal communication, January 26, 2016): maintaining the school’s and system’s tradition while innovating and renewing for the present, and with the future in sight. Additionally, some ELs called attention to a practice they observed in certain schools. The latter would start with several classes of

grade one and, years later, would finish with just one senior class. That pushed Anaïs-P to question what, in fact, were the purpose of education and the role of schools: was it to purge the system or to educate students?

Therefore, school leaders opened up about their visions for the Haïtian education system broadly (macro-level). Some spoke about sharing of practices and experiences among school leaders, as well as coordination between educators from all three school levels and leaders and discussions about appropriate and meaningful programs that would prepare students for post-secondary life. Certain ELs argued for curricula and programs that would incorporate the elaboration and construction of school materials onsite, which would be particularly relevant for schools in remote rural areas that lacked materials, human resources, and cultural capital found in urban centres. Others wished for social advantages, benefits, and rewards for teachers, so they could enter the profession by vocation and not by necessity; and for financial and banking schemes to support ELs in times of need or with specific projects.

Lastly, principals talked about this hard profession that oftentimes left them feeling lonely and alone in their quest or journey towards quality education.

## IX. Educational leadership

*“How do educational leaders (ELs) define leadership as a field of practice?”*

This final section explores how participants in this study defined, understood, and conceptualized the notion of ‘educational leadership’ (in French, *leadership scolaire/éducatif*). In a sense, it wraps up everything ELs said and everything observed regarding their journey towards SL/A. Besides, school leaders were encouraged to provide analogies that would better explain –in their own terms– their perception of the concept. And their responses to these questions varied widely and broadly.

As stated previously, school leaders viewed educational leadership as a service: a service to students. As Jonathan-R declared, *“ce n’est pas toi le plus important”* [you are not the most important person (own translation)] (personal communication, February 13, 2016). In other words, students came first. ELs like Claire-Emmanuelle-R acknowledged that, for that purpose, leading a school required having “the right person at the right place” (personal communication, January 26, 2016). More so, ELs perceived themselves as being an example, and setting an example. Just and ethical, they set forth moral and religious principles, and infused a spirit within the school. In doing so, as Isabelle-P claimed, social values were fostered in their students such as *“savoir vivre... vivre ensemble... vivre en communauté... respect”* [social skills... live together... live in community... respect (own translation)] (personal communication, February 1, 2016). Ultimately, it implied creating harmony in the institution where each person had a sense of belonging, of being valued.

According to ELs, one of the key aspects of educational leadership related to having vision, missions, and orientations for their schools. Regardless of their school's type, they developed, elaborated, and/or re-elaborated the school's development project and statements based on their own visions, values, and goals, those of their congregations and/or those of the ministry of education. Essentially, they asked themselves as Claire-Emmanuelle-R did: "*Quel est le plus que je peux offrir qui ne se voit pas, qui ne se dit pas, et qui permet à l'enfant de [se] construire?*" [What is that most that I can offer that cannot be seen nor talked about, and yet that enables the child to build herself? (own translation)] (personal communication, January 26, 2016). Put differently, ELs thought about what would benefit their students on various levels. They acknowledged that educational leadership entailed having a sense of responsibility, which pushed them to offer the best to students. Consequently, they sought new knowledge to improve themselves and their practices, while they observed, coordinated, and took actions. Principals like Sébastien-R took a step further by asserting that being an educational leader is about "*mobiliser son équipe afin qu'elle intègre et s'approprie votre vision*" [mobilize one's team so that they can integrate your vision and take ownership of it (own translation)] (personal communication, February 3, 2016), in order for them to buy-in into this vision.

As much as they mentioned having influence over others, some ELs asserted that educational leadership was about delegating and distributing tasks and authority to staff. Marion-R clearly said: "*Toi-même, tu ne peux pas tout faire... c'est une grande entreprise*" [You, you cannot do everything... this is a big enterprise (own translation)]

(personal communication, January 27, 2016), to which Dimitri-S and Anaïs-P added that a leader cannot be everywhere at the same time and should not be indispensable. A few principals brought up the notion of a decentralized structure or a democratic model of management. As such, they claimed to value a participative leadership and a shared leadership, both of which put an emphasis on the individual and human relationships. Viewed from that vantage point, ELs stressed the importance of cooperation and collaboration; thus, highlighting the humanistic side of schooling. However, principals like Mélodie-Anne-P, Janine-P, and Dimitri-S admitted that they not only delegated reluctantly but also demanded to be kept informed. Whereas Laurence-R revealed that she and her three other principals had to learn to delegate.

Stemming from that notion, participants claimed that educational leadership was not solely a matter for the principals. Leadership also concerned staff, teachers, and even students. To these ELs, their leadership needed to be nurtured, developed, and honed, as well as showcased both within the school and outside. On the one hand, principals talked about helping them realize that they too can bring forth ideas, suggestions, initiatives, and propositions, and encouraging them to go that extra mile. In some settings, staff discussed among themselves about what could be done to improve certain aspects of the school or resolve certain issues. On the other hand, as much as they recognized their staff's and teachers' leadership, certain principals declared: "*Voici ce qui est négociable et ce qui n'est pas négociable*" [Here is what is negotiable and what is not negotiable (own translation)] (Claire-Emmanuelle-R, personal communication, January 26, 2016). This implied that that some things were open for discussion while others were not.



When discussing their conceptions of what it meant to be a school leader, participants stated that as ELs, they did not want to inspire fear, to terrorize their staff, teachers, and students. To them, that did not define a leader. In that same line of thought, other ELs rejected the idea that a principal was only there to impose, to give orders, to reprimand, to discipline, and to constantly watch over staff and teachers' shoulders. However, they did recognize that a hierarchy existed and that the principal was ultimately the one with the authority and power to make certain decisions, which should be taken by examining multiple facets. That connected neatly to some school leaders' assertion that in leading a school, professionalism, constant dialogue, and transparency were key components in (building) relationships and in (implementing) actions. From there, Christian-S believed that their leitmotiv should be performance.

On another side, participants mentioned that educational leadership entailed constantly reflecting on, and questioning, everything related to their schools and its practices. They pondered on the education that was being given to students, on what they envisioned for their students, and on what type of citizens they were making and sending into society, while at the same time making sure that these youths were useful to their communities. Some talked about being (becoming) agents of change that not only should innovate but also should combine intelligence and humanity as much in themselves as in their schools. Conscious that this was not an easy undertaking, they were not afraid to seek council and ask for advice to move their schools forward.

Lastly, ELs explained how educational leadership looked at, and adapted to, the mentalities and the actual needs of the environment, the community, the school and the

students, and the situations that arose; if necessary, restructured and made adjustments in/to their strategies to meet those needs and situations. It inferred understanding what each individual and group of individuals (students, teachers, staff, personnel) within the school were dealing with, were going through. Yet, some principals cautioned that, in doing so, they should be mindful of their own reactions to these needs and situations: not to react, but instead to analyze and weigh the pros and cons before making any decisions. While Anaïs-P remarked that this was not simply a matter of sentiments and feelings, Olivia-P asserted that there were situations that were not written anywhere which meant ELs had to have that sense (born a leader) to figure things out by themselves (what to do versus what not to do).

During the various interviews, ELs were asked to provide an analogy or image that best describes what educational leadership means to them. These metaphors varied in terms of comparisons, from using abstract concepts to simple reference to animals. They focused on four main overarching themes. The first one was related to the idea of leading in a direction, of guiding; be it from a conductor directing an orchestra, a ship reaching port, or a mother (maternal figure) steering towards success. Here are some of the participants' analogies.

Jonathan-R referred to a conductor or orchestra leader, elected by her/his peers, who made sure that the partition was known by everyone, was mastered, and who puts everything together to achieve harmony.

*Un chef d'orchestre que les autres acceptent... Tu fais en sorte que la partition est [sic] reçue. Et après maintenant qu'elle est [sic] sue, qu'elle est [sic] maîtrisée, et puis, bon, là tu mets ensemble pour qu'il y ait harmonie. (personal communication, February 13, 2016)*

[An orchestra conductor who is accepted by others... You make sure that the partition is received. And now, after it is known, it is mastered, and then, well, you put it together in order to create harmony (own translation)]

Thierry-R envisioned educational leadership and leading a school as a big cruise ship/liner that was not like a small boat that can turn immediately. It took its time to change course, but it was capable of sailing farther: *“Un grand paquebot... c'est pas une petite barque qui peut virer tout de suite. Un paquebot, ça met du temps à changer de cap. Mais... mais en même temps, ça permet d'aller plus loin”* [A big cruise ship... it is not a small boat that can turn around right away. A cruise ship takes time to change course. But... but at the same time, it makes it possible to travel much further (own translation)] (personal communication, February 4, 2016).

The second theme referred to the notions of circle and balance that encapsulated everyone and where everyone at some point in time and space was in command, while aiming to find an equilibrium. In his statement, Sébastien-R envisioned educational leadership as circular (like a circle) where the principal was positioned at the centre, and everyone around; where her/his proximity to everyone allowed her/him to stimulate, to encourage, to be with everyone, and to give direction:

*L'image d'un leader, c'est une image circulaire avec quelque chose au milieu. Ce quelque chose au milieu, c'est la position du leader. Et le leader qui est là pour stimuler, pour encourager, pour être à côté, pour être avec, pour donner aussi la direction. (personal communication, February 3, 2016)*

[The image of a leader is a circular image with something in the middle. That something in the middle is the position of the leader. And the leader who is there to stimulate, to encourage, to be next to, to accompany, to also give direction (own translation)]

Malik-S, on the other hand, positioned educational leadership as a balancing act where ELs were in the middle and balanced things or found a balance in everything: “*Quelqu’un qui se trouve au juste milieu et qui balance les choses*” [Someone who is located right at the center and balances things (own translation)] (personal communication, February 29, 2016).

The third reference evoked the idea of guiding light and energy that led the way, from a beacon to electricity and motor. School leaders expressed themselves in their own words. Claire-Emmanuelle-R portrayed educational leadership as a beacon that guides, enlightens, and shows the way; and ELs, as those at the centre, gathered the energies, directed, and enabled everyone to give their best:

*Être un phare... c’est d’être ce qui guide, ce qui éclaire, ce qui montre le chemin... qui rassemble... c’est, pour moi, celle qui est au centre, qui rassemble les énergies, qui les orientent, et qui permet à chacun, chacune de donner le meilleur de lui-même, d’elle-même.* (personal communication, January 26, 2016)

[Be a beacon... to be the one who guides, who enlightens, who shows the way... who brings together... for me, to be the one who is at the centre, who bring energies together, who orients them, and who enables each and every one to give the best of himself, of herself (own translation)]

Working in a group of three principals, Michael-P approached educational leadership as an electricity that ran through all of them, a spark that lightened and allowed them to connect in their decisions. This created this image of unity in front of

the whole school: “*Un courant qui passe... il y a toujours cette étincelle qui lie chacun dans les décisions que nous prenons... cette image de soudure... que ça soit aux yeux des professeurs ou des élèves ou des autres membres de l’administration*” [A connection that flows... there is always that spark that binds us in the decisions that we make... an image of unity... be it in the eyes of the teachers or the students or the other administration members (own translation)] (personal communication, January 14, 2016).

The fourth and final theme was articulated around animals and their perceived characteristics. These ELs expanded on the links they made with these creatures. When Anaïs-P evoked the image of ELs being like ants, she alluded to their natural relentless motivation and steadfast enthusiasm to work, even when they got disoriented by hardships. She explained that:

*Ce sont des fourmis. Parce que même si une reine meure... tout le groupe de fourmis est désorienté; [mais] il y a une autre reine. Et puis la nature fait que toutes les fourmis travaillent. Toutes les fourmis sont motivées. Les fourmis, elles ne sont jamais fatiguées ; elles ont un enthousiasme qui n’est jamais épuisé.*  
(personal communication, January 26, 2016)

[They are ants. Because, even if a queen dies, the whole group of ants is disoriented; [but] there is another queen. And nature has made it that all ants work. All ants are motivated. Ants are never tired; they have an enthusiasm that never wanes (own translation)]

Whereas Isabelle-P, for instance, thought of this position as being like a spider: a principal cannot have just two hands, one must have several paws, which implied that s/he must be able to be everywhere, go in several directions, and attend to various aspects of the school. She noted that: “*On est comme un araignée. On ne peut pas avoir deux*

*mains : il faut avoir plusieurs pattes*” [We are like a spider. One cannot just have two hands: one must have several paws (own translation)] (personal communication, February 1, 2016).

Given how broadly participants understood and conceptualized educational leadership, it was not easy nor was it relevant, for me, to summarize and box in all that richness of perspectives and insights. However, Sébastien-R found the exact words to explain the basis and foundation of what educational leadership entailed to all of them: “*C’est un métier de l’humain*” [It is a profession on/about mankind and of humanity (own translation)] (personal communication, February 3, 2016).

## Concluding summary

As I stated in the introduction of this chapter, Haïtian ELs are at the heart of this research. Their understandings of what it means to be a leader, the conceptualizations of SL/A, all the strategies they put in place, all the challenges they face, and all the policies that guide them, all of that was presented in detail in this chapter. From Marion-R who acknowledged that this grand enterprise of leading a school cannot be done alone, to Alexander-P who aimed to introduce an international component to his school, to Isabelle-P who believed in staying calm, to Malik-S who envisioned a marching band for his school and now had an embryo of one, to Olivia-P who boldly stated that people are born leaders and do not become one, this showcases the breadth, depth, nuances, and multifaceted aspects of Haïtian school leaders and their work in their leadership journey

towards SL/A in their settings. To me this also points out to the messiness, the dynamics, the ever-changing, ever-challenging situations, and the evolution of not just the participating ELs involved in the study, but also of myself collecting this data in a small, fragile, and developing country like Haïti at a time fraught with social and political uncertainties.

Nonetheless, having collected this rich data and presented these findings, in the next chapter, Chapter 7, I plan on analyzing it based on the theoretical framework elaborated and discussed earlier in this dissertation (Chapter 3), and on the literature about these different themes (Chapter 2).

## CHAPTER SEVEN: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### Introduction

The aim of this analysis and discussion chapter is to make sense of school leaders' discourses and practices. The main argument that I advance here is that, while educational leaders (ELs) in Haïtian schools share similar ideas about student learning and achievement (SL/A), the ways in which they translate their understandings/interpretations into leadership practices vary depending on the various contexts or fields within which they work. These contexts or fields encompass Haïtian society, education, and school (private, public, religious) fields, among others.

For me, it is about understanding everything they said and did, as much as it is about understanding also what they omitted and did not do. In writing this chapter (as with the previous one, to a certain extent), a lot of my positioning as a researcher is involved. As Tarc (2013) suggests, I did not enter nor come about this research as a blank canvas: who I am also affected and impacted how I analyze the data I collected from the participants in this study. To me, acknowledging this from the onset is what adds more value to this qualitative study. Because, my analysis is not only based on my theoretical framework and the literature review, but is also based on my interpretation and vantage point of what participants have said, have done, and are going through, seen through these lenses. With that said, this chapter analyzes the emerging themes through

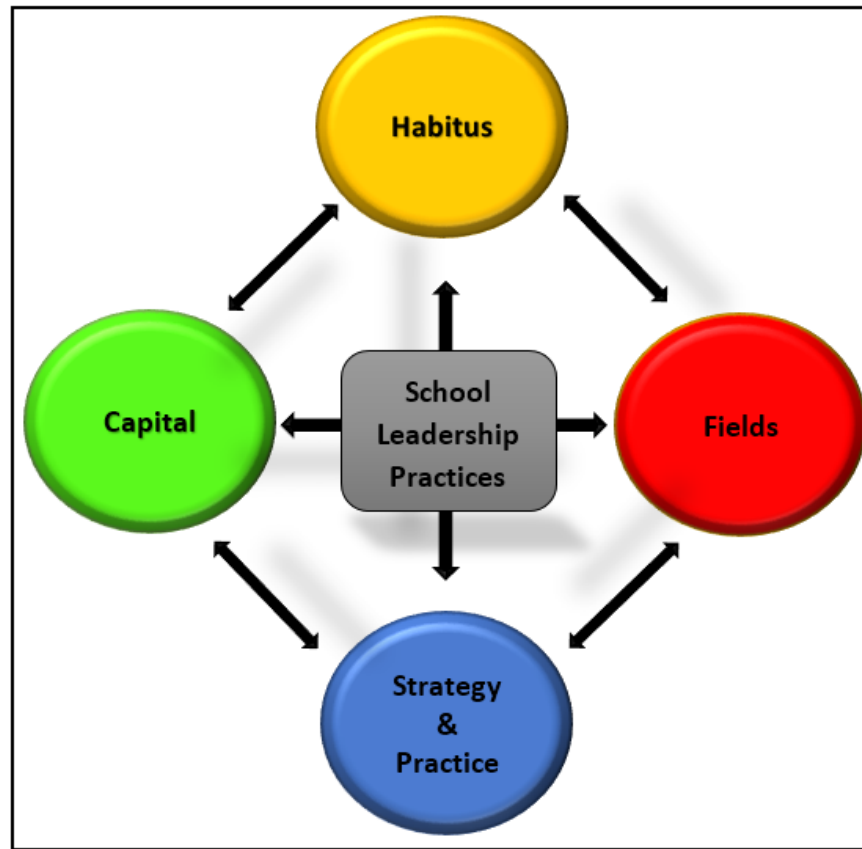


the operationalized theoretical framework and by weaving in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

## I. A Bourdieuan Educational Leadership (for) Practice

### Framework

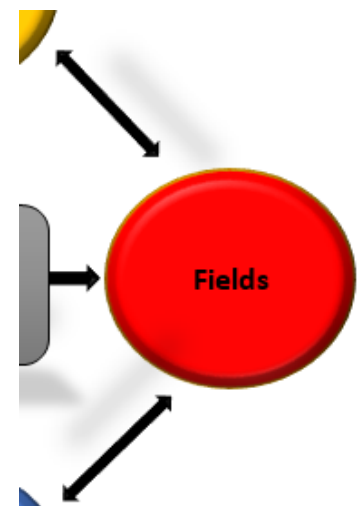
For the purpose of this study, I developed a theoretical framework, a *Bourdieuan Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework* (BELPF), which draws upon both critical policy analysis concepts and Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' and work (see Chapter 3). I used this framework to analyze the data generated and presented in Chapter 6. Put differently, BELPF's concepts will be operationalized, meaning I will 'make them work' to explain what Haïtian educational leaders (ELs) have said, as well as what I observed about their practices in their schools. Figure 7.1 demonstrates the different ways in which these Bourdieuan concepts interplay within a broader critical framework. As such, throughout this discussion, the concepts connect and intersect even when I break down the analysis into the BELPF's themes for clarity and comprehension purposes. In essence, the discussion itself is about explaining how and why that occurs.



*Figure 7.1 A Bourdieuan Educational Leadership (for) Practice Framework*

## Fields

A field is a structured social space with its own, specific, and particular values and regulative principles. Bourdieu (2001) calls it a “*forme de vie*” [a way of life/living (own translation)] (p. 141) that encompasses areas of socially constructed and established activities by individual agents or groups of agents. In this study, there are multiple fields at play that school leaders are a part of, and interact with. Figure 7.2 showcases the multiple relations, intersections, and overlaps



between these different fields. Moreover, it highlights the manner in which ELs, social actors at the micro-level within the education field and focus of this study, are positioned within, and interrelate with other fields (meso, macro). This section thus analyzes the different characteristics of these various fields as they apply to/in this study, while unraveling how they affect, and connect with, the participants in this research, and vice-versa.

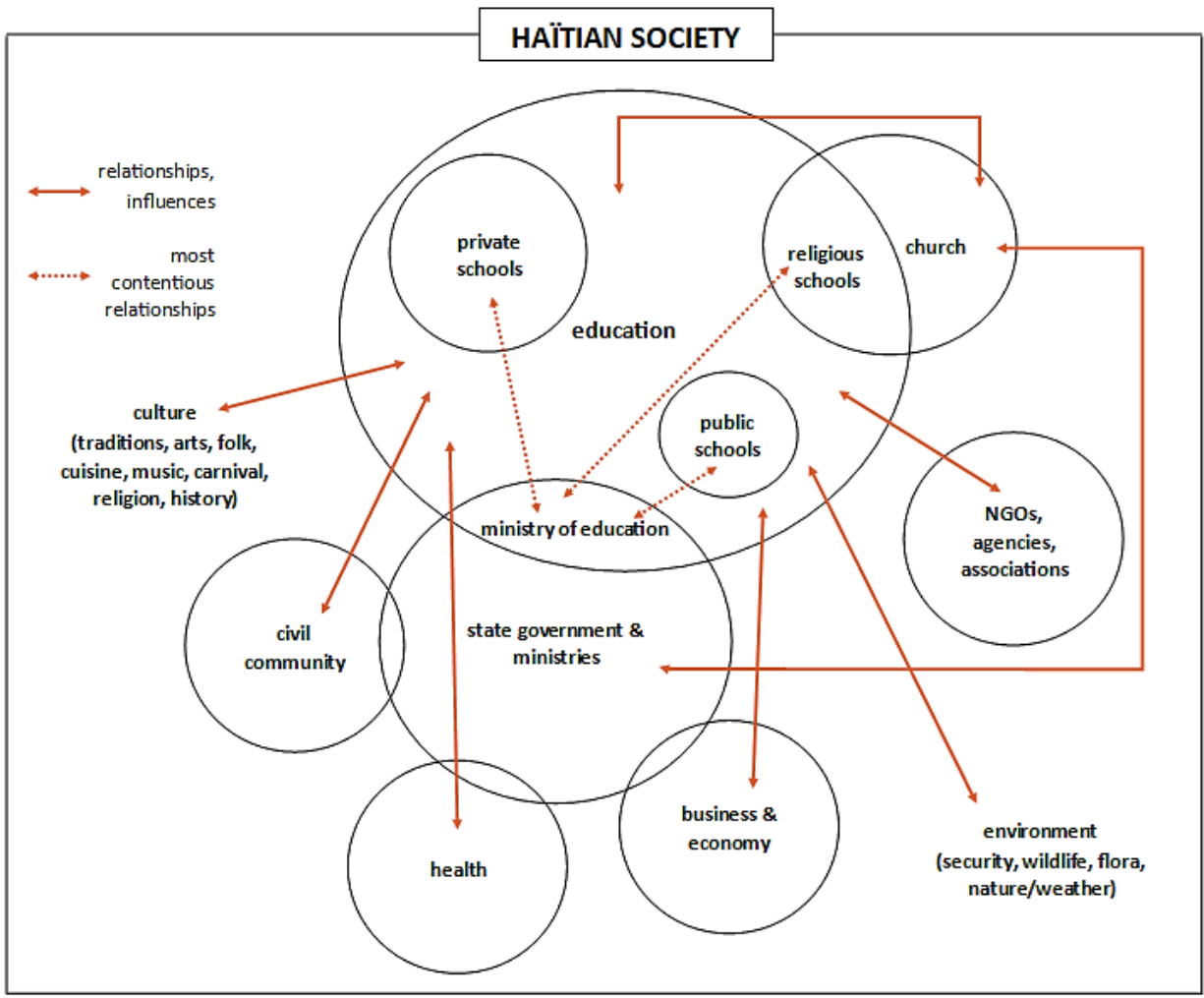


Figure 7.2 Fields within the Haïtian context

Each field possesses distinctive values and regulative principles (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Put differently, fields are defined by sets of rules, beliefs, and opinions widely shared, called doxa, and accepted by the social agents within. ELs as part of the educational field and their local school field have a set of doxa that they implicitly and/or overtly agree upon. In their local field, some rules are unspoken, taken-for-granted as they are “both the product and producer of the habitus which is specific and appropriate to the field” (Jenkins, 1992, p. 84). Other rules are written and they represent, to ELs in this study, sets of guiding principles based on their beliefs and values. These rules are highly valued as they emphasize what is deemed desirable, appropriate, and acceptable within the school field (Ozga, 2000); for example, attitudes, manners, deportment, and uniform codes, among other things. And ELs want these rules to become and feel ‘natural’ to their students, staff, and teachers. Yet, as Ozga (2000) puts it, they are still institutionalized and imposed on students. In doing so, ELs are essentially promoting the doxa of their own field, which can then turn into habitus (explained later on).

Furthermore, through these sets of rules, school leaders are also endorsing specific sets of capital, especially in the cultural embodied state which I will expand on in more detail in the capital section below, but I raise the point here to exemplify the relationships between field, doxa, and capital. Put it simply, ELs want their students to learn and acquire the ‘right’ social codes in order to know what works in any given situation. They take that very seriously because anyone who deviates from the rules is immediately lectured and/or sanctioned since they believe that possessing capital that is valued in society will enable students to better integrate into the broader social fields.

Nonetheless, this can also be perceived as a means of reproducing and maintaining certain ways of acting, behaving, and being of/in the field(s); and failure to adhere/incorporate to such rules can lead to feeling excluded from the fields.

When talking about Bourdieu's notion of fields, one of its main attributes is its autonomy, even when there exist interrelations between fields. This autonomy speaks to the field's internal capacity to reproduce itself in order to assure and provide itself, as Dirkx (2015) states, with its own differentiation and self-organization principles. That is precisely what Haitian ELs in private and religious school fields have done when they put considerable emphasis on their successors. ELs are preparing them, grooming them (to a certain extent) to make sure that they are developing and acquiring the skills, knowledge, and abilities to take over. In a way, they are perpetuating the autonomy, the 'forme de vie', and the continuity of their field by ensuring that the right/correct elements are in place. However, some ELs in this study worry about their successors not continuing in the same direction, which, to them, poses a legitimate concern for the maintenance of their field.

For the purpose of this analysis, I focus on field(s) as they intersect with the participants' own field in the context of their leadership. To begin with, society is a field, a structured social space with its own social agents and/or groups of social agents, themselves belonging to other (sub)fields. Based on participants' input, the overarching field is the Haitian society within which other fields exist like education, state government and ministries, civil community, health, business and economy, and church

(see Figure 7.2). As such, they constitute “recognizable bounded territories” (Grenfell, 2004, p. 27).

Next, we can consider the field of education. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) explain how the education system is a field in itself:

Every institutionalized education system (ES) owes the specific characteristics of its structure and functioning to the fact that, by the means proper to the institution, it has to produce and reproduce the institutional conditions whose existence and persistence (self-reproduction of the system) are necessary both to the exercise of its essential function of inculcation and to the fulfilment of its function of reproducing a cultural arbitrary which it does not produce (cultural reproduction), the reproduction of which contributes to the reproduction of the relations between the groups or classes (social reproduction). (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 54)

As with any field, the education field has its own hierarchies and logics of practices. It is also defined and positioned, with regard to other social fields, by the “stakes which are at stake” (Jenkins, 1992, p. 84). For this field, these stakes refer primarily to intellectual distinction, educational qualifications and diplomas (forms of cultural capital).

Within this broad education field, two other fields are of interest to this study: the ministry of education (meso level) and the (micro, local) school field (private, public, religious) among which there exist various habitus, doxa, hierarchies, and logics of practice that touch a wide range of social actors involved. And as Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) pinpoint, school leaders, ELs in this study, are “located at a specific point within the educational field” (p. 69) as they “sit within the... field at a point

between the policy producing apparatus and the practices of schooling” (Lingard & Christie, 2003, p. 326).

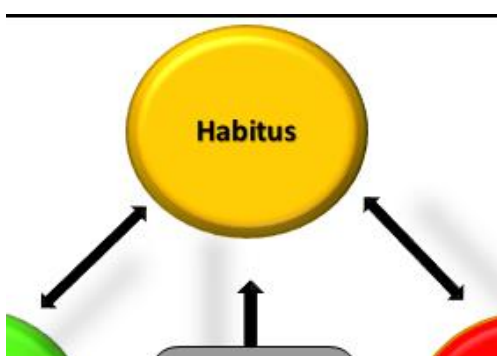
The Haitian ministry of education, the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle* (MENFP), constitutes another field within the education field. It has its own structures and principles. Its social agents occupy specific positions and adhere to their specific doxa. Based on its nature and purpose (see Chapter 5 for more details), this field's position as the field in charge of education (visions, policies, programs) for the whole country puts the MENFP in a dominating position vis-à-vis other education fields such as the schools and their agents. But simultaneously, it puts it in a dominated position as (sub)field of the state/government field, which entails that the MENFP answers to the latter and enacts its education vision and mission.

At the micro/local level, the school in itself is a field. Each school field, especially given their type, has generated and developed its own beliefs, values, and regulative principles that makes it unique. It has its logic of practice “linked to the creation of forms of pedagogies and assessment practices and their alignment... and the creation of school cultures and structures associated with these” (Lingard & Christie, 2003, p. 327). Yet, the school field shares common elements with other schools' fields, particularly if they come from the same school type. This field is essentially a network of relations between the diverse positions occupied by its social agents (Heimans, 2012). In this study, the social agents at this level refer to those evolving within an individual school field, which include the school leaders themselves (the main focus of this research), staff and support staff, personnel, teachers and department heads, and students.

As such, they collectively represent a field of forces that generates its own habitus. And the amount and distribution of resources accumulated over the years, in a sense, determine the position (advantage or disadvantage) ELs and their school field occupy within the broader education field, and even the overarching social fields. Moreover, school leaders also belong to the educational leadership field through professional networks, associations, and memberships (Lingard & Christie, 2003).

The field itself represents only one piece of the puzzle that constitutes ELs' leadership practices. In fact, Bourdieu (1988) talks about a two-way relationship between field and habitus "where the field, as a structured space, tends to structure the habitus, while the habitus tends to structure the perception of the field" (p. 784). In other words, it is within field(s) that habitus is moulded and shaped. And as Grenfell (2004) asserts, their structures are in some way similar as they both have generative principles in common.

## Habitus



Bourdieu's concept of habitus refers to systems of installed dispositions, durable, without any conscious planning (Bourdieu, 1990; Lingard et al., 2003). In fact, habitus is about social agents' multidimensional dispositions. In other words, it represents ways of being and acting (behavioral dimension), of thinking (cognitive dimension), of feeling (affective dimension) of an individual agent or group of



agents that are acquired through socialization and/or gradual processes of inculcation. This infers that habitus is not static. It varies from one social agent (ELs) to another, from one group of social agents (group of ELs, network of ELs) to another, from one field (school) to another.

The behavioral dimension of these dispositions can be seen through the various ways ELs are, behave, and act as an extension of perceptions and actual enactment of their roles and responsibilities. Participants in this study seem to possess an internal compass that allows and enables them to know, almost without overtly/visibly hesitating, what to do, how to react, and in which direction to go, with regard to their multiple daily tasks and arising situations. Therefore, their habitus is based on structured structures developed through experiences that lead to structuring structures that influence (the future of) their local field.

The cognitive dimension of ELs' habitus refers to their ways of thinking. As Jenkins (1992) states, the habitus "only exists inasmuch as it is 'inside the heads' of actors" (pp. 74-75). Participants provided analogies and metaphors. That enabled them to "develop creative insights in a clear way around a very indistinct phenomenon like leadership" (Spicer & Alvesson, 2011, p. 48) as they tried to explain, in their own words, what was inside their heads in order to get at their inclination (see in that, ways of thinking) towards educational leadership, and student learning and achievement (SL/A); thus, towards what they do and why they do it. From orchestra conductor to ship at port to guiding light/beacon to relentless ants and multi-tasking spider, these images offer insights into ELs' unconscious (un-verbalized) schemes of perceptions; and therefore,

into how and why they operate the ways they do. These analogies also refer to various discourses around metaphors and leadership such as ‘leaders as gardeners’ like Claire-Emmanuelle-R who facilitate, develop, and enable others to reach their potential and give their best (Huzzard & Spoelstra, 2011), or ‘leaders as commanders’ like Jonathan-R and Thierry-R who lead the charge, are engaged, and “define what needs to [be] done” (Spicer, 2011, p. 121).

Haïtian school leaders’ ways of feeling, the affective dimension of their habitus, are evident in the philosophy, vision, and values they expressed, sometimes without saying anything as they transcend their discourses and actions. ELs in this study demonstrate compassion, humility, love for/of students, honesty, openness, and tolerance. These feelings may appear a common, general occurrence but for these participants, they were part of them. And one gets a sense of these ways of feeling as their habitus when they stated that this is who they are, how they feel about things. Moreover, they reveal being troubled, irritated, disturbed, or aggravated when other social agents in their own field or from other fields prevent them from expressing their habitus, or at least try to.

Although there is an unconscious character to habitus, Jenkins (1992) argues that there is also a certain amount of consciousness required and involved. This is evident in the various policies school leaders put in place in their school field. Put simply, through their policies, they consciously put in writing their dispositions towards several aspects of their work. For example, while discussing SL/A, the fact that most ELs include discipline in their policies attests to the unifying principle of this notion of habitus within their field of educational leadership.

This leads to another component of habitus. Bourdieu (1998) explains it as “this generative and unifying principle which retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position into a unitary lifestyle, that is, a unitary set of choices of persons, goods, practices” (p. 8). In other words, among social actors within a field, there exist dispositions that are specific to said field. Participants in this study, although from three different school types, share a series of dispositions –an educational leadership habitus– that is evident throughout the local school fields and expressed through their leadership practices. Lingard and Christie (2003) refer to this as the “dispositional product of the field of educational management and leadership” (p. 326). As ELs, they share specific ways of being, of thinking, of behaving, and of acting. In this case, they all accept that their roles and responsibilities (R&R) are multi-faceted and that they must act at multiple levels in their leadership practices: moral, social, psychologic, pedagogical, administrative, and financial. This aligns with Miller’s (2016) study explaining that principals in England and Jamaica have “mediated through a range of factors including cultural, social, economic, legal, technical and personal” (p. 7) working together and/or against each other.

Yet, ELs’ habitus is also linked to the histories and the position of their school field. This implies that each type of school field –fields within fields– has distinctive schemes of values, perceptions, and regulative principles that are “collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53) of the social agents, the ELs. Religious school leaders, for instance, possess these ways of being, of thinking, and of perceiving certain phenomena that regroup them and

predispose them to function in certain ways. This can be explained by the fact that they are part of the Roman Catholic Church and a religious order, and by this virtue, have been exposed to and integrated their Catholic faith and principles which transcend them. For example, some religious ELs perceive educational leadership as a matter of service which, in turn, impact the ways they interact with their students and the strategies they use. Consequently, this determines their situatedness and positioning within their field and vis-à-vis other fields.

Building on that, habitus also results in social agents' own positions within the field(s) and their own social/personal trajectories and histories (Bonnewitz, 2009). The professional trajectories and personal experiences school leaders in this study have had enabled them to acquire and develop sets of dispositions in how they think, talk, and act, which they internalize and carry with them in their leadership positions. In essence, habitus is the internalization of the exterior (Bonnewitz, 2009). For instance, a public school principal has worked for decades as a teacher in a religious school where she acquired certain ways of doing things, of thinking. And when she moved to the public school system and later became a principal, these dispositions had become such an integrated part of her that it impacted some of her strategies and practices. Similarly, another public school principal's trajectory was influenced by his French literature studies and his years teaching French in a French system international school. Through these experiences, he developed a French linguistic habitus that has also become an integral part of who he is, and that he tries now to develop in his students.

Stemming from that, there is Bourdieu's notion of corporeal hexis, the physical dimension of the habitus. Jenkins (1992) views both habitus and hexis as "different dimensions of [the] embodiment" of culture that is "encoded in or on the body" (p. 179). Hexis is, thus, the embodiment of the habitus such as deportment, manner, linguistic dispositions, actors' style of carrying themselves (stance, gait, gesture, etc.). The way some ELs maintain an erect posture when standing or seated, or the way others walk with purpose and confidence, or the way certain express themselves in French (style, pronunciation, accent) represent but manners in which these dispositions are engrained in these school leaders' body.

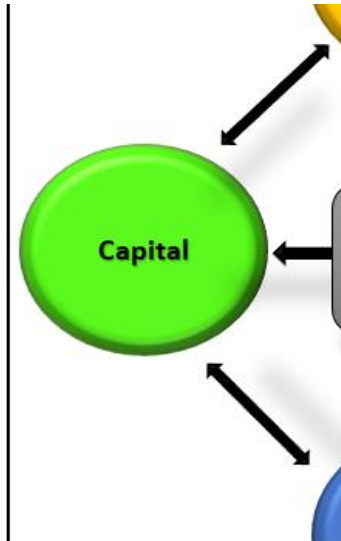
Moreover, Lingard and Christie (2003) argue that "gender is not a 'role' that can be discarded once recognized; rather, it is embodied and supported by the social world in its material and symbolic expressions, which resist simple redefinition" (p. 321). Therefore, habitus is gendered, sexually characterized; and thus, plays a role in the reproduction of gender inequalities (Lingard & Christie, 2003; Lingard et al., 2003). In Haïti, gender issues still linger for some female ELs. What Bezzina (2002) and Miller (2013b) call gender prejudice, these female Haïtian principals refer to that as male teachers not accepting (or having a hard time) being led by a woman, or simply taking instructions from one. This highlights and calls attention to a society that is still, to some extent, very gender-divided and patriarchal. In her study about Haïti, Schaffner (2006) talks about expected gender roles where "women's work (*travay fanm*) is primarily domestic" [emphasis original] (p. 51). There is a strict separation between what is perceived (and actually constitutes, in most cases) as women's work and men's work. In

other terms, there are specific tasks and positions women are expected to do and be in, and others they are not supposed to do or be in. Put it differently, (some) Haïtian men do not take it well (at all) when women break those boundaries, step outside of their assigned roles, and assume positions ‘supposedly’ reserved for men, such as leadership positions. Paradoxically, as Schaffner (2006) states, this “may reflect an unconscious denial of the fact that without women’s earned income [from their work], most Haitian households would not survive” (p. 52). Moreover, only 8% of Haïtian women are executives nationwide, with 12.5% within the metropolitan area, as opposed to men (approximately 13% nationwide and 30% within the metropolitan area) (Haïti MSPP, 2012). And in this study, 16 out of 30 participants are women in leadership positions for as long as four decades. This implies that, consciously or unconsciously, these women redefine and rework, to a certain extent, this gendered habitus and the discourse surrounding it.

Eacott (2013b) asserts that habitus establishes “what is important (e.g. capital) and by virtue, the conditions of entry, a condition which members buy into” (p. 181). This means that social agents’ habitus within a field determines what forms of capital count more as they represent the “medium of communication between field and habitus” (Grenfell, 2009, p. 19).

## Capital

For Bourdieu, capital represents an “accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its ‘incorporated,’ embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241). In other words, capital invokes the various, multi-dimensional forms of possession and acquisition that ELs have developed and/or



gained over the years that allow them to accomplish what they need to, and to position them within the field(s).

### Economic capital

Economic capital refers to money and wealth, materials and supplies, properties and buildings. In religious and private schools, ELs depend on their students’ annual fees and monthly tuition; whereas for public schools, ELs rely on students’ annual fees and the government allocation (not distributed on time). This entails that ELs’ main income and budgets are based on their students’, more precisely their parents’ economic capital, regardless of their school type. More specifically, the student body intake affects the school’s economic capital and its revenue. This situation varies from school to school, and even within one school. Some schools in this study had students from a wide range of socio-economic status (SES), while others had only low income students. Each

circumstance impacts ELs' choice(s) of strategies and actions. Put differently, the amount of money and wealth a school has determined what ELs can afford and offer students, teachers, and staff, in terms of materials, resources, programs and salaries (which represent the bulk of their budgets).

Properties and buildings also account for ELs' (and their schools') economic capital. And, from one school to another, this specific form of economic capital varies greatly in terms of dimensions, sizes, levels, wings, sections, and areas. Nine out of ten religious school buildings are located on properties that belong to the ELs' congregations. Similarly, private ELs are also owners of the properties and school buildings. This further infers that, although they do have that economic capital, they are also responsible for everything pertaining these properties, from taxes to mortgages to maintenance. Public school buildings, on the other hand, are state properties, which imply that these ELs do not have to worry about things such as taxes or mortgages. They are just in charge of the general maintenance of the properties and school buildings.

Therefore, schools with more economic capital and/or with ELs possessing enough connections through which they access certain economic capital (i-e. resources, funding) have the capacities to expand and enrich their students' learning experiences (leading towards student achievement), which often is the case with private and religious school leaders. Those ELs have more resources and materials than others, which enable them to offer a broader range of activities and programs to their students. For example, certain schools have both computer and science labs while others barely have a few computers for their students. Some have a full complete music department while others



cannot afford or had to discontinue these programs. Nonetheless, despite their situations, nearly all ELs include sports and physical education in their curriculum/programs, with their students having the choice between one (for some schools) and multiple sport disciplines (for certain schools).

Consequently, limited, or lack of, materials and resources and poor/limited working conditions for students and teachers are mainly the results of limited (or lack of) economic capital (money, income, gains). Simply put, ELs' ability to purchase materials, offer certain programs, pay/increase salaries, make infrastructure improvements and/or rebuild after the 2010 earthquake destruction, for example, is closely linked to their students' annual fees and monthly tuition (for religious and private schools), on which all the schools heavily depend, as stated earlier. By the same token, parents' or guardians' limited (or lack of) economic capital (money/income) affects students primarily on two levels: academically and physically. Academically, this prevents them, among other things, from paying tuitions and school fees, from purchasing the materials (accessories, books, supplies, technology) students need for their studies at school and at home, and from paying for certain extra-curricular activities. Physically, given their economic situation, some parents are unable to provide nutritious meals and lunch boxes for their child(ren), which not only leads to distraction from, and inattention towards, studies but also provokes health issues. Moreover, some of these challenges and obstacles reported by participants in this study corroborate what other researchers have found regarding the Haitian education context and its school leadership: school tuition fees unpaid; limited to

no access to resources and digital technologies (Claudy, 2009; Jean-Marie & Sider, 2014; Romelus, 2009; Sider & Jean-Marie, 2014; Solect, 2009).

Haïtian ELs have thus come to realize that they cannot burden their students' parents by increasing tuition (in private and religious schools) and annual fees. Therefore, they have to find other sources of funding, regardless of their school type (private, public, religious), if they want to carry on certain projects. Similar to what Oplatka (2004) discovers in some African countries and in China, Haïtian school leaders seek and request financial support from parents (aside from mandatory fees), from community members (to a lesser degree), and from their networks and ensuing connections; some even use their facilities in an entrepreneurial manner, renting it for various events to increase the school's income (generate more money). They use this extra flow of monies for infrastructure, materials, and/or basic students' needs.

For Bourdieu, there is more to capital than just economics. And this study proves that to understand ELs' work towards SL/A, it is important to examine other forms of capital, namely cultural, social, and symbolic.

### Cultural capital

Bourdieu distinguishes three states of cultural capital: objectified, embodied, and institutionalized. In this study, the last two states are mainly used and greatly valued: the embodied and the institutionalized. The embodied state is about form of language (pronunciation, intonation), body language (confidence, assurance, poise), style, among other things. And the institutionalized state refers to formal education qualifications,

diplomas, knowledge, and skills. In this analysis, I look at these two forms of cultural capital not only as they apply to the Haïtian school leaders themselves, but also as ELs refer to them as important in/for their work with regard to staff, teachers, and students.

Some ELs discuss Haïtians' ability and facility to easily switch from one language to another, mainly in Creole and French, and sometimes in English. This multi- or bilingualism is indeed observed in most participants with various degrees, with some favouring one language while others shift between them. This means that some ELs were more at ease with certain language(s) than others, which is an occurrence in the country. It represents ELs' own linguistic cultural capital which, in turn, provides them with a certain linguistic habitus. And Marty's (1997) take on bilingualism resonates clearly with participants' statements, and can be applied to everyone within the school, especially students: "*Beaucoup de ceux qui réussissent... sont bilingues. Pour eux, c'est une richesse de passer d'une langue à l'autre et d'avoir une bonne connaissance de leur culture d'origine, de leurs racines*" [Many of those who succeed... are bilingual. For them, it is a richness to move from one language to another and to have a good knowledge of their original culture, of their roots (own translation)] (p. 37). In fact, some other principals believe that having French is one of the most important cultural capital their students can have.

Regarding their institutionalized cultural capital, ELs' education qualifications vary greatly. They obtained their diplomas in various fields/domains: education and teaching, engineering, business, theology, and medicine. They hone in their skills and knowledge of the field through training, seminars, and conferences, which enable them to

develop that ‘feel-for-the-game’ that further allows them to know what works for and in what situation. Moreover, the fact that some ELs’ initial qualifications are not in education/administration nor teaching implies that they have to make more efforts (in terms of on-the-job and continuing training) to acquire the skills and knowledge (institutionalized cultural capital) needed to effectively lead their schools.

These two forms of cultural capital are observed in the hiring process of staff and teachers, as part of ELs’ roles and responsibilities, particularly in private and religious schools. These ELs place great value on the institutionalized and embodied state of their employees’ cultural capital. In the institutionalized state, they look at staff and, especially, teachers’ formal qualifications and diplomas, and knowledge. Teachers’ quality and competencies are closely linked to their initial and continuing training, according to the participants. Through a careful recruitment process, ELs showcase how conscientious they are about how and by whom are transmitted the education qualifications, knowledge, and skills they seek for their students. This recruitment strategy is honed by years of experiences and intuitively knowing what they are looking for. As for the embodied state, recruits’ French language and communication skills (form, pronunciation, intonation, grammar) and how much these components are an integral part of them weight in the balance. This linguistic component can also be understood as ELs’ attempt to control the linguistic habitus that is displayed in their schools because it also represents a physical, visible manifestation of their habitus, a corporeal hexis.

Parents' various forms of cultural capital (or lack thereof) impact both their child(ren)'s education and ELs' work. Put differently, parents' cultural capital in its embodied (mainly language) and institutionalized (education level and diplomas) state determines, for some participants, how far they must go with the education they provide, and how much they must give to their students. Because, as Guimard (2010) alludes to, the school might be the only stable place where students would acquire a clearly planned education (institutionalized state) and obtain, in the process, specific forms of embodied cultural capital. On the one hand, that should compel ELs not to ask of, nor expect from, their students what the latter do not have to give (Lingard et al., 2003). But, on the other hand, that should not prevent them from expecting their students to do their best, from setting high expectations for their students.

Regarding students, ELs also focus on these two states of cultural capital. For the embodied state, they emphasize body language and style, and languages. ELs put in place policies (rules, codes of conduct) that dictate the proper dressing code/style authorized at the school. They further elaborate on what is acceptable and what is not in terms of posture and poise which can lead to a level of self-confidence. Through that, they aim at developing and/or reinforcing this cultural capital in their students. The status of language as a cultural capital for students is somewhat complex and problematic. It was observed that, among students, one language was favoured (was used more often, to be precise) over the other depending on the school type. This can be explained by the amount of linguistic cultural capital some students have developed and accumulated within their families, which was further honed during their schooling in

certain schools. In different terms, students who were exposed early on in life to French, for example, had no problem expressing themselves in that language, and in Creole also, for that matter. Whereas, students only exposed to Creole at home, and to French only in school, during instruction periods, had a hard time developing and acquiring that French linguistic cultural capital. As such, languages become a “mechanism for cultural transmission” (Grenfell, 2004, p. 76) and put students either at an advantage or a disadvantage depending on their backgrounds and considering the fact that, in the academic field, most teaching instruction and testing are done in French. In other words, many of the students who succeed are bilinguals (multilinguals), for whom speaking two languages (or more) and being able to switch from one to another is considered a rich asset (embodied cultural capital) (Marty, 1997). And more often than not, it is religious and private schools that are developing that linguistic capital and/or reinforcing that linguistic habitus in their students. Nonetheless, ELs are pushing their students more strongly towards a French cultural capital (various strategies being implemented with that aim in sight) because they firmly believe students need to develop that French linguistic habitus to evolve not only in this academic (school) field but also in broader social fields (post-secondary education, work, society).

For the institutionalized state of cultural capital, certain levels of education qualifications, knowledge, and skills are more valued than others by ELs, as well as parents and society. First, through benchmarks and rewards, ELs signal to students that there is an “amount and kind of knowledges and credentials” (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003, p. 383) they need to strive towards. As such, they “impart that specific knowledge

and particular ways of behaving” (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003, p. 383) are more profitable and useful than others. Second, learning requirements and official standards represent serious concerns for school leaders from a cultural capital standpoint. Thirdly, there is a culture of high stake examinations for which students must be trained, and that parents value very much; practices that are also evident in other countries (Sharp & Gopinathan, 2002; Yin et al., 2014). Although critical of the whole evaluation system, ELs are expected to produce results (parental, ministerial, and societal pressure), with students being evaluated through those standardized exams. In both accounts, students not reaching the benchmarks or failing exams imply they are not acquiring the necessary institutionalized cultural capital needed to obtain the qualifications and diplomas, which can later prevent them from entering certain fields, thus making economic capital harder to gain. Essentially, ELs want their students to acquire/develop sets of skills and competences so that, when they are done with high school, they can find a job to sustain themselves financially if they do not, or while, they attend post-secondary education.

While ELs consider their mission and responsibilities to ensure that students learn in school, grow, and develop their potential, by promoting these specific states of cultural capital, they are trying to transmit and maintain a form of habitus, knowledge, and skills (and culture as well) that are deemed appropriate and useful to their local/broader field/context. They, in fact, confirm what Bourdieu (1998) asserts about school that “contributes [...] to the reproduction of the distribution of cultural capital and, consequently, of the structure of social space” (p. 19). However, ELs do not attain such

results on their own. They rely on others to help them achieve their goals: and by others, I mean their social capital.

### Social capital

Bourdieu's notion of social capital refers to social agents' networks, connections, relationships, and social obligations (see Figure 7.2). They are assimilated and accumulated through time, as much as they are useful, permanent, and/or prestigious. For social agents like the ELs in this study, their social capital is both internal and external which encompasses local, national, and international.

The internal relationships and networks school leaders in this study tap into include their staff, personnel, and teachers, as well as parents whose positions straddle two worlds (point discussed later on). In fact, they rely a great deal on the social capital available internally, in their own setting, their own local field. As such, they make useful connections with everyone at every level: staff, personnel, and teachers. ELs view them as an integral part of the setting and, as Bourdieu (1980) asserts, make every effort to foster their sense of belonging to the group that is the school. Aside from hired staff and personnel, ELs in private schools rely on a special kind of social capital: their own family members. The latter work with them as part of their staff and/or administrative council. These connections are permanent and particularly useful to ELs who benefit and gain from them in terms of expertise, resources, and financial support. With them, ELs form and belong to a 'family' group. In sum, ELs acknowledge that they cannot do their work alone, that they need to do it in conjunction with, and with the assistance of, others within



their schools, regardless of their level within the school structure, of their status and their personal connections. These relationships are, thus, useful to ELs, if not crucial and vital. This aligns with the principles (interpersonal skills, working with others) set forth in various principal professional standards documents worldwide: South Africa, Australia, United Kingdom, for example.

Stemming from that, it is understandable that a shortage of qualified staff and teachers is problematic for Haïtian school leaders because that means they do not have that internal, useful, and resourceful social capital within their field they can rely on for their daily work. Not having this internal social capital of qualified, competent, and skilled teachers is critical because they represent the means through which ELs/schools socialize, transmit, educate, influence, and train their students. Such scarcity can be explained by teachers' lack of real vocation for the profession, by inadequate teacher education training programs, and/or by a systemic/societal brain drain affecting many fields (yet another way broader social fields affect micro school fields). Teachers are using the field as a social springboard or a last career option: therefore, have no real passion nor drive. Such situations are serious and challenging for the participants because that can intensify and complexify the already intense and complex relationships between policy and practices. In other terms, Haïtian ELs unsurprisingly encounter issues and/or resistance from teachers to apply and enact certain policies and programs. Furthermore, dealing with some teachers' unprofessionalism, regardless of the reasons and actions, represent a constant source of problem for Haïtian school leaders as that undermines the usefulness of this specific social capital. Tardiness, absence, non-

implementation of policies and programs, unethical discourses, inaccurate reports represent some of the cases they deal with, which are also evident in other settings. As Marty (1997) discovers, one of the heaviest and hardest situations for principals in any school is related to those teachers for whom nothing can be done, who give the school a very bad reputation, and provide a bad image of the education system, and I will add, the teaching profession and the principal as well.

Both insiders and outsiders to school fields, ELs also count on parents, and community members for some. They benefit from this social capital that includes individual parents and/or networks of parents that are useful and resourceful to ELs and their schools. In fact, parents assist, support, plan, and even micro-manage other parents. By setting up recurrent meetings/reunions with parents and guardians, participants try to foster meaningful communication patterns and maintain constant contact with them. Additionally, some school leaders also take advantage from the connections they establish with members of their immediate community (see Figure 7.2). They are bringing together these two distinct fields through projects, events, and basic communications; thus, highlighting the ways in which these two fields can intersect, even when/if the power dynamics are not evenly balanced (discussed later on). By doing all this, Haïtian school leaders' practices align with what Leithwood, Harris and Strauss (2013) find in their study: that ELs need to create relationships with both parents and wider community.

At the local level, ELs have yet other sets of connections and networks that assist them in various capacities. These linkages include alumni associations, networks of

professionals and individuals (other ELs, in the education field or in other fields), and congregations (for religious schools). At the national level, ELs' social capital varies from one person to another. It encompasses national professional networks and associations, (inter)national NGOs and institutions, and foreign agencies and embassies that operate in Haïti (see Figure 7.2). At the international level, school leaders connect with their counterparts in other countries; thus, extending their social capital beyond their borders, beyond their individual school fields. All these diverse networks of social agents are valuable and advantageous, although not always permanent as circumstances can alter their course (yet another example of broader issues impacting micro school fields). Nonetheless, these connections enable ELs to either obtain resources (human, material and financial), build partnerships/projects, or gain access to other social agents from whom they can get these supports. In essence, ELs stress the importance of their social and professional networks (social capital) in the work they do, as Sider and Jean-Marie (2014) also point out to in their study about Haïtian principals.

It is important to note that ELs' accumulation and maintenance of their social capital is built on trust between them and their schools' constituencies, namely staff, teachers, students, parents, and public (Tschannen-Moran, 2013). Their leadership is thus built on and from trust that pushes everyone towards the same or similar goals and/or directions. Tschannen-Moran (2013) proposes five facets of this trust that Haïtian ELs refer to as important to them: honesty, openness, reliability, competence, and benevolence, with the addition of compassion, morality, and ethics. But, when these facets no longer prevail in the relationships, trust is therefore broken, so are the

connections. On the one hand, this occurs to ELs in this study at the internal level where they have to engage in problem talks and make tough decisions (Lashway, 2006) that can potentially lead to firing staff and/or teachers. Furthermore, the act itself of terminating contracts based on breach of principles and professionalism, thus breach of trust, implies that ELs, social agents in that field, are doing everything they can to maintain the culture (habitus and cultural capital) at play in their specific field. In a sense, some might view this as an unevenly distributed power dynamic, while others might perceive this as ‘doing-what-needs-to-be-done’.

On the other hand, ELs’ relationships with networks and associations of professionals (local and national) are often strenuous, again due to trust issues or lack of trust. Similarly to what Sider (2014), and Sider and Jean-Marie (2014) have discovered, Haitian school leaders are reluctant, are not open enough, or do not trust other principals enough to share their ideas, programs, practices, and strategies. ELs clearly feel that as a barrier to developing strong connections and relationships with them. And as these authors state, these situations affect the participants at a certain level. Furthermore, some ELs in this study voluntarily withdrew from associations; thus, cutting ties with these social agents. They did so since they no longer trusted these networks because of politics, shifting directions, and divergence of interest, among other things. For them, these social networks were no longer useful, and they did not feel like they belonged anymore.

Lastly, another component of ELs’ social capital includes their connections and associations (or lack thereof) with the ministry of education (MENFP). In fact, they vary

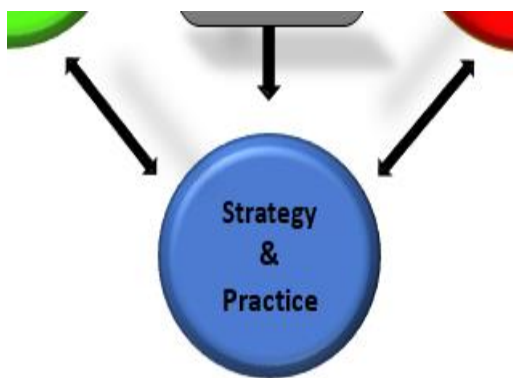
greatly from one participant to the other. This implies that each agent perceives her/his relationships with the ministry differently and functions accordingly. Most have little to no support from the MENFP as Jean-Marie and Sider (2014) also find in their study (also discussed later on). For these ELs, the ministry does not really count as reliable social capital. Therefore, their associations with MENFP tend to stay at the surface since their trust in the institution is somewhat eroded. Consequently, ELs' enactment of the ministry's policies differs from one to another. Some are not always aware of policies being published/implemented; others sift through them and pick the most appropriate for their school field; and a few do not feel concerned with what is happening. But one thing is certain: they abide, at the minimum, with the mandatory policies, the ones that affect the whole education field (system and structure).

### Symbolic capital

Symbolic capital is concerned with the legitimization of social agents' various forms of capital that are recognized, thus becoming prestigious. One of the ways in which it is demonstrated is through participants' role as interface between their schools and the outside world. It can be argued that certain aspects of this intermediary role are based on the symbolic capital ELs have developed and accumulated throughout the years. Part of that is due to the prestige/recognition, competence/authority they have gained (or not) over the years, and another part is based on the amount of social capital they have. All that combined positions ELs either at an advantage, or at a disadvantage with regard to their counterparts.

Finally, forms of capital determine, to a certain extent, what strategies and practices ELs are able to put in place within their field(s). In essence, their leadership practices can be examined by looking into the various forms of capital at play in their local school field.

### Strategies and practices



Bourdieu's notion of strategy/practice is concerned with going beyond what people do while acknowledging wider social life patterns. It is viewed as the result of how social agents (ELs) use their forms of capital to enact their habitus within the field(s) (contexts),

considering the various doxa (rules, policies) specific to each field. This research in fact showcases diverse facets of what strategy/practice entails.

The strategies ELs put in place in their individual settings (fields) represent actions and moves, according to Bourdieu, done without conscious rational thought. Especially while observing these principals in action, this perspective on strategies and practices takes its full meaning. In fact, it was as if ELs possess an internal compass, a mental guideline that tells them exactly what to do, that enables them to react promptly to situations as they happen. It is as if they have a 'feel for the game' of schooling; an intuitive knowledge, at some level, of the rules of the game of educational leadership. It becomes second nature to these ELs who understand "somewhere at the back of their

minds [...] the usual pattern of how things are done or happen” (Jenkins, 1992, p. 72). It is indeed the case because participants have gained this intuitive knowledge partly through their years of experience in their fields (specific/local and broader). Collectively, they accumulated approximately 387 years of experience, with a mean of 13 years, with the beginner at 6 months and the most seasoned at 42 years as principals, at the time of data collection.

Nonetheless, as Jenkins (1992) suggests, ELs are also taught the game and its rules: they learned how to play it. As such, the strategies are also executed knowingly, with ELs doing what-needs-to-be-done in their own schools to achieve the goals they set out for their students. That entails working diligently –through stress and energy drain– with heavy workload and extended schedules and time; similar to what researchers like Bezzina (2002), Marty (1997), and Notman and Henry (2011) have found in their studies. This has made it hard for them to achieve a work-life balance.

Practice/strategy has its purpose(s), although it is done without conscious deliberation most of the time. This leads to the notion of strategizing, to social actors setting goals and having interests which position “their practice in their own experience of reality – their practical sense or logic” (Jenkins, 1992, p. 72). The Haitian ELs in this study, in fact, view part of their roles and responsibilities as doing just that: setting directions and guidelines, re-evaluating practices, planning, focusing on instruction, teaching, and pedagogy, and creating safe environment. Some principals even talk about their school’s education project (education plan) that outlines the visions, objectives, and actions for the school moving forward. And in doing so, they align themselves with what

researchers put forth as critical dimensions for effective leadership (Davies & Davies, 2005; Griffith, 1999; Institute for Education Leadership, 2012; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2013; Nettles & Herrington, 2007; Robinson et al., 2009).

The notion of strategy/practice also entails social actors making decisions and adopting plans that they try to carry out (Jenkins, 1992). This can be seen in the school leaders' attempts to encourage, promote, push towards, and implement a student-centered approach to learning, despite resistance, mainly from teachers; an approach that blends contemporary and traditional views of student learning. However, it is important to note that certain practices ELs try can be perceived as traditional and/or out-dated in developed settings while they are quite innovative in Haitian settings. The reasons for that paradoxical situation vary greatly: a) these approaches are not widely used and embraced; b) ELs do not have the means (financial, among others) to promote them or offer them to students; c) teachers are not properly trained and equipped to use such approaches; d) security and political tensions in the country prevent ELs from organizing certain activities/events (including field trips, seminars, training).

To some extent, practices are synonymous to ongoing processes of learning, not fully conscious nor wholly unconscious, through which social actors “know – without knowing – the right thing to do” (Jenkins, 1992, p. 72). Haitian school leaders, then, employ these strategies on a regular basis. They talk about continuously researching new teaching approaches, methods, theories, and resources. They further engage in constant and regular discussions with, monitoring of, and observations of teachers. This attests to their desire to “explicitly seek and want to make a difference in the schools they lead”



(Southworth, 2005, p. 75). In other words, ELs are as much concerned with learning as they are with teaching (Southworth, 2005).

Through the multiple and diverse strategies and practices put in place, ELs in this study demonstrate that they do not adhere to a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach, which aligns with Bourdieu’s perspective on strategy and practice. For example, a public school principal hires a teacher for tutoring classes on weekends; or a religious principal facilitates a student-to-student (peer) learning group; or a private school leader includes students in the school’s decision-making process. As Bourdieu (1990) affirms, what these ELs are doing is going beyond mainstream’s perception of strategies and practices and proving that they go way further than just planning.

In that same optic, ELs do their best to remove organizational and/or structural barriers to their students’ learning and experiences as recommended by Leithwood, Harris and Strauss (2013). They adjust/modify school schedules and timetables, school structures (access to specific services when needed), administrative behaviors (allowing students to come to them at any time), and instructional practices. In doing so, their attempt is to make sure that their students “are engaged in meaningful learning for as much of their time in school as possible” (Leithwood et al., 2013, p. 264). As they try to alleviate certain constraints and restrictions to their students’ human development, ELs, thus, take a form of advocacy. This resonates with Jean-Marie and Sider’s (2014) findings that Haitian principals develop resiliency to overcome certain barriers and inequities.

Another facet of strategies and practices has to do with them being constrained and needing to improvise at the same time, requiring multiple skills as mentioned in their analogies of educational leadership (guide, motivator, multi-tasker, doer). However, participants point out these complexities and intricacies of their work not being covered, for some, in their initial training. This further speaks to the messiness, the complexity, the incompleteness, the struggles, and the dynamism inherent to policy enactment. And leading a school, at its basic level, is about the enactment of various, diverse, and sometimes contradictory policies, explicit and implicit, coming from multiple fields (structured and unstructured), at multiple levels: the school, its congregation (for religious schools), the ministry of education/government, society, and regional and international partnerships/protocols. Expressed differently, ELs' school leadership practice is a multi-layered re-contextualization process (Ball et al., 2011a, b; Maguire et al., 2015). As Braun and colleagues (2011b) contend, the contexts within which ELs operate are “‘active’ force[s]” where “dynamic policy processes and choices... [are] continuously constructed and developed both from within and externally in relation to policy imperatives and expectations” (p. 590).

Strategies and practices result, over time, from the process of social actors, ELs, adjusting between constraints, demands, and opportunities coming from various social fields (Jenkins, 1992). Participants in this study are conscious of the importance of instruction, teaching, and teacher development as recommended in many principal professional standards worldwide, and comparable to what Jean-Marie and Sider (2014) find about Haïtian principals. Yet, despite their efforts at providing their teachers with

professional development (PD), they still face serious challenges when offering those PD sessions: teachers not attending, political climate, training not appropriate, not useful, and not frequent enough. This further highlights the complicated relations between policy and practices where some social actors (teachers, in this instance) take a non-participative role.

Moreover, Haïtian school leaders' diverse and multi-dimensional strategies towards SL/A resemble what Marzano, Waters and McNultry (2005) expand on in their meta-analysis such as instruction and assessment, optimizer (lead role), intellectual stimulation, change agent, monitoring, and evaluating. Through the practices, competences, skills, and responsibilities they exhibit, ELs in this study are enacting various principles prescribed in principals' professional standards worldwide. Table 7.1 below gives a comparative overview of what Haïtian ELs are doing and what other countries are demanding of their principals. This points to the fact that essentially these principles are actually evident in many settings, including Haïti. Yet they are context-specific, and the manners in which they are enacted and taken up at a macro- and micro-level set them apart and give meaning to each principle, for each school leader, in each local school field. In fact, Vidovich (2001) contends that "localised context[s] of individual institutions can directly influence the nature of practices/effect at that site" (p. 18). These strategies and practices are therefore bound to (located in) space and time as they relate to the local field(s) and social spaces, yet another characteristic of this Bourdieuan concept.

**Table 7.1** *Principals' professional standards from other countries used by Haitian ELs*

<b>Principles &amp; themes</b>	<b>Countries</b>
Cultural responsiveness, context adjustment	United States, China, Canada
Courageous conversations	Canada
Goals, quality, improvement	Canada, South Africa, Australia, UK, USA, China
Instruction, teaching, learning, curriculum, assessment	USA, France, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, China, Canada
Resources priorities	Canada
Relations with others outside the school	France, UK, USA, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, China
Vision, mission, values, ethics	USA, UK, Australia, France, New Zealand
Development for, and management of, staff & teachers	USA, UK, Australia, South Africa
Management, operations, organization	USA, UK, Australia, France, South Africa, China
Focus on students	USA, UK,
Extra-curricular activities	South Africa
School culture nurturing	China, New Zealand

In sum, Haitian school leaders' diverse and multi-dimensional strategies and practices towards SL/A are characterized by both a fluidity and an indeterminacy. They are essentially based on a practical sense or a practical logic as things did not just occur. While they have an intuitive knowledge that "is not consciously – or not wholly consciously – organised or orchestrated" (Jenkins, 1992, pp. 69-70), participants also recognized the value of being prepared to "do the most good and cause the right change" (Lingard & Christie, 2003, p. 329) in order to contribute more efficiently and effectively to their micro fields, their schools.

## II. Thinking relationally: Connecting the dots

Bourdieu stresses the importance of thinking relationally. This entails expanding on how his different thinking tools –habitus, field, forms of capital, strategies/practices– connect and intersect with each other, and/or depend on one another within the context of this study and for the participants. This concept is also emphasized in critical policy studies: the complementary approach that constitutes my theoretical framework.

### Between forms of capital and fields

ELs in this study use their social capital, meaning networks of connections, to look for, access, and find support for their students and their schools in several forms (of economic capital): scholarships, funding, donations, lunch programs, building reconstruction, to name a few. The fact is that some are more successful than others in gaining access to, and/or obtaining, these supports. This attests not only to the amount and strength of the social capital they themselves nurtured and accumulated throughout the years, but also to the amount and strength of the social capital their own connections have. All of this creates a chain from which these ELs benefit. Knowing how to make use of the capital they possess is equated to having an acute ‘feel for the game’, which in this case we can conceptualize as the game of educational leadership based on its own educational leadership habitus within the educational leadership field. Moreover, some ELs are able to master the ‘rules of the game’ better than others, as they either are better positioned or situated within the field(s). Considering all that, it is comprehensible that some Haïtian ELs argue that nowadays any principal cannot survive or sustain

herself/himself for long without any kind of support and/or aid. In other words, without social capital they have limited to no access to some forms of economic capital.

In some cases, participants' position as principals is the result of an inheritance (8 out of 12 private ELs). That, in itself, represents economic capital because it includes properties (the school buildings), and a symbolic capital that comes from the prestige and recognition that their school has accumulated throughout the years. For these school leaders, that positions them at an advantage within the specific educational leadership field (among other ELs) and within broader social fields (the whole education system, for example). As Grenfell (2009) argues, and as these concepts work relationally, these social agents possess the capital that belongs to the field(s) which set(s) its value.

On a different note, religion plays a great role within the Haitian culture; and thus, occupies a particular position within society. The Roman Catholic Church is no exception to this situation, especially considering the fact that Catholics represent more than half of Haiti's population, close to 55% (CIA, 2017). Furthermore, it shares a close and intense and, at times, controversial and contentious history with the country and its government. It is like a roller-coaster with ups and downs, with years of silence and years of activism, with political involvement and subsequent withdrawal, with accusation of corruption and complaisance, and regained esteem for speaking and acting for social justice issues (Greene, 1993). Over the years, and even centuries, the Catholic Church has developed its own habitus, has become a field on its own, and has accumulated various forms of capital, especially symbolic. As such, its social agents assume a particular position within their field and with regard to other fields. It is understandable

that Catholic ELs and their schools that have been providing education for/to Haitian youth of diverse socio-economic status (SES), as one participant states, are benefiting from all that accumulated throughout the years: the certain amount of symbolic (prestige), social (networks, alumni positioned in multiple fields), and cultural capital. This also explains the high regard in which these schools are placed. However, some ELs (private mostly) criticized the fact that these religious ELs have lost their humanistic side, that their practices (for example, sending students back home or withholding their report cards for tuition unpaid) do not always reflect the human side/face of the profession (Notman & Henry, 2011), which leads to the mixed feelings reported. Yet, the way society at large and parents in particular view, perceive, and refer to Catholic nuns, fathers, and priests differ greatly than towards anyone else: it is as if they are on a pedestal with a different status that sets them apart. Therefore, the added deference noticed towards the Catholic school leaders in this study can be explained within the broader societal context. With this in mind, it is not surprising that ELs incorporate religious education and growth in their curriculum and programs. Regardless of their type, they insist on praying times (or meditation for students of other faiths) and provide diverse religious sacraments for their students.

### Between habitus, values, and practices

Here I analyze how ELs' habitus and values are an integral part of their practices. According to Lingard and Christie (2003), leadership habitus is both normative and productive. And the three dimensions of this normative/productive leadership habitus are based on what is considered the usual way leadership practices should be. Through

reflexivity (1<sup>st</sup> dimension), ELs examine and reflect on their situated daily practices, and keep an eye on what is happening. This allows them to have a better feel-for-the-game as they make sense of the diverse logics of practices occurring in their own school field and beyond. It further enables them to concentrate on schooling goals, although some school leaders admit to not doing so as regularly or as systematically as they would have liked.

After reflecting and getting a feel for the game, school leaders in this study assess what needs improving and address certain key issues, and then make actual appropriate changes. This 2<sup>nd</sup> dimension is thus concerned with a preparedness to do-what-needs-to-be-done and bring about effective changes. Participants further include staff and teachers in the process in diverse capacities. ELs involving them, to a certain extent, in the decision-making process aligns, in fact, with one of Notman and Henry's (2011) approaches to decision-making.

Lastly (3<sup>rd</sup> dimension), participants have the “capacity and disposition to deal with the wholeness of the school and the education system as fields” (Lingard & Christie, 2003, p. 329). This refers to ELs’ attending to every aspect of their local school field, with everyone in it: administration, culture, human resources, finances, pedagogy and teaching, students, and parents, to name a few. ELs also acknowledge the various relationships with others outside the school as well as the social contexts. This alludes to the several synergic yet contentious connections (see Figure 7.2) existing between ELs, their field, and other fields, and to how ELs’ leadership habitus “only exists in, through and because of the practices of actors and their interactions with each other and with the rest of their environment... it is an integral *part* of it (and vice versa)” [emphasis



original] (Jenkins, 1992, p. 75). In sum, habitus constitutes the basis of practices, meaning “the habitus *disposes* actors to do certain things” [emphasis original] (Jenkins, 1992, p. 78).

### Between fields and contexts

I now return to the discussion of fields from the first part of this chapter. There are interrelations, intersectionality, and interdependency (to a certain extent) evident between the diverse social fields. These include Haïtian society, education, each of the schools, and other social fields. What I demonstrate here are the multiple ways in which the fields under study mediate external forces and factors in Haïtian society, which in turn influence the practices and strategies that ELs are able to engage in. In other terms, the educational field crosses with other fields that may (or may not) have more power and influence within the greater society world/field (Lingard et al., 2003). This aligns with the critical policy approach taken in this dissertation which pays attention to different contexts and the power dynamics within the relations. And participants did talk about these educational and non-educational social spaces with which they interact, and that affect them at different levels.

Participant-ELs come from three different types of schools: private secular, religious (private and public), and state-funded (secular and religious). That, in itself, is not surprising; what surprises (and even shocks to a certain extent) is the fact that the non-public sector (private secular and religious) counts for nearly 90% of schools. And that is specific to the Haïtian context. Moreover, these ELs share similar ideas about

student learning and achievement (SL/A); yet, the comparative Table 6.1 (in Chapter 6, Findings) highlights how strategies and practices used by ELs varied in each school type, with certain commonalities and comparable challenges. The analysis thus far brought to the forefront the fact that Haïtian ELs' leadership practices are at the intersection of various fields and contexts, are intertwined with the amount of capital ELs have (as well as that of their staff, teachers, and students) and how they tap into them, and are affected by their ways of being, of thinking, and of behaving (their habitus). Further, with New Public Management's (NPM) focus on performance measure and output controls through high stake testing, it can be argued that this analysis offers a partial explanation to –more of an understanding of– the results of the 2013-2014 official state exams (see Table 5.6 in Chapter 5, Setting the stage) where most religious schools have success rates between 90% and 100%, and the majority of private schools between 75% and 100%.

As much as there are connections, there are also disconnections and tensions in this intersectionality between the fields. Bourdieu talks about how the social space (field) is constructed by different kinds of capital, and their distribution defines its structure.

In the first dimension, agents are distributed according to the overall volume of the capital of all kinds that they possess; in the second, according to the structure of that capital, that is, according to the relative weight of economic capital and cultural capital in their patrimony; in the third, according to the evolution over time of the volume and structure of their capital. (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 15)

Considering the fact that each of the three school types within the Haïtian educational system represents a field in itself, it not surprising that some schools are positioned differently in relation to others, hence the tensions. As Bourdieu and

Wacquant (1992) explain, it is as if ELs –social agents in each field– are in a battlefield and “vie to establish monopoly over the species of capital” (p. 17). This entails that one school field can have more prestige and reputation (symbolic capital), a diverse student body intake and SES (economic capital) and various forms of cultural capital promoted in that specific school field. Consequently, a (covert) hierarchy can be seen among fields at the micro level (schools), which leads to competition, uneven power, and domination distribution between them. Participants further discuss how other principals would compete to gain more capital, especially economic, by doing everything they can to attract and enroll more students. In fact, there exists competition between private schools, between private and religious schools, between public schools which alludes to a form of school choice, both practices associated with NPM approach in education (Anderson & Herr, 2015; Grunter & Fitzgerald, 2013), described in Chapter 2. ELs are puzzled by this rivalry because they do not understand the purpose of such permanent competition given that there are enough school-aged students in Haïti to fill every school, and that their schools will never have the physical capacity to welcome every school-aged student. Such situations create tensions for the participants who have to learn how to navigate not only these struggles and ensuing consequences, but also their relations with these other principals. Put differently, as much as they intersect and are interdependent, these school fields are also autonomous; hence, “a plurality of fields, thus a plurality of logics, a plurality of commonplace ideas, and a plurality of habitus” (Lingard & Christie, 2003, p. 324).

This further implies a certain power dynamic –another characteristic of field– where ELs and schools with more capital (economic-facilities, cultural-student achievement, symbolic-prestige) will, knowingly or un-knowingly, attract more students and can actually be more selective in their student intake. Moreover, there exists another form of power dynamics between public school principals and the MENFP. According to these ELs, they have no say in who gets to teach in their schools: the central office at the ministry level assigns teachers to them. As they enter their position as principals, they knew that this is the way of things, the MENFP’s regulative principles and own logic of practices. Nonetheless, these constraints from the ministry field (meso level) over the school field (micro level) have not dissuaded nor deterred some ELs from doing-what-needs-to-be-done (Vidovich, 2002). They clearly show their agency –guided by a moral order, their students’ progress and well-being– by finding ways of dealing (strategies) with certain issues without overtly confronting the power/hierarchy in charge (Prunty, 1985). For example, some request transfers of ‘unqualified’ teachers while others personally hire teachers for supplementary weekend classes.

Another example of such tensions comes from one of ELs’ main critique towards the MENFP. It refers to the disconnect between their two fields, regardless of the type of schools (see the dotted/broken lines in Figure 7.2). These relationship are, at best, contentious. As Jean-Marie and Sider (2014), and Solect (2009) equally point out, there is little to no (in some cases) oversight, support, and/or control of principals’ work and their schools from the ministry, especially in the private and religious sectors. As some participants hint to, echoing the authors’ findings, they are left to their own devices.

More than that, ELs remark on not always being aware of MENFP's plans and actions which have serious implications for the enactment of the ministry's policies; therefore, can become problematic. Simply put, school leaders' responses to any given policy depends on its nature, whether it is mandatory or recommended. And even then, these policies are adapted in each local field, and are subject to their own interpretations and final decisions. To paraphrase Vidovich (2001), the localized contexts of each school field influence the ways in which Haïtian school leaders put these policies in action, as well as the nature of their strategies. In other terms, their enactment of policies is partly based on their school's capacity to deal with them and put them in practice (Braun et al., 2011a), which is similar to what some ELs said regarding the new secondary reform. As Kanter (1981) suggests, sometimes the educational field itself, and I will add the MENFP in this instance, with all their characteristics, procedures, and regulations contribute to that situation.

According to Bourdieu (1998), the family “as an objective social category (a structuring structure) is the basis of the family as a subjective social category (a structured structure), a mental category which is the matrix of countless representations and actions” (p. 67). As such, family is perceived as “the most natural of social categories” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 67). And family members “are united by intense affective bonds” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 68) that create devotion and solidarity. Therefore, parents as social agents of/from that category/group occupy a unique position as being part of multiple fields, mainly the civil community field and education field, more precisely the local school field. And they view themselves as being part of both which

often leads to tensions, if not properly dealt with. On the one hand, there are the schools as structured social fields with their own values, habitus, principles, and norms that not only value their autonomy but also put in place mechanisms to limit certain influences from others fields and social agents. On the other hand, there are parents who want to have their input in what goes on in their child(ren)'s schools but are viewed by the school as outsiders, as social agents from other social fields. Therefore, when participants refer to the tensions between them, they zero in on the fact that these two fields intersect. As such, there exist some underlying struggles for power (who gets to do what), for legitimacy (who has the right to do what), and even for domination (who dictates what to do). Nonetheless, with their school field located within a broad education field and the broader social field, Haitian ELs are attuned to the context within which they are living, to its particularities and idiosyncrasies. In fact, they deal on a regular basis with the impact culture has on their work, especially with regard to parents' own culture like their folk beliefs, superstitions, ideologies, mentalities, and subsequent practices. These cultural factors strongly infiltrate and affect not only ELs' field, but their students as well (see Figure 7.2).

Civil community constitutes one of the many fields within the wider social field with its own practices and logics (Lingard & Christie, 2003). Its social agents are either individual members or groups of social agents organized into committees or associations. ELs demonstrate that their local fields do intersect with this field as they, themselves, entertain rapports and foster their students' involvement and engagement with their surrounding communities. This aligns with the Balance Leadership Framework proposed

by Waters and Cameron (2007) who assert that school leaders need to focus on purposeful community. As ELs in this study did, it is concerned with establishing connections and relationship with communities, and furthermore, with various stakeholders. Yet, participants also discuss how their connections with this field can be contentious and have a negative impact on their schools because of the field's social agents themselves who can be dangerous. In essence, through this plurality of fields, as Lingard and Christie (2003) argue, Haitian ELs learn how to deal with this plurality of habitus, given that the logic of practices and the structures inherent to each field vary from one to another, even when they have common grounds.

Research has shown that leading schools in challenging environments and circumstances is quite demanding for and on ELs as they adapt to how they deal with certain issues and take specific actions (Miller, 2016). In other words, environmental factors affect and impact each school field. Given the troubling, edgy, and violent context within which their schools evolve, it is understandable that Haitian school leaders insist unyieldingly on security measures, and more so because they cannot do anything to reduce or stop the tensions. As opposed to other settings where the school location determines the degree of violence or challenging circumstances a principal will face (Miller, 2016), it is not the case in Haiti where acts of violence, disturbance, and protests erupt and happen anywhere and at any moment; thus, warranting the security measures.

Furthermore, the political tensions and tense climate occurring within the country originate, in a large part, from the contentious relationships between state/government field and other fields. Consequently, this situation affects everyone in every field,

especially those involved in the school field (ELs, staff, personnel, teachers, students, parents). It disrupts their everyday lives, creates anxiety and nervousness, which in turn impacts performance in school. As Kanter (1981) stresses, ELs are not always responsible for the feeling of powerlessness others may experience. Sometimes there is not much they can do about it; yet, at times, they find ways to navigate around these situations and deal with some of these issues, such as offering counselling for teachers.

Clearly we can see that there exist various degrees of interrelations, intersectionality, and interdependency between the diverse social fields in this study; same as the interrelationships between contexts as critical policy scholars point out. As Jenkins (1992) concisely sums this up, the field is “the crucial mediating contest wherein external factors – changing circumstances – are brought to bear upon individual practice and institutions” (p. 86).

### Between policy, fields, contexts, and capital

ELs explained that their enactment of the ministry’s policies depends on the policy’s nature. Some policies are mandatory and they have to follow them such as curriculum and state exams. According to policy scholars like Ball (1993), Taylor (1997), and Vidovich (2002), they represent first order effects in the sense that they refer to transformations affecting the schooling structure (intermediate level) and ELs’ practices (micro-level).

However, regarding other reforms, more precisely the New Secondary reform, ELs’ responses varied: some already implemented it, others are gradually applying, and



certain were preparing to implement in the future. When examining ELs' rationale for holding back, Vidovich (2011) pointed out to the context of practice/effects within a continuous policy process where attention is paid to the various struggles encountered over this policy. And participants mentioned the diverse challenges and obstacles inherent to enacting this policy; for example, (high) cost of materials and resources, (lack of) teachers' training and competency, and (lack of) support for the ministry.

Moreover, in terms of policy influences, some *fondamentale* ELs mentioned that, although their schools are not concerned with that specific reform, they had to examine the reform, what it entailed; which in fact, led some to make actual changes in their practices in their schools. They are in fact anticipating (looking forward) and preparing their students who will later on attend these reformed secondary schools. That demonstrates how policy enactment is dynamic and acknowledges these ELs' role of agency, of sense-making, and of interpretation (Viccko & Riveros, 2015).

On the one hand, this critical policy sociology lens enabled us to examine the nuanced interpretations of policy in these specific contexts (Ball, 1994). As policy analysts would say, it highlights the schools' actual capacity to deal with the demands of the policy. On the other hand, Bourdieu's thinking tools allowed us to understand why and how these localized contexts are the way they are: how the fact that they have limited economic capital restricts what they can offer, how the fact that some of them do not have a strong enough social capital that could assist them in obtaining more economic capital, how some schools' position(s) within the field (especially in terms of symbolic and cultural capital) gives them more flexibility regarding their enactment of this policy. The specific localized context of each school influenced "the nature of practices/effects"

(Vidovich, 2001, p. 18) of this policy in their setting: the situated, professional, material, and external contexts. In essence, both Bourdieu and CPS in their own way showcased the multi-dimensional factors that come into play during policy enactment, and how the policy (and the subsequent enactment) is “subject to contestation and the different logics which pertain in the various fields through which it passes” (Heimans, 2012, p. 385).

## Concluding summary

Bouchez asserts that principalship represents

*Une action qu'on a cru, jusqu'à ces derniers temps, simple, évidente, facile, et qui se révèle, en fait, complexe, délicate, porteuse de dynamisme, de risques, de satisfactions, mais dévoreuse de temps et qui exige autant de qualités humaines que pédagogiques ou administratives ou de communication.* (Bouchez, 1997, p. 3)

[An action that, until recently, has been believed simple, obvious, easy, and that, in fact, is complex, delicate, dynamic, risky, satisfying, but time-consuming and demanding human qualities as much as pedagogical or administrative or communication skills (own translation)]

This highlights how the profession is not only complex, dynamic, and delicate altogether, but also entails a certain time-consuming risk-taking where principals' skills vary from humanistic to pedagogical to administrative to communicative. This aligns with the main argument advanced in this dissertation that, while educational leaders (ELs) in Haïtian schools shared similar ideas about student learning and achievement (SL/A), the ways in which they translated their understandings/interpretations into leadership practices varied depending on the various contexts or fields within which they

are working. These contexts or fields encompass Haïtian society, education, and school (private, public, religious) fields, among others. This analysis clearly establishes the fact that for Haïtian school leaders, their leadership and leadership practices are not lived in a unidimensional nor unidirectional fashion, especially given their contexts and habitus. In other words, they do not adhere to a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. Based on Dimmock (1999), we can understand what Haïtian ELs do on their day-to-day work: “deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, student and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower order duties (administrations)” (pp. 449-450). And they must do it all! However, some are more fortunate than others, having a well-established system within their school field that decentralizes the tasks, responsibilities and duties, leaving the ELs with the opportunities to concentrate more on certain aspects of their work while keeping an eye over everything. Yet, given the scope and magnitude of the challenges and obstacles they face, one is tempted to say that the Haïtian school is in crisis; a crisis, as Guimard (2010) explains, that stems from shattered hopes and deceptions in a system that is not able to provide the expected (and intended) outcomes for its students. Ultimately, school leaders are the ones dealing with, and facing, the implications and effects of such crisis, as their schools are often questioned, then criticized when achievement is not reached (Florin, 2010).

Nonetheless, from the evidence gathered, ELs in this study do not appear to be in a constant search to connect their leadership practices to student learning and achievement. They just know they have a work to do. They adopt a ‘doing-what-needs-

to-be-done' attitude towards SL/A in terms of strategies and practices they enact that necessitate multiple skills and are rooted in their local/specific context(s) and field(s). In essence, through their leadership, these school leaders create, in their own individual school field, a sense of possibility, and of making a difference.

Essentially, Haitian educational leadership at the school level cannot be boxed in. It is everywhere, and criss-crosses multiple complex social fields. It challenges the notion that educational leaders ought to be/do this or that. In fact, this study challenges the whole notion of 'one-size-fits-all'. It challenges the rhetoric around applying one specific approach or theory to educational leadership in one's school, as this Haitian educational leadership encompasses and embraces many approaches and theories of leadership. And it challenges the school effectiveness/school improvement movement as it problematizes its 'what works' approach. It has developed a school leadership practice—a *modus operandi* and a *modus vivendi* based on a school leadership habitus and forms of capital—that is shared within the field and among school leaders, as much as it is specific to each individual leader and her/his school field. It has a way of emphasizing cultural and symbolic capital to a point where they become natural to ELs, an integral part of their taken for granted social actions. Paradoxically, it can be both social justice-oriented and silent regarding the needs of the most vulnerable students. It shares some of its strategies and practices with other international educational systems, meaning others can recognize, and see themselves in what ELs do. Yet, it has a distinctive and unique twist to it that makes it typically and culturally Haitian.

The next and final chapter, Chapter 8, wraps up everything. It brings a conclusion to this study that was conceived for Haïtian ELs, for their use and concrete application, in the sense that it stresses the fact that they are not alone in their work, in their struggles. And more so, it implies that they can learn from one another without feeling threatened, with trust, openness, and thirst for knowledge, just as they have been with me during the data collection period.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

### Introduction

Throughout this study, we have noticed the multidimensional facets of educational leadership in general, and in a small, fragile, and developing country, in particular. This case-study about educational leadership in Haïtian urban schools has shown that it is transformational, interactive, steward and servant, moral, distributed, shared and participative, authoritative and managerial, inclusive, strategic, transactional, democratic, *inter alia*. It is all this without being one thing in particular. Above all, educational leadership is viewed as being a service to/for all, as building communities within and outside the school field. For the participants in this study, it is concerned with people: staff, personnel, teachers, and particularly students. In essence, educational leadership is a matter of guiding, conducting, gathering, energizing, mobilizing, and multi-tasking. As Sébastien-R exclaimed, “*c’est un métier de l’humain*” [it is a profession on/about mankind and of humanity (own translation)]. And through all my interviews with them, my observations, and the documents they refer to, Haïtian school leaders have tried to do just that. They were able to accomplish something –not as much as they wanted to– by looking for alternative ways –not always conventional or traditional or accepted– to circumvent their obstacles and challenges, and by “think[ing] outside the box” (Laurence-P). And at the core of their leadership reside their resiliency, their passion and drive, and their belief in what they are doing. Moreover, that supports

the main argument I advanced in the introductory chapter of this dissertation that, while educational leaders (ELs) in Haïtian schools share similar ideas about student learning and achievement (SL/A), the ways in which they translate their understandings/interpretations into leadership practices vary depending on the various contexts or fields within which they work, encompassing Haïtian society, education, and school (private, public, religious) fields, among others.

In this concluding chapter, I answer the stated research questions as I summarize some key points of findings and analysis, which then lead to areas for future research. Then I talk about the originality of the study, its contribution and significance to the field(s). Finally, I wrap up with some personal thoughts and reflections about my journey throughout this doctoral program, and particularly about conducting this specific research.

## I. Research questions answered and lessons learned

In the introductory chapter of this dissertation, I mentioned that this study's main purpose was to describe the state of leadership in Haïtian educational settings in order to inform policy makers, particularly during these changing times, of the reality and lived experienced of educational leaders (ELs), their relevance and importance as they enact their understandings/interpretations of student learning and achievement (SL/A) in their schools. To do so, I put forth several research questions that guided me throughout this study. Keeping in mind this central question, "How do educational leaders (ELs)

interpret student learning and achievement (SL/A), and translate their understandings/interpretations into leadership practices?” I use the diverse sub-questions to summarize the findings –answering the questions– and analysis –drawing out the lessons learned.

***How do ELs understand SL/A?***

Haïtian ELs’ understanding of SL/A is broad. It varies from a comprehensive approach that encompasses a holistic view of student learning and development, to a more technical approach that student achievement is based on grades. Yet, some ELs have reached a point where grades are no longer their main priority, which enables them to focus on other dimensions of their students’ educational journey. SL/A is also perceived as dynamic based on the principle that every child can learn. Lastly, Haïtian school leaders considered attitudes, values, manners, life and social skills as an integral part of SL/A.

***How do educational leaders (ELs) define leadership as a field of practice?***

Participants based their definition of educational leadership on their own values, visions, and philosophy, in addition to those of their congregations (for religious schools) and of the MENFP (for public schools). Seeing their purpose as a guide to students made them approach leadership as a service: a dynamic service that enabled them to give back to society. Principals touched on the humanistic side of educational leadership as they viewed the latter as a grand enterprise that they cannot do alone. As such, leadership also became distributed and shared, even as they maintained a certain level of control over



what was happening. Others perceived this whole endeavour as a quest and an advocacy for balance/equilibrium: between the system's/school's traditions while innovating and renewing for the present and the future.

***How do ELs perceive their roles and responsibilities within that field?***

Based on their perceptions of SL/A and educational leadership, ELs view their roles and responsibilities as multileveled as they must deal with the multiple facets of their specific schools. That implied focusing on instruction, pedagogy, and teaching, while at the same time attending to administrative and organizational tasks like recruitment and termination. Principals also saw themselves as the link, the interface between their schools and the outside world. Lastly, they stressed the importance of their staff and teachers who also shared in the responsibilities towards students, without neglecting the impact parents and communities had in the process.

***What strategies/practices, including forms of capital (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic), do ELs use to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices? What support or enablers are available for Haitian ELs to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices? What constraints and challenges do they face?***

Haitian ELs employed diverse leadership strategies and practices to foster SL/A in their respective schools. They touched on multiple domains of school life: culture, administration, human resources, relationships, students, teachers and pedagogy, materials, resources and infrastructures, finances and economy. Furthermore, they also

relied on various networks and associations, at different levels: internal, local, national, and international. By the same token, there were aspects of these same domains that were considered as challenges and constraints depending the settings, on how ELs approached them and how they affect their work. In other words, something that is an enabler for one principal can become a challenge for another, for example. Interestingly, regardless of their school types, private, religious or public, all school leaders do engage on all these domains as they work towards SL/A.

***How are the strategies/practices used by ELs to translate their understandings of SL/A into leadership practices influenced by the contexts within which they work?***

On one hand, participants mentioned how the broad contexts and fields impacted their work, one way or another. They talked about their relationship (or lack of) with the MENFP, and how the current political situation with its security issues affect their work, their staff, and mostly their students. On the other hand, school leaders referred to the recent educational reform touching the secondary education system. They expanded on its merits and flaws, on the various challenges principals face implementing it, on how some of them adapted to it while others are still ambivalent about it, and on how some took actions even when they were not concerned with it.

First and foremost, Haïtian ELs' leadership practices are the products of their actions and interactions (*strategies*) that are molded and shaped by these social agents' dispositions (*habitus*) and by how they used their various forms of *capital*, all of which depends on their contexts (*fields*) and their position within it (them). With that said, it all

comes down to how ELs have mastered the ‘feel of the game’ in order to play it properly, to use all their ‘cards’ accumulated through experiences, and a sense of belonging to a specific field.

Moreover, ELs who were able to capitalize on the social capital (and that of their associations) were better positioned to access certain economic capital that helped them implement their strategies. There were also those whose symbolic capital, the recognition they have within the broader education field, allowed them to gain some economic capital. Lastly, Haitian educational leadership proved that indeed it does not adhere to a one-size-fits-all approach, and that its social agents cannot be boxed in. They do ‘what-needs-to-be-done’ for their local school field as they have tried to address their needs as much as they can.

Looking back at the assumptions I put forth, in the introduction chapter, I can say that SL/A is, in fact, partially related to, or dependent on, the work of Haitian educational leaders in the school field and context. Not setting out to find a correlation between educational leadership and SL/A at the school level, I can nonetheless assert that the relationship between them is complex. Various factors need to be taken into account as they affect ELs’ work towards SL/A, the students themselves, and their educational journey, such as economics, politics, society, culture, religion (Moorosi & Bush, 2011), resources (human and material), geography, demography, health, *inter alia*. And indeed, these factors can serve as both enablers and constraints depending on how ELs use and manage their capital.

## II. Areas for future research

In Chapter 4, Methodology & Methods, I expanded on various limitations to this study. But, in fact, they constitute areas for future research that would add more knowledge to the field(s). First, future research should broaden the participant pool. Including other social agents involved in the school like staff, teachers, students, and parents would provide different perspectives on how they view their ELs' roles, responsibilities, strategies, and practices towards SL/A. And from there, a comparative analysis could be made to look for affirmations or discrepancies between what ELs said and how others perceive them. Another study could look at the students' perspectives on what they think they need to learn and succeed. Giving them voice within the Haitian context would be of significance as they are still under their parents' tutelage. MENFP's officials would constitute a research study in itself as they represent a different level of leadership, being part of multiple social fields and interacting with these fields differently.

Secondly, expand the location for future studies on educational leadership in Haïti. This study was conducted in one department (province), and furthermore in its metropolitan area. In other words, it looked at ELs' leadership in an urban setting, with all that is attached to that in terms of facilities, supports, and access. Therefore, replicating this study in another department will provide new insights to the literature. Moreover, focusing on rural areas again will offer additional knowledge as the contexts, challenges, obstacles, and realities of these regions vary greatly from urban hubs.

Future research could be conducted over a different timeline. Although I had no control over that was happening in the country, politically speaking, conducting a similar study at a different period (with less turmoil and tensions) could yield new perspectives. As Jenkins (1992) asserted, the notion of practice is closely linked to that of space and time.

And finally, more comparative studies of educational leadership could be done in other small, fragile, and developing countries, especially in the Caribbean. And they will add more to the literature by using the theoretical framework elaborated for this study.

### III. Originality, contribution, and significance of the study

My research contributed to the scholarly literature in various ways across several fields of study. The study's significance and contribution to the fields of educational leadership and of comparative and international education (CIE) are closely related and intertwined. Within these specific bodies of literature, educational leadership in Haïti has not been much examined although it has been extensively studied in other settings, particularly developing countries. This study is not only showing that educational leadership specifically in Haïti, a small, fragile and developing country, is complex and multidimensional, is dependent on various fields and contexts, on ELs' habitus and forms of capital, but also that components are dynamically interconnected and inter-related, despite (in spite of) tensions and struggles that are typically Haïtian. Similarly, very little scholarly research has been conducted from the vantage point of Haïtian students'

learning and achievement (or lack thereof), and the practices and strategies surrounding them. Therefore, what this study brings to the research community is an alternative look on both issues, educational leadership and student learning and achievement (SL/A): how school leaders translated their discourses on SL/A into leadership practices. This new approach has not yet been researched within the Haitian context, much less from a CIE framework.

Furthermore, these issues under study, educational leadership and SL/A, are both important for Haïti's own educational development and progress. The results have, thus, the potential to inform policy makers and other stakeholders in their decision-making process, particularly at this moment where certain education reforms from the ministry level are being implemented and put in place throughout the country.

One of the study's original contributions relates to the use of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' as an alternate theoretical discussion of leadership practices. Eacott (2013b) argued that research looking into the dynamics of school leadership practice lacked that easy-sell feel given its non-marketable message, yet it "sheds light on previously under-developed or unexplored features of practice" which provides a "far greater chance of surviving the test of time [...] than the repetitious, prescriptive, and aspirational tone of much work in the area" (p. 185). Or as Bourdieu (1999) stated, it provides "a complex and multi-layered representation capable of articulating the same realities but in terms that are different and, sometimes, irreconcilable" (p. 3). This approach thus helped to "problematize rather than spin a

position, and open up dialogue about activity rather than move directly to either condemn or to prescribe action” (Gunter, 2002, p. 20).

Through this Bourdieuan theoretical framework, enhanced with critical policy study principles, this research produced a “new gaze... a genuine conversation... a mental revolution” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 251) in how educational leadership, its role and its practices are perceived by social agents, the school leaders, which can potentially lead to a transformation of their views on their work, as well as how we view their leadership. And exactly that occurred to Simone-R who exclaimed: “*Vous venez de m’ouvrir les yeux sur certaines [choses]. Vous venez de m’ouvrir les yeux. Je me sens plus déterminée, plus motivée... J’aurais aimé qu’il y ait plus de gens comme ça qui viennent pour nous ouvrir les yeux*” [You have just opened my eyes on certain [matters]. You just opened my eyes. I feel more determined, more motivated... I wish there were more people like that coming to open our eyes (own translation)] (personal communication, February 29, 2016). In other words, going through this interview, this process has opened her eyes on how she sees things, which has made her more determined and motivated to move forward. She also wished that more researchers would come to them to push them outside of their comfort zone.

This research is also a response to Jean-Marie and Sider’s (2014) call for continuous study of leadership practices in fragile states like Haïti, as they were themselves answering to Dimmock and Walker’s (2000) appeal for more CIE research in school leadership. Such research will help build our knowledge base about school

leadership across contexts outside of the West. In a national sense, this study contributes to Haïti's educational journey with a focus on school leaders.

Finally, as my principals themselves called for more research to be conducted on/about the education system, about their work and daily lives (with researchers returning in the country to contribute to society at large), this study gave them voice. As one participant shared, it allowed them to express themselves, to inform others of what it is that they actually do, and to make them have a better understanding of their work as school leaders. Furthermore, this research gave them a platform, a medium to transmit (to future generations) the wealth of knowledge they have accumulated throughout the years, as another participant pointed out. And that, to me, *vaut son pesant d'or* [is worth its weight in gold (own translation)], and adds value and originality to this study.

## Personal concluding thoughts and reflections

In my (self)positionality section in Chapter 1, I talked about how using that framework not only applies to the participants in this study but to me as well. I anticipated tapping into my social capital, both personal and professional, to recruit participants, which I did without a problem. I anticipated how my own linguistic habitus and cultural capital might be noticed and picked on, which occurred with some participants who clearly pointed to them. That, in itself, was not an issue for me because having lived in Haïti where languages, manners, and deportments are highly valued, I learned how to address these comments and move the conversations along. I anticipated



that, given my professional experiences and my nationality, there would be the likelihood that some participants would be more receptive to the national professional, whereas others will be more open to the international researcher. In that front, the actual experiences were mixed. Very few referred to my previous experiences in the country, which was interesting to notice. Others made connections to my personal social capital and were receptive to that. Surprisingly, most (if not all) participants acknowledged the national who is also an international researcher conducting a study for a doctoral degree. As it turned out, they were receptive to both the Haïtian citizen and the researcher from Canada who came back to study her country. That made me realize the complexity of my identity as I am not just one person but the sum of various experiences and positioning. Yet, throughout this journey, what I did not anticipate was that “once one thinks in terms of “habitus” [and field, capitals, strategy], its effects can be seen everywhere” (Maton 2008, p. 50). And that was exactly what I experienced. Using Bourdieu for this research had me reflect on my own history, family history, trajectories, experiences, and schooling/education through his thinking tools. Basically, I reviewed my whole life through this lens and understood it in a different light, from a different vantage point; process that was a little unsettling and unnerving in the beginning, to become eye-opening, and finally accepting.

These experiences and whole process allowed me to understand participants’ journeys on a deeper level. Because if I, the researcher, had come to terms with this feeling of existing in two worlds where I was experiencing a duality both intellectually and emotionally, I can completely comprehend what their situations must be like, as

social agents in their own local school fields, the broader education field, and the overarching societal field with interconnections everywhere and interactions with everyone, meanwhile keeping their students' learning, development, and achievement at the forefront of their mind. Therefore, this quote takes its full meaning to me and for my study as it makes all of Haitian educational leaders' hard work, successes, trials, and challenges completely worthwhile, and provides us with hope and, as some participants would say, with faith in the future, while underlining and emphasizing the potential of these school leaders to make changes, particularly with regard to their students' learning, development, and achievement.

Being an educational leader is difficult. It is complex. It is rarely honored in song or book. But when the final chapter is written, it will be education and educational leaders who will have contributed most to the protection of democracy, to equity, to justice, and to human dignity. (Thomas & Davies, 1998, p. 46)

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## Appendixes

### *Appendix A. Letter of invitation (English version)*

London, Ontario, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

#### **Re: Invitation to participate in research about educational leadership in Haiti**

Madam,  
 Sir,

You are being invited to participate in a study that we, **Carolyne Verret** (research staff/study investigator) and **Dr. Marianne Larsen** (principal investigator), are conducting. The study aims to understand Haitian educational leaders' understandings/conceptions about student learning and achievement in primary and secondary schools. It also intends to find out about the support you rely on in your work as well as the challenges and constraints you face. The following research question serves as guide for the purpose and objective of the study: "*How do educational leaders (ELs) translate their understandings of student learning and achievement (SL/A) into leadership practices?*"

The study involves:

- An initial semi-structured interviews lasting up to 90 minutes, regarding your professional leadership practices. It can take place at a location and time of your convenience.
- A 2-week (10 days) observation at your school.
- A 2<sup>nd</sup> semi-structured interview after the observations to clarify the observations about your school, lasting 60 to 90 minutes, at a location and time of your convenience.

However you have the choice to participate in *the initial interview only* **or** in *the interviews and observations*.

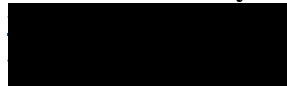
You will also be asked to provide artifacts from your school such as daily schedule/routine, policy, programs and agenda.

If you would like to more information about this study, please contact the study investigator at the contact information given below.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

**Carolyne Verret**  
**Ph.D. Candidate**  
**Faculty of Education**  
**Western University**



In attachment: Letter of information



**Appendix B. Letter of invitation (French version)**London, Ontario, 1<sup>er</sup> Septembre 2015.**Objet: Invitation à participer dans une recherche sur le leadership éducatif en Haïti**Madame,  
Monsieur,

Vous êtes invité(e) à participer à une étude que nous, **Carolyne Verret** (chercheuse du projet) et **Dr. Marianne Larsen** (chercheuse principale), entreprenons. Cette étude vise à comprendre les conceptions des leaders éducatifs Haïtiens par rapport à l'apprentissage et à la réussite scolaire dans les écoles primaires et secondaires. Elle entend également reconnaître le système de support sur lequel s'appuient ces leaders dans le cadre de leur travail, ainsi que de signaler les défis et contraintes auxquels ils font face. Cette question de recherche sert de guide permettant d'atteindre le but et les objectifs fixés : « *Comment est-ce que les leaders éducatifs (ELs) traduisent leurs compréhensions de l'apprentissage et la réussite scolaires (SL/A) en pratiques de leadership ?* »

L'étude implique:

- Un entretien initial semi-dirigé/structure durant jusqu'à 90 minutes, concernant vos pratiques professionnelles de leadership. Il aura lieu à l'heure et à l'endroit qui vous conviennent.
- Une observation de 2 semaines (10 jours) de votre école.
- Un second (2<sup>e</sup>) entretien semi-dirigé/structuré juste après les observations afin de clarifier les observations concernant votre école. Celui-ci durera entre 60 et 90 minutes, à lieu et à l'heure qui vous conviennent le mieux.

Toutefois, vous avez le choix de participer soit à *l'entretien seulement*, soit *aux entretiens et observations*.

Vous serez également invité(e) à fournir des documents de votre école tels que horaire/routine scolaire, politiques/régulations, agenda.

Si vous souhaitez obtenir davantage d'information sur ce projet, veuillez contacter la chercheuse de l'étude aux coordonnées fournies ci-dessous.

Sincères remerciements !

Cordialement,

**Carolyne Verret**  
**Doctorante**  
**Faculté d'Éducation**  
**Western University**

En attachement : Lettre d'information et de consentement





*Appendix C. Letter of information and Consent (English version)*

London, Ontario, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

**Project title:**

How do educational leaders translate their understandings of student learning and achievement into leadership practices? A case-study about leadership in Haitian schools.

**Letter of Information and Consent**

**Principal Investigator:**

Dr. Marianne Larsen, Ph.D.  
Faculty of Education  
University of Western Ontario



**Student Researcher:**

Carolyne Verret  
Faculty of Education  
University of Western Ontario



**Invitation to Participate**

You are invited to participate in this research study that we, **Carolyne Verret** (student researcher) and **Dr. Marianne Larsen** (principal investigator) are conducting about educational leadership in the Haitian context because as a school administrator your leadership impacts student learning and achievement.

**Purpose of the study**

The study aims to understand Haitian educational leaders' understandings/conceptions about student learning and achievement in primary and secondary schools. It also intends to find out about the support you rely on in your work as well as the challenges and constraints you face. The following research question serves as guide for the purpose and objective of the study: *"How do educational leaders (ELs) translate their understandings of student learning and achievement (SL/A) into leadership practices?"*

**Length of the study**

It is expected that you will be involved in the study:

- for **90 minutes one (1) day**, if you participate in the interview only;
- for **twelve (12) days** if you take part in the interview and observations. In this case, there will be 2 days for 60-90 minutes interviews, and 10 study visits in your school (each visit lasting up to 6 hours).

### **Study procedures**

If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to take part in, or provide, the following:

- 1. Semi-structured interviews.** One (1) initial interview will take place before the observations, lasting up to 90 minutes, at a location and time of your convenience. It will explore your conceptions of leadership and SL/A, and of your role and responsibilities, the practices and strategies in place at your school, and the policies impacting your practice. A second (2<sup>nd</sup>) interview will happen immediately after the 2-week observation. It will be based on the observations and will focus on the themes/categories observed. However you have the choice to take part in the interviews only; in that case, you will be interviewed once. Furthermore, you also have the option of not answering specific questions, or have certain answer(s) removed/erased from the recordings.
- 2. Observations.** Observations will last 2 school weeks (10 full days) and will take place in your school. Based on your answers during the initial interview, the student researcher will observe: practices/strategies, schedule/routine, ELs agenda, interactions, obstacles/challenges, support/enablers, resources, events/critical incidents, leadership by others. Given the nature of the study, these observations will also take note on your interactions and encounters with other people in the school as part of your day-to-day life (who initiates the interactions, their nature and how they conclude). The student researcher will briefly explain her presence to the person you interact with and the nature of the observations. Then she will ask for verbal assent/understanding that she could continue with the observations of the interaction with the other person. In the case the person does not accept, she will step aside, will not take notes and will absent herself from this specific encounter. Furthermore if there are specific interactions that you do not want to be observed, the student researcher will not observe those and will not take notes regarding them.
- 3. Documents.** You will be asked to provide documents such as the school schedule, your daily agenda/schedule, activities programs and school projects/policies related to student learning and achievement, for the study.

### **Inclusion & exclusion criteria**

In order to participate in this study, you **must meet all these criteria**. You must:

- 1.** Occupy a leadership position such as principal/director, vice-principal/assistant-director, director of study or pedagogical director
- 2.** Be located in Port-au-Prince, Haiti or the West department
- 3.** Work in primary school and/or secondary school
- 4.** Work in a school that is private non-denominational, private congregational (religious) **or** public

5. Offer the Haitian curriculum in your school
6. Agree to be audio-recorded during the interviews

If you **do not meet all 6 criteria**, you are not eligible to take part in this study.

### **Possible benefits, risks and harms, and compensation in participating in this study**

Some of the possible benefits to you include:

- A critical awareness of your strengths as an educational leader, as well as your areas for future improvement;
- An understanding of the connection between your conceptions of students' learning, progress, development and achievement, and your leadership in terms of actions, programs and practices;
- A reflection on the challenges, constraints and success of your work, how you face them as well as the journey leading to them.

Some of the possible benefits to society consist of:

- Understanding of educational leaders' work, actions and practices within their context;
- Informing policy-makers of the reality of educational leadership to assist them in elaborating and planning more research-based reforms and policies.

There are no known or anticipated risks and discomforts associated with participating in this research.

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

### **Possible withdrawal**

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any point during the course of the project by informing the student researcher that you do not wish to continue with the interviews and/or observations. You can do so without any concerns of repercussion. If you decide to withdraw from the study, you will have the option of having your data removed and destroyed; otherwise, data collected prior to this point will be retained for the project.

### **Confidentiality**

Any and all information you provide is confidential, and will not be shared with anyone or with any institution. Your name and identifiable references will be removed from the final transcriptions and report in order to keep your anonymity. The data will be electronically encrypted and stored for a period of 5 years. After that period, it will be professionally destroyed.



**Voluntary participation: Rights**

Participation in the study is **completely voluntary**. The choice to be part of this project is your own. You will not be (or should feel) pressured nor coerced by the researcher(s) nor any third party. You may decide not to participate in this study. Even after you consent, you have to right to withdraw from the study at any time, as stated previously.

**Contact for further information**

If you want to have more information about the study, its purpose and objectives, or if you have any concerns or comments regarding your participation, you may contact the student researcher or her supervisor/principal investigator.

- Student researcher: **Carolyne Verret, M.Ed.** – email: [REDACTED]
- Principal investigator (supervisor): **Dr. Marianne Larsen, Ph.D.** – email: [REDACTED]

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may also contact The Office of Research Ethics at the University of Western Ontario, in London, Ontario, Canada, by phone [REDACTED], or by email:

[REDACTED]

**Consent**

Your consent is required prior to any participation. You will be asked to sign a consent form attesting that you have read this information letter, understand the study and are willing to participate in the project. By signing the consent form, you do not waive any legal rights as a research participant.

*This letter is yours to keep for future reference.*

**Project title:**

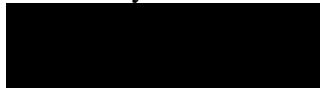
How do educational leaders translate their understandings of student learning and achievement into leadership practices? A case-study about leadership in Haitian schools.

**Consent Form**

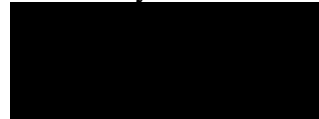
*“You do not waive any legal rights by signing this form”*

**Principal Investigator:**

Dr. Marianne Larsen, Ph.D.  
Faculty of Education  
University of Western Ontario

**Student Researcher:**

Carolyn Verret  
Faculty of Education  
University of Western Ontario



I have read the Letter of Information. I have had the nature and the purpose of the study explained to me and I agree to participate in the study. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to be audio-recorded during the interview.

I agree to participate in the **interview only**.

I agree to participate in the **interviews and observations**.

I consent to the use of unidentified quotes obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research.

**Participant's name (print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Person obtaining informed consent (print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Appendix D. Letter of information and Consent (French version)*

London, Ontario, 1<sup>er</sup> Septembre 2015.

**Titre du Projet:**

Comment est-ce que les leaders éducatifs traduisent leurs compréhensions de l'apprentissage et de la réussite scolaires en pratiques de leadership ? Une étude de cas sur le leadership dans les écoles Haïtiennes.

**Lettre d'Information et de Consentement**

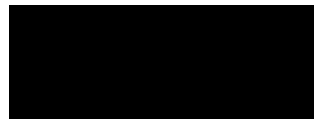
**Chercheuse Principale:**

Dr. Marianne Larsen, Ph.D.  
Faculté d'Éducation  
Université de Western Ontario



**Étudiante-Chercheuse:**

Carolyne Verret  
Faculté d'Éducation  
Université de Western Ontario



**Invitation à Participer**

Vous êtes invité(e) à participer à une étude que nous, **Carolyne Verret** (étudiante-chercheuse) et **Dr. Marianne Larsen** (chercheuse principale), entreprenons concernant le leadership éducatif dans le contexte Haïtien, parce qu'en tant qu'administrateur(trice) scolaire, votre leadership impacte l'apprentissage et la réussite de vos élèves.

**But de l'étude**

Cette étude vise à comprendre les conceptions/compréhensions des leaders éducatifs Haïtiens sur l'apprentissage et la réussite scolaire dans les écoles primaires et secondaires. Elle entend également reconnaître le système de support sur lequel s'appuient ces leaders dans le cadre de leur travail, ainsi que de signaler les défis et contraintes auxquels ils font face. Cette question de recherche sert de guide permettant d'atteindre le but et les objectifs fixés : « *Comment est-ce que les leaders éducatifs (ELs) traduisent leurs compréhensions de l'apprentissage et de la réussite scolaires (SL/A) en pratiques de leadership ?* »

**Durée de l'étude**

Nous estimons que vous serez impliqué(e) dans ce projet:

- pour **90 minutes, un (1) jour**, si vous participez à l'entretien uniquement;

- pour **douze (12) jours**, si vous prenez part aux entretiens et observations. Dans ce cas-là, il y aura 2 jours d'entretiens de 60-90 minutes, et 10 visites de recherche dans votre école (chaque visite durant jusqu'à 6 heures)

### **Procédures de recherche**

Si vous acceptez de participer à cette recherche, vous aurez à prendre part aux activités suivantes, et à fournir les documents suivants:

- 4. Entretiens semi-dirigés/ semi-structurés.** Un (1) entretien initial aura lieu avant les observations, allant jusqu'à environ 90 minutes. Il aura lieu à l'heure et au local de votre choix. Il explorera les thèmes suivants : vos conceptions du leadership et de SL/A, ainsi que votre rôle et responsabilité, les pratiques et stratégies mises en place dans votre école, et les politiques qui influencent votre pratique. Un second (2<sup>e</sup>) entretien sera tenu immédiatement après les observations. Il sera basé sur ces dernières et se portera sur les thèmes/catégories observés. Cependant, vous avez le choix de participer aux entretiens seulement ; dans ce cas, vous ne serez interviewé(e) qu'une fois. De plus, vous avez également l'option de ne pas répondre à certaines questions, ou d'avoir certaines de vos réponses enlevées/effacées des enregistrements.
- 5. Observations.** Les observations dureront 2 semaines de classes (10 jours complets) et auront lieu dans votre école. Basées sur vos réponses durant l'entretien initial, la chercheuse observera : pratiques/stratégies, horaire/routines, agenda ELs, interactions, obstacles/défis, support/facilitateurs, ressources, événements/incidents critiques, leadership par d'autres. Compte tenu de la nature de l'étude, ces observations noteront également vos interactions et rencontres avec d'autres personnes à l'école dans le cadre de votre travail de tous les jours (qui a initié les échanges, leur nature et aboutissement). La chercheuse du projet expliquera brièvement sa présence et la nature de ses observations à la personne avec laquelle vous entrez en contact. Ensuite elle sollicitera leur accord verbal pour qu'elle poursuive ses observations de votre interaction avec l'autre personne. Au cas où ces personnes n'acceptent pas, elle se retirera, ne prendra pas de notes et s'absentera de cette rencontre. De plus si, pour certains échanges spécifiques, vous ne voulez pas être observé(e), la chercheuse ne le fera pas et ne prendra aucunes notes à leur sujet.
- 6. Documents.** Pour cette étude, vous serez invité(e) à fournir des documents tels que l'horaire scolaire, votre horaire/agenda journalier, les activités, programmes et projets/politiques scolaires en rapport à l'apprentissage et à la réussite scolaires.

### **Critères d'inclusion & d'exclusion**

Afin de participer dans ce projet, vous **devez répondre à tous ces critères**. Vous devez :

1. Occuper un poste de leadership tel que directeur d'école, assistant-directeur, directeurs des études, directeur-pédagogique
2. Être situé(e) à Port-au-Prince, en Haïti ou dans le département de l'Ouest



3. Travailler dans une école primaire et/ou une école secondaire
4. Travailler dans une école privée laïque, privée congréganiste (religieuse) **ou** publique
5. Offrir le curriculum Haïtien dans votre école
6. Accepter d'être enregistré(e) durant les entretiens

Si **vous ne remplissez pas tous les 6 critères ci-mentionnés**, vous n'êtes pas admissible à prendre part à cette étude.

### **Avantages possibles, risques et préjudices, et rémunération à participer dans ce projet**

Quelques-uns des bénéfices que vous pouvez en tirer comprennent :

- Une prise de conscience critique de vos atouts en tant que leader éducatif, de même que vos domaines d'amélioration future ;
- Une bonne compréhension de la relation entre vos conceptions de l'apprentissage, du progrès, du développement et de la réussite scolaires, et votre leadership en termes d'actions, de programmes et de pratiques;
- Une réflexion sur les défis, contraintes et succès de votre travail, sur la manière dont vous y faites face, ainsi que de votre parcours pour y parvenir.

Quelques-uns des bénéfices pour la société se résument ainsi :

- Comprendre le travail des leaders éducatifs, leurs actions et pratiques dans leur propre contexte ;
- Informer les décideurs de la réalité du leadership éducationnel afin de les aider dans l'élaboration et la planification de réformes et politiques davantage basées sur la recherche.

Il n'existe aucun risque connu ou anticipé, ni aucun inconfort lié à votre participation dans cette recherche.

Vous ne serez pas rémunéré(e) pour votre participation à cette étude.

### **Possibilité de retrait**

Vous avez le droit de vous retirer de cette étude à tout moment pendant la durée du projet, en informant l'étudiante-chercheuse que vous ne désirez plus continuer avec les entretiens et/ou les observations. Vous pouvez le faire sans aucune crainte de répercussion. Si vous décidez de vous retirer de l'étude, vous aurez l'option d'avoir toutes vos données enlevées et détruites ; sinon, les données collectées de vous jusqu'à ce point seront retenues pour le projet.

### **Confidentialité**

Toute information que vous divulguiez est confidentielle, et ne sera partagée avec quiconque, ni avec aucune institution. Votre nom et toutes autres informations se référant à votre personne seront supprimés des dernières transcriptions et du rapport final en vue de préserver



vos données personnelles. Toutes les données seront sauvegardées et cryptées électroniquement pour une durée de 5 ans. Après cette période, elles seront détruites professionnellement.

### **Participation volontaire : Droits**

Votre participation à cette étude est **entièrement volontaire**. Le choix de faire partie de ce projet est la vôtre à part entière. Vous ne serez (et vous ne devez pas vous sentir) ni pressuré(e) ni forcé(e) par la chercheuse ou par aucune tierce personne. Vous pouvez décider de ne pas participer à cette recherche. Et même après avoir accepté, vous avez le droit de vous retirer de l'étude à tout moment, comme mentionné préalablement.

### **Contacts pour plus d'information**

Si vous souhaitez obtenir plus de renseignements sur le projet, sur son but et ses objectifs, ou si vous avez des préoccupations ou des commentaires concernant votre participation, vous pouvez contacter l'étudiante-chercheuse ou son superviseur/chercheuse principale.

- Étudiante-chercheuse: **Carolyn Verret, M.Ed.** – courriel: [REDACTED]
- Chercheuse Principale (superviseur): **Dr. Marianne Larsen, Ph.D.** – courriel: [REDACTED]

Si vous avez d'autres questions sur vos droits en tant que participant de recherche, ou encore sur la procédure de cette étude, vous pouvez également contacter le Bureau d'Éthique de Recherche à l'Université de Western Ontario, à London, Ontario, au Canada, par téléphone [REDACTED], ou par courriel : [REDACTED]

### **Consentement**

Votre consentement est requis avant une quelconque participation. Vous serez invité(e) à signer un formulaire de consentement attestant que vous avez bien lu cette lettre d'information, que vous avez compris le projet et que vous êtes prête(e) à y participer. En signant le formulaire de consentement, vous ne renoncez à aucuns droits légaux en tant que participant de recherche.

*Cette lettre est la vôtre, à conserver pour référence ultérieure.*

**Titre du Projet:**

Comment est-ce que les leaders éducatifs traduisent leurs compréhensions de l'apprentissage et de la réussite scolaires en pratiques de leadership ? Une étude de cas sur le leadership dans les écoles Haïtiennes.

**Formulaire de Consentement**

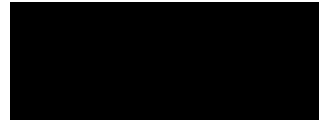
« Vous ne renoncez à aucun droit légal en signant ce formulaire »

**Chercheuse Principale:**

Dr. Marianne Larsen, Ph.D.  
Faculté d'Éducation  
Université de Western Ontario

**Étudiante-Chercheuse:**

Carolyne Verret  
Faculté d'Éducation  
Université de Western Ontario



J'atteste avoir lu la Lettre d'Information. La chercheuse de l'étude m'a expliqué la nature et les objectifs de l'étude, et j'accepte de participer au projet. Toutes les questions ont été répondues à ma satisfaction.

J'accepte d'être enregistré(e) durant l'entretien.

J'accepte de participer à l'entretien seulement.

J'accepte de participer aux entretiens et observations.

Je consens à l'utilisation de citations non identifiées obtenues lors de l'étude pour la diffusion de cette recherche.

**Nom du (de la) Participant(e):** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(caractère d'imprimerie)*

**Signature du (de la) Participant(e):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Personne obtenant le consentement**  
*(caractère d'imprimerie)*

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Appendix E. Instruments (English version)**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> interview before observation: Questions**

##### *Your history, your trajectory & your school*

1. Demographic about principal: name, age, years in the profession, years in this school
2. Why did you become a principal/a vice-principal/a director? How did it happen?
3. What qualifications or trainings do you have?
4. Tell me a little bit about this school, its composition, demographic, background.

##### *Your leadership*

5. How do you define leadership, educational leadership (EL)? What does EL mean to you? Give me an analogy and/or a metaphor that best describes how you envision EL
6. What does leadership look like in your setting? Can you give me specific examples?

##### *Student learning & student achievement*

7. How do you define & understand student learning? student achievement?
8. How are SL/A demonstrated in your school? Can you give me specific examples?

##### *Roles & responsibilities*

9. What do you think are your general role and responsibilities to achieve SL/A
10. What do you think are the role, responsibilities and contribution of others in the school towards SL/A?
11. What do you think are the role, responsibilities and contribution of others outside the school towards SL/A?

##### *Leadership practices & strategies*

12. What actions, programs, strategies and practices have you put in place to achieve SL/A?
13. Which ones have been successful? How? Why?
14. Which ones have not been successful? How? Why not?
15. What supports and/or forms of capitals do you tap into in your leadership practices regarding SL/A? Can you give me specific examples?

16. What social networks and associations do you have in place within and outside of the school do you draw upon in your work towards SL/A? How were they constructed? How do they impact your work? Can you give me specific examples?
17. What obstacles do you encounter when trying to achieve SL/A? How do you overcome them or resolve them (if you do)? Can you give me specific examples?
18. What challenges do you face when implementing SL/A actions, programs, practices and strategies? How do you overcome them or resolve them (if you do)? Can you give me specific examples?
19. How are your staff & teachers affected by these supports, networks, challenges and obstacles? Can you give me specific examples?
20. What are the persisting challenges/problems related to SL/A?
21. How, if at all, have your training (initial and continuing) and qualifications enable you to foster SL/A in your school?

*Policies*

22. Are there policies you draw upon to achieve your goals around SL/A for example, Ministry, regional or international policy documents, programs, action-plans and/or strategies related to EL and/or SL/A?
23. What are their origins? Where do they come from? Who wrote them? How did you come in contact with them?
24. Are you (and your leadership practices) affected/impacted by them? In other words, do you consider/find them useful or not? Why?
25. How could educational policy better support you in achieving your goals around SL/A?
26. To conclude this interview, is there anything else, relevant to this study, that you would like to add? Anything related to your leadership toward student learning and achievement?

**2<sup>nd</sup> interview after observation: Themes covered**

1. Specific strategies
2. ELs leadership practices, strategies & actions
3. Leadership practices, strategies & actions by others
4. Events, critical incidents
5. Enablers, support
6. Obstacles, challenges
7. ELs daily agenda& schedule
8. School schedule & routines
9. Interactions
10. Social associations
11. School surroundings & location
12. Resources

**Observation grid***Components*

1. Specific strategies mentioned by ELs during initial interview
2. Physical and material settings
3. School location and surroundings
4. Events, behaviors and critical incidents
5. Human setting & interactions
6. Morning, mid-day and afternoon specific routines
7. School schedule
8. ELs daily schedule
9. Leadership strategies and practices
10. Enablers and supports towards SL/A
11. Obstacles to SL/A
12. Challenges to SL/A
13. Evidence of social networks and associations, and interactions

Site # \_\_\_\_\_

One-time observation # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>School schedule</b>			
<b>Morning specific routines</b>			
<b>Mid-day specific routines</b>			
<b>Afternoon specific routines</b>			

Site # \_\_\_\_\_

One-time observation # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Description	Notes
<b>Internal physical settings</b>		
<b>Internal material settings</b>		



Site # \_\_\_\_\_

One-time observation # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Description	Notes
Physical location		
External surroundings		

Site # \_\_\_\_\_

Daily observation # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Time	Evidence of	People involved Location Initiator	Notes
<b>Specific strategies mentioned by ELs during interviews</b>				
<b>Leadership strategies &amp; practices by ELs</b>				
<b>Broader leadership strategies/practices</b>				
<b>Events &amp; critical incidents &amp; behaviors</b>				
<b>Enablers &amp; support to SL/A</b>				
<b>Obstacles to SL/A</b>				
<b>Challenges to SL/A</b>				
<b>ELs daily schedule/agenda</b>				
<b>Human settings &amp; interactions</b>				
<b>Evidence of social networks &amp; associations</b>				

## *Appendix F. Instruments (French version)*

### **1<sup>er</sup> entretien avant l'observation : Questions**

#### *Votre parcours, votre trajet et votre école*

1. Données démographiques du leader: nom, âge, nombre d'années dans la profession, nombre d'années dans cette école
2. Pourquoi êtes-vous devenu(e) directeur/assistant-directeur/vice-directeur ? Comment cela s'est-il produit ?
3. Quelles formations avez-vous eue/suivi ?
4. Parlez-moi un peu de cette école, sa composition économique, démographique, son histoire

#### *Votre leadership*

5. Comment définissez-vous le leadership, le leadership éducatif (EL) ? Que signifie l'EL pour vous ? Donnez-moi des analogies et/ou métaphores qui décrivent le mieux votre vision du l'EL
6. À quoi ressemble le leadership dans votre établissement ? Pouvez-vous me donner des exemples spécifiques ?

#### *Apprentissage & réussite scolaire*

7. Comment définissez-vous et comprenez-vous l'apprentissage scolaire? La réussite scolaire? (SL/A)
8. Comment est-ce SL/A est démontré dans votre école ? Pouvez-vous me donner des exemples ?

#### *Rôles & responsabilités*

9. Que pensez-vous être votre principal rôle et vos responsabilités en vue d'atteindre SL/A dans cette école ?
10. Que pensez-vous être les rôles, responsabilités et contribution du personnel scolaire en vue d'atteindre SL/A dans cette école ?
11. Que pensez-vous être les rôles, responsabilités et contribution d'autres personnes en dehors de l'école (parents, membres de la communauté, société) en vue d'atteindre SL/A dans cette école?

*Pratiques & stratégies de leadership*

12. Quels actions, programmes, stratégies et pratiques avez-vous mis en place en vue d'atteindre SL/A ?
13. Lesquels ont eu du succès ? Comment ? Pourquoi ?
14. Lesquels n'ont pas eu de succès ? Comment ? Pourquoi pas ?
15. Quels supports et/ou formes de capital (économique, social, culturel) utilisez-vous dans votre pratique de leadership en vue d'atteindre SL/A? Pouvez-vous me donner des exemples spécifiques ?
16. Quels réseaux sociaux et associations avez-vous en place au sein de l'école et en dehors, auxquels vous faites appel pour votre travail visant SL/A ? Comment ont-ils été formés ? Comment influencent-ils/impactent-ils votre travail ? Pouvez-vous me donner des exemples spécifiques?
17. Quels obstacles rencontrez-vous dans votre travail en rapport à SL/A ? À quels obstacles faites-vous face dans votre travail en rapport à SL/A? Comment y faites-vous face ? Comment les résolvez-vous (si vous y arrivez) ? Pouvez-vous me donner des exemples spécifiques?
18. À quels défis faites-vous face quand vous mettez sur pied des programmes, actions, pratiques et stratégies visant SL/A ? Comment vous y prenez-vous pour y faire face ou pour les résoudre (si vous y parvenez) ? Pouvez-vous me donner des exemples spécifiques?
19. Comment est-ce que votre staff et vos enseignants sont affectés par les supports, réseaux, défis et obstacles ? Pouvez-vous me donner des exemples spécifiques?
20. Quels sont les défis et problèmes qui persistent en vue d'atteindre SL/A ?
21. Comment est-ce que votre formation (initiale et continue) et vos qualificatifs, si jamais, vous ont-ils permis de promouvoir SL/A dans votre école ?

*Politiques scolaires*

22. Existente-t-il des politiques/régulations sur lesquels vous appuyez votre travail et vos objectifs en rapport SL/A, par exemple documents, plan d'action et/ou stratégies provenant du ministère, au niveau régional ou international sur le EL et/ou SL/A ?
23. Quelles sont leurs origines ? D'où proviennent-ils ? Qui les a rédigés ? Comment êtes-vous rentré en contact ces documents ? Comment avez-vous été informé ?
24. Êtes-vous (et votre leadership) affecté(e)/impacté(e) par ces politiques ? En d'autres termes, les considérez-vous utiles ou pas ? Pourquoi ?
25. Comment est-ce que ces politiques/régulations d'éducation pourraient mieux vous encadrer dans vos objectifs envers SL/A ?
26. Pour conclure cet entretien, aimeriez-vous ajouter quelque chose de pertinent pour cette étude ? Quelque chose liée à votre leadership par rapport à l'apprentissage et à la réussite scolaire ?

**2<sup>e</sup> entretien après l'observation: Thèmes abordés**

1. Stratégies spécifiques
2. Pratiques, stratégies et actions de leadership des ELs
3. Pratiques, stratégies et actions de leadership par d'autres
4. Événements, incidents critiques
5. Support, facilitateurs
6. Obstacles, défis
7. Agenda quotidien et calendrier des ELs
8. Horaire et routines de l'école
9. Interactions
10. Associations sociales
11. Environnement et localité de l'école
12. Ressources

**Grille d'observation***Composantes*

1. Stratégies spécifiques mentionnées par ELs durant l'entretien initial
2. Conditions/environnement physiques & matériels
3. Localité de l'établissement et ses environs
4. Événements, comportements et incidents critiques
5. Conditions humaines et interactions
6. Routines spécifiques ayant lieu le matin, à midi et l'après-midi
7. Horaire scolaire
8. Horaire/agenda des ELs
9. Stratégies et pratiques de leadership
10. Supports et catalyseurs/facilitateurs visant SL/A
11. Obstacles face à SL/A
12. Défis rencontrés par rapport à SL/A
13. Preuve de réseaux sociaux et d'associations, y compris les interactions entre ces derniers

Site # \_\_\_\_\_

Observation unique # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Horaire scolaire</b>			
<b>Routines spécifiques – matin</b>			
<b>Routines spécifiques – midi</b>			
<b>Routines spécifiques – après-midi</b>			

Site # \_\_\_\_\_

Observation unique # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Conditions physiques internes</b>		
<b>Matériels internes &amp; dispositions</b>		



Site # \_\_\_\_\_

Observation unique # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Description	Notes
Localité physique de l'école		
Environnement de l'école		

Site # \_\_\_\_\_

Observation unique # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Heure	Évidence de	Personne impliquée Location Instigateur	Notes
<b>Stratégies spécifiques mentionnées par ELs durant l'entretien</b>				
<b>Stratégies &amp; pratiques de leadership par ELs</b>				
<b>Stratégies &amp; pratiques de leadership au sens large</b>				
<b>Évènements &amp; incidents critiques, comportements</b>				
<b>Support &amp; catalyseurs pour SL/A</b>				
<b>Obstacles envers SL/A</b>				
<b>Défis par rapport à SL/A</b>				
<b>Horaire/agenda journalier des ELs</b>				
<b>Conditions humaines &amp; interactions</b>				
<b>Preuve de réseaux sociaux &amp; associations</b>				

## Appendix G. NMRED Delegated Initial Approval Notice



**Western  
Research**

Research Ethics

### Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Marianne Larsen  
**Department & Institution:** Education\Faculty of Education, Western University

**NMREB File Number:** [REDACTED]

**Study Title:** How do educational leaders translate their understandings of student learning and achievement into leadership practices? A case-study about leadership in Haitian schools

**Sponsor:**

**NMREB Initial Approval Date:** November 06, 2015

**NMREB Expiry Date:** November 06, 2016

**Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:**

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Instruments		2015/08/27
Recruitment Items		2015/08/27
Advertisement		2015/08/27
Advertisement		2015/08/27
Instruments		2015/08/27
Recruitment Items		2015/08/03
Revised Western University Protocol		2015/10/01
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	French	2015/10/01
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	English	2015/10/01

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the NMREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Erika Basile, NMREB Chair or delegated board member

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information: Erika Basile \_\_\_ Nicole Kaniki \_\_\_ Grace Kelly \_\_\_ Mina Mekhail \_\_\_ Vikki Tran \_\_\_

*This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files*

## Curriculum Vitae

<b>Name:</b>	Pierre Marie Carolyne Verret
<b>Post-secondary Education and Degrees:</b>	<p>Licence en Sciences de l'Éducation (Bachelor degree in Education)            Université Quisqueya            Port-au-Prince, Haïti            1999-2003</p> <p>Master in Education (M.Ed.)            The University of Western Ontario            London, Ontario, Canada            2011-2013</p> <p>Doctor in Philosophy (Ph.D.)            The University of Western Ontario            London, Ontario, Canada            2013-2017</p>
<b>Honours and Awards:</b>	<p>Organization of the American States (OAS) Scholarship            2011-2013</p> <p>Faculty of Education Internal Travel Grant            The University of Western Ontario            2014-2017</p>
<b>Related Work Experience:</b>	<p>Research Assistant – DELF-DALF Testing Centre, WesternCAN            The University of Western Ontario            2011-2017</p> <p>Research Assistant – OLF &amp; professional standards research            The University of Western Ontario            2014, 2015, 2017</p> <p>French Translator – Comparative &amp; International Education Journal            2013-2017</p>
<b>Publications:</b>	<p>Riveros, A., Verret, C., &amp; Wei, W. (2016). The translation of leadership standards into leadership practices: A qualitative analysis of the adoption of the Ontario Leadership Framework in urban schools. <i>Journal of Educational Administration</i>, 54(5), 593-608. doi: 10.1108/JEA-09-2015-0084</p>

