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***Square pegs in round holes? Understanding expatriate teachers’ lives in the government secondary school system of Grand Cayman from 2005 to 2011.***

By:

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Dissertation submitted in part requirement for the EdD in Educational Studies

University of Sheffield

School of Education

May 2016

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# Abstract

In the Cayman Islands the majority of government teachers are expatriate. This research study examines the experiences of nine expatriate teachers in the two government secondary schools in Grand Cayman. A case study approach was used with the bounded time from 2005, the year after Hurricane Ivan, to 2011, the second year of the transformation of the government secondary school system in Grand Cayman. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight participants from Caribbean and non-Caribbean nationalities. As an insider, being both an expatriate teacher and working in the government secondary school system in Grand Cayman, my autobiographical account was included in the data collected. The research study examined the reasons given for migration by these teachers as well as their recruitment and orientation into their Caymanian teaching experience. The accounts described, analysed and focused on how they adjusted professionally and personally to the new experiences. A year later a further interview was conducted with each available participant to gather what changes had occurred in their circumstances and the way they viewed their international posting. Push and pull factors such as finances, weather, seeing more of the world, lack of crime, improved family life were all described as important to varying degrees by the participants. An important feature that was recognized was the influence and support offered by having a confidant such as a spouse or close friend/roommate during the adjustment to the new environment. With this in place, there was less of a dependence on the wider community or diaspora. Also viewed as key was the need for the provision of accurate information about the society, the school and the curriculum before the teacher arrived on the island. This study recognises the potential for further research into the views of home country nationals and the impact of migratory practices on small island developing states in a globalised society.

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# Prologue

On August 26, 1997 at around 12:30 am, I arrived at the Owen Roberts International Airport in Grand Cayman. There had been a 10-hour delay in Kingston, Jamaica. The first leg of my journey saw me leaving Port of Spain, Trinidad early on the morning of the 25th. It was a Friday morning, and the flight was full. After the “dust” cleared – that is, by the time I made my way to the Cayman Airways ticket counter in the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston, Jamaica, I realized that there were nine other teachers from Trinidad and Tobago like me – going to work in the Cayman Islands for the first time. We were told that there was no flight. We would have to wait. Ten hours later and relaxing at a hotel near to the airport, we were now friends - our common circumstances, uncertainties and excitement knitting us together into a unit. Little did I know how crucial to my sanity and survival these nine people would be.

Jump forward to August 26, 2011, and I am still living and working in Grand Cayman. There are 4 of us from the original ten who are still teaching on the island. Two more still live here but have since left the government teaching service. The others have all left the island, either returning to Trinidad or moving on to the US. Even as I have lost these colleagues who will continue to be dear friends, I have stopped counting the number of ‘associates’ that I have been in contact with at the school over the past 14 years. I call them ‘associates’ because though for a period we worked together – with the business and pressures of the job, true friendships did not have a chance to develop before these people were gone. Every June there are a lot of goodbyes and gifts being purchased. Every September, a new list of names and faces to memorize.

Why do some of us stay and make the Cayman Islands our home, while others barely complete one contract which would be two years? What are the characteristics of an expatriate teacher? What makes one person more able to adjust to a new environment, while another does not? These questions are broad and intricate and involved with no easy answers.

For this study, I chose to focus on a defined period in the life of the new expatriate teacher in Grand Cayman – the time from September 2005 to June 2011. September 2005 is significant because it marked the beginning of the school year in Grand Cayman after the devastation of Hurricane Ivan in September 2004. Teachers arriving in September 2005 only heard about the hurricane, they did not experience the trauma or confusion after this event. The Ministry of Education was so desperate to keep these newly recruited teachers that they were offered more than any other group of teachers before or since as their start up package include three months’ salary. June 2011 marked the end of the first year of a major transformation of the secondary education system in Grand Cayman and has greatly impacted how teachers see their roles in the scheme of things on the islands.

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

This research uses a case study approach to explore the experiencesof eight expatriate teachers employed to work in the government secondary schools on Grand Cayman during the period 2005 to 2011. Four of the teachers are from Jamaica, a Caribbean island about 300 miles from Grand Cayman and 45 minutes by air. The other four teachers are from non-Caribbean territories, namely, Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom. The life history approach used explores the meaning that these teachers attribute totheir lived experiences, and to their lives as expatriates in the Grand Cayman context. I have included my life history as an autobiographical narrative describing my experiences as a newly recruited expatriate teacher. The objective of this case study was to recognize and describe the theoretical concepts that offer an explanation for the experiences of these eight expatriate teachers and myself in Grand Cayman.

## Importance of expatriate teachers

As a Caribbean expatriate teacher in the Cayman Islands government school system, I have often wondered if my reasons for migrating to these shores and my experiences as an expatriate are similar to those of my expatriate colleagues, either Caribbean or non-Caribbean. Informal discussions with some of my non-Caribbean colleagues revealed that they have had a global and transient approach to employment. For some of them, Grand Cayman was just another stop along the way, having previously taught English in China, or Mathematics in Dubai, or having taught in other Caribbean countries such as Turks and Caicos and the Bahamas. For many Caribbean teachers, however, the Cayman Islands posting is their first venture outside of their homeland. The principal question for all the expatriate teachers then becomes why did they migrate here? Why did they leave their country of origin to live and work in another country for a period of time? What are the motives or the motivation, as Brown and Schulze (2007) describe it – “the push factors and pull factors” (p. 3) that led these individuals to all end up on these Cayman shores? And, secondly, how did they adjust and settle into the Caymanian culture and experience? This chapter provides an overview and rationale for this research study.

## Overview of the study

The study focuses on the experience of expatriate teachers in a predefined period of time. I have, therefore, used this period of time as I referenced statistical data on the Cayman Islands during my research study.

While there are many definitions of expatriates, I have chosen The Business Dictionary definition as most fitting for my study:

a person who has citizenship in at least one other country, but who is living in another country. Most expatriates only stay in the foreign country for a certain period of time, and plan to return to their home country eventually, although there are some who never return to their country of citizenship.[[1]](#footnote-1)

With a work force that is about 55% expatriate, according to employment data from 2011 by the Economics and Statistics Office of the Cayman Islands, and with over 135 nationalities represented, as stated in the New Resident magazine, I have chosen to classify my participants into two broad geographical groupings – Caribbean and non-Caribbean. Informal observations of non-Caribbean expatriate teachers give the impression that the weather and social aspects seem to factor prominently in their experiences on the island. Many non-Caribbean expatriate teachers can be found, during their recreation time, deep sea diving, at the beaches, and participating in many other outdoor activities. With the Caribbean teachers, the comment can sometimes be heard from among the indigenous Caymanian population, that the Caribbean teachers are here “for the money” since the Caymanian dollar has a high value among the other currencies in the Caribbean region. There is also informal discussion among Caribbean teachers that the European or North American teachers are more readily accepted and welcomed in the society and even get an easier time in the classroom as demonstrated by more attentive, less disruptive students and more parental support, (or maybe the better comment should be ‘less parental animosity’). Supporting this premise is the fact that students have been heard to make disparaging comments about Jamaicans teachers, who make up the largest nationality among all expatriate teachers in our schools. As stated previously, these observations were informal and may be considered ‘rumour’ or ‘hearsay’. I took the opportunity, through this research study, to acknowledge my story, and to hear from other teachers about their reasons for coming to the Cayman Islands, and what their lives have been like since.

## Aim and Rationale

My intention, through this study, was to formally research and document the experiences of these expatriate teachers, who share a common experience in being employed by the Cayman Islands government at one of the secondary schools in Grand Cayman.

I believe our stories as teachers, and hence this research study would be relevant to the Human Resource department of the Ministry of Education as the findings of this study may have an impact on policies around future recruitment and the induction process for new staff. Armitage and Powell (1997, p. 2) identified the process of selection of recruits as one of the more crucial management decisions for the success of an organization. I believe this is even more critical in education where, in one year, a teacher can switch a student on to or off of the joys and rigor of learning. As further stated by Armitage and Powell, “the cost and time of good recruitment, selection, preparation and briefing is always less than the cost, time and disappointment engendered in failure” (p. 15). Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen (2003), in a meta-analysis of the literature on acculturation recognized that although technical skills are important in the selection of recruits in international postings, other influences such as family factors and individual personalities must also be considered.

### Conceptual Focus

This study is structured around two key conceptual viewpoints. The first area of focus concerns the issues involved in migration and globalization as they pertain specifically to teachers. The global movement of teachers from home nations to the rest of the world continues to increase at a rapid pace with the development of technologies in internet and data exchange, cheaper air travel, international banking transactions and global recruitment. For some individuals, migrating once is not sufficient – rather, their personal needs and desires cause them to move again and again. In this research study I will be delving more closely into what has motivated a group of expatriate teachers to relocate, temporarily or permanently to Grand Cayman. All of them have moved to a smaller geographic location and a smaller population estimated at 57,000 of which 44% are listed as non-Caymanian[[2]](#footnote-2).

The second area of focus looks more closely at the acculturation of the expatriate teachers and how they are able to adapt professionally and personally. Expatriate teachers are (or should be) fully aware when they are recruited that they will be working in a classroom and a society which is different from their own and hence some adjustment will be required for a successful posting (Zhou and Qin, 2009). Success is demonstrated by the quality of teaching and learning occurring in the classroom as well as being able to adapt to the new cultural norms and establish a social life in the new environment. Failure to make the necessary adjustments will often lead to a teacher rejecting the overseas posting – either physically (as demonstrated by early termination) and/or mentally (by an inability to give one’s best in the classroom). Both of these have serious ramifications for teaching and learning.

Together these theories will be used as the framework to hinge my findings as these teachers are interviewed and their stories analyzed. Both aspects are key to providing a composite picture of the experiences of the individuals during this specific period of their lives.

## Research questions

1. What are the reasons for migrating and becoming self-initiated expatriates? The decision to migrate was initiated by the individual as opposed to being sent overseas by a parent company. I sought to answer why the teacher felt the need for the move as I asked the questions about what was occurring personally and professionally in his or her life that lead to this decision.

2. How did the process of recruitment and orientation prepare teachers for the reality of teaching as an expatriate in the government secondary schools in Grand Cayman? With this question I was seeking to determine if the teacher felt adequately prepared for teaching and living in Grand Cayman having progressed through the recruitment and orientation phases.

3. How did expatriate teachers adjust to the teaching experience at the government secondary schools in Grand Cayman? The teaching experience included classroom practise, staff and administration interaction as well as an understanding of the ethos and school culture.

4. How were the personal and social lives of the expatriate teachers affected by living in Grand Cayman? This is especially important when considering relationships among family members who may or may not have relocated with the teacher.

## Research methodology

This research study aims to explore the views and experiences of a microcosm of the variety of expatriate teachers who have been recruited to teach in Grand Cayman government school system during a specific time period. Each person is an individual and will generate his or her unique story. However, I also believe that there are common threads or themes from these stories that occupy or impact the lives of expatriate teachers.

I have chosen to adopt a qualitative approach to this study since I am interested in providing an avenue for individual experiences to the communicated and analyzed. Teachers were able, through the semi-structured interview process, to share their experiences and self-reflections on how they viewed their lives personally and professionally in their current situations as expatriate teachers. I also sought to determine whether their views of their lives had altered a year later.

Our stories and storylines need to be understood, not just as personal constructions but as expressions of particular historical and cultural opportunities. Life story work concentrates, then, on personal stories, but life histories try to understand stories alongside their historical and cultural backgrounds. Goodson, 2013, p. 6

While the retelling of the life story is the beginning of the process, the situating of the life story in context then gives a more complete picture of the individual’s life and experiences. Lives do not exist in a vacuum, rather our experiences are in context – impacted by the historical and cultural framework in which we reside (past and present), whether by force or by choice. Hence, life histories can be used as a source of data in qualitative research. As data, the life history then becomes open to interpretation. It is given its context through the position held by the researcher, the researched and the audience of the research, that is, the reader/receiver. Life history inquiry, as described by Cole and Knowles (2001) “is about understanding a situation, profession, condition, or institution through coming to know how individuals walk, talk, live and work within that particular context”, (p. 11). I have also included my autobiographical account as data in this research study.

### Data collection and analysis

I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with eight volunteer teachers. The initial intention was to select the participants via an online demographic survey according to who met my criteria and through their willingness to share their experiences. However, three participants approached directly to make up the complement to be interviewed. Semi-structured life world interviews are defined by Kvale (1996) as “an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting meaning of the described phenomenon” (p. 5-6). Analysis, by definition, means the breaking into smaller parts to reveal its elements and structures. Therefore, analysis goes beyond a description, but rather, to explain, interpret, and therefore help to understand (Dey, 1993). Hence, the transcribed interviews were used as a life history narrative of each participant and analyzed by a process of coding for themes, categories and interconnections.

### My positionality

As the researcher, I am an insider. I am an expatriate teacher, as are all my participants. My role as an insider has shaped much of what I ‘asked’ and ‘heard’ during the interview process. I am an insider squared as I am a Caribbean expatriate teacher, therefore, I expected that my experiences will have much in common with other Caribbean teachers. But I am also an outsider. I am an outsider to the non-Caribbean expatriate teachers, and my years employed in the Cayman Islands have made me a Permanent Resident[[3]](#footnote-3), an outsider squared.

Although many of my informants recognized me as a fellow member of staff, my research was not ‘intimate’ (Taylor, 2011) since I did not have a close relationship with any of them. Therefore, to them, I may be viewed as outside their familiar circle. However, as we were all going through a transition phase in secondary education in the Cayman Islands, the solidarity brought on by that transition reinforced my insider position on a professional level. I know that for those who were interviewed and who I worked with daily, there was the important ethical consideration that I now knew more about their personal lives. I needed to be mindful that the confidence that they placed in me in sharing part of their lives could not be violated.

Mercer (2007, pp. 4) described insider/outsider research more as a continuum than a dichotomy, with no distinct lines being drawn in research such as I was conducting. The features listed earlier of nationality and ethnicity, expatriate status, shared experience are all dimensions on the continuum. Mercer also identifies facets (p. 6) such as gender, age, personality, which I did not consider initially, but, on retrospect, are lenses through which both the participants and I would view the process. There were times during the interview process when my insiderness was more pronounced and could have greatly affected the responses given by the participants. Frequently, the comment would be made, “you know what it is like here”, where there was the general understanding and acknowledgement of the fact that, though I was the researcher, I was also ‘one of them’. I could not be divorced from my insiderness.

## Significance of study

There is available research on the global movement of teachers, especially from the developing world to the developed such as work by authors such as Paul Washington Miller (2007, 2008, 2009), who looks at migration of Caribbean teachers to the United Kingdom), Sadhana Manik (2009, 2010) and Amanda Sives, John Morgan and Appleton (2005, 2006), whose research focused on migration among African countries, migration from Jamaica to the United States of America and to the United Kingdom, as well as on the Commonwealth Recruitment Protocol. However, more research is needed that documents the expatriate situations described by movement between Caribbean nations and movement from developed countries to the developing world such as is seen from Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom to the Cayman Islands.

Interestingly all the nations represented in this research study have ties to the United Kingdom. Jamaica, Canada and Trinidad and Tobago are all members of the Commonwealth of Nations, although Trinidad and Tobago has republican status. Ireland is a former member of the Commonwealth and maintains very close ties to the United Kingdom and is part of the European Union.

The Cayman Islands is a British Overseas Territory, which means that the Cayman Islands has its own Constitution with its own government and its own local laws. However, it remains under the jurisdiction and sovereignty of the United Kingdom, with a Governor appointed by the Queen, on the advice of her ministers in the UK. The Governor has responsibility for “external affairs, defense, internal security (including the police) and the appointment, discipline and removal of public officers” (p. 14, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2012).

Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica have full membership in Caricom (Caribbean Community) while the Cayman Islands has Associate member status. This means that the Cayman Islands has limited voting rights, but has observer status and can actively participate on committees and bodies that it is a member of.

Richardson, Richardson and von Kirchenheim (2005, 2006) conducted a quantitative study on expatriate teachers in the Cayman Islands. Richardson et al recognized that there may be differences in the responses between Caribbean and non-Caribbean teachers and cited the inability in their study to distinguish between these two groups as a limitation. They also suggested that more in-depth work was required and that a qualitative approach would be advantageous. Hence this study seeks, with its findings, to fill some of the gaps recognized from their work.

The findings can have an impact on the expectations of future recruits and also on the approach of the Education Department to new teachers to improve the changes of a long lasting successful posting – success as determined by both the professional impact of the teacher in the classroom and also how well the teacher as a person has adjusted to living in the Cayman islands.

## Conclusion

This chapter establishes the context of my research study and an overview of many of the research decisions made. The phenomenon of expatriate teachers in the Cayman Islands government secondary school system has not been extensively researched. I sought to add to the literature on expatriate teachers in the Caribbean context and to acknowledge the interactions of migration, globalization, and acculturation in the process.

The ensuing chapters will be detailed as follows: chapter two delves into the historical, cultural and financial background to the Cayman Islands and its continuing need for expatriate teachers. Chapter three examines the existing literature on migration and globalization and its impact on education. This chapter also explores the literature surrounding the adjustment process that occurs when a person migrates and how the personal and professional lives are impacted and adapted during the course of living. Chapter four describes the methodologies, philosophical assumptions and methods used as well as looking more closely at the ethical considerations generated by the research study. I look more closely, in chapter five, at the online survey that was used to gather demographic information and to increase the pool of expatriate teachers that my participants were chosen from. The next five chapters examine the results of the data collection and analysis of the life stories of my participants and myself over the specified period represented by the research case. The final chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the research study.

# CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND

## Introduction

The Cayman Islands is a three-island British Overseas Territory in the Caribbean Sea. Grand Cayman, the largest island where about 95% of the population of approximately 56,000 reside, lies just three hundred miles northwest of Jamaica. Little Cayman and Cayman Brac, affectionately called the Sister Islands or Lesser Islands, lie about 200 miles south of Cuba and close to the state of Florida in the United States of America. From the seven mile stretch of pristine beach on the west side of Grand Cayman to the abundant jewelry stores in the capital city, the Cayman Islands are a popular tourist destination. In 2011, the population demographics listed the following statistics: 56% Caymanian and 44% non-Caymanian[[4]](#footnote-4).

My goal in this chapter is to present a brief history of the Cayman Islands and its development. Although I have chosen to focus primarily on the educational provision through the years, I will highlight aspects of governance and economic development that have played a major role in the current labour market and on societal views of the prevalence of non-Caymanians in the community.

The most defining event in the lives of the residents of the Cayman Islands over the past 50 years began on September 11, 2004 and continued for two days. The repercussions from that event continue to ripple through the community, years later. Hurricane Ivan, a category 5 hurricane with winds of about 150 miles an hour (and gusts of up to 220 miles an hour)[[5]](#footnote-5) battered and flooded Grand Cayman for 3 days, while the Sister Islands were fortunate to escape the brunt of the storm. The demarking that Hurricane Ivan represented served as a catalyst for this research study, as life was described as “before Ivan” and “after Ivan”. All those interviewed arrived on island “after Ivan”. I, however, was part of the “before Ivan” and I guess I may add – the “during Ivan”.

## History

The Sister Islands, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, were sighted by Christopher Columbus in 1503 on his fourth voyage as he sailed from Panama to Hispaniola. He named the islands Las Tortugas because of the number of sea turtles he saw there. The first recorded English visitor was Sir Francis Drake in 1586 who recognized the animal population of caimanas (from which the country has its current name) and turtles as a valuable source of fresh meat for the shipping crews. There is no record of Drake having claimed the Cayman Islands at that time for the British Crown. The islands remained uninhabited until around the 17th century.

The first permanent inhabitants were recorded around 1660s and were of European or African ancestry and were either shipwrecked on the many reefs surrounding the islands or came on ships from Jamaica. It was considered ideal for pirates and buccaneers because of the small settlements and abundant natural resources in fish, turtle, hard wood (for boat repairs) as well as the flat geography of Grand Cayman, being only a few feet above sea level (Williams in West-Duran, 2003). England took control of the Cayman Islands and Jamaica in the 1670s from the Spanish and the Cayman Islands continued to maintain links with Jamaica. The number of land owners and slaves continued to grow and the population increased during the 18th and 19th century.

During that period, the Cayman Islands had a less than perfect connection to Jamaica with infrequent visits from the Jamaican governor and hence had developed a measure of self-governance. A petition by Caymanians in 1837 had the following statement recorded by John Drayton(a land owner) to the then Governor in Jamaica:

Our simple and retiring habits furnishes us with few opportunities of knowing what is going on in the political world. Unnoticed and disregarded by others, we were literally “a law unto ourselves”.

The Cayman Islands were formally declared a dependency of Jamaica in 1865, with the appointed British governor of Jamaica also having formal responsibility and jurisdiction for the Cayman Islands. Even after formal dependency was established, there was still the ‘benign neglect’ of the affairs of the Cayman Islands. In the later part of the 19th century Caymanians had developed a measure of self-reliance and self-sufficiency by becoming farmers, fishermen, turtlers and boat builders (Craton, 2003). The inhabitants began spreading themselves around Grand Cayman and to the sister islands as well as further afield to Bay Islands (which later changed hands from Britain to Honduras) and Belize in Central America. Other Caymanians moved to Jamaica and Cuba. In the early part of the 20th century, many Caymanian men moved to the USA to work on railroad construction and to Panama to work on the canals. Still others took to sea and to shipping companies as merchant marines (West-Duran, 2003)

World War II saw active participation from the Caribbean and the Cayman Islands was no exception. The Colonial Report of 1946 states:

Then came the War and practically every able bodied man not already at sea and not employed in a reserved occupation volunteer for service in the Merchant Navy, the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve or the Army. (p. 3, 1946)

After World War Two, when the general trend in the Caribbean was a thrust towards independence, the Cayman Islands refused to adopt that leaning.

When Jamaica sought and obtained independence for Britain in 1962, the Cayman Islands chose to remain a British Crown Colony. At the time of the Jamaican quest for independence in 1962, the Cayman Islands electorate had the option to join with an independent Jamaica or to continue the association with Britain and remain a British colony. The Sister Islands, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman formally declared their intention to remain a British colony. They stated that if Grand Cayman chose to join with an independent Jamaica they would separate themselves from Grand Cayman/the Cayman Islands. However, in Grand Cayman, the visiting Governor felt that the Grand Cayman people also supported the desired to remain a British colony and hence decided that:

Caymanians will continue to carry United Kingdom passports with the Cayman Islands stamp on the front, to fly the Union Jack, and to sing the British National Anthem. Britain would keep responsibility for defence, foreign affairs, internal security, and other matters, and the powers of Administration would most likely increase once there was no longer a British-appointed Governor of Jamaica. (Craton, 2003, p. 317)

As further stated by Craton:

This crucial decision proved both astute and profitable. Not inclined to make sudden changes or under pressure to do so, Caymanians sought by gradual means to shape a constitution, administration, and legal system that reflected their character and needs. (p. 306, 2003)

Since that time there have been many constitutional changes with the most recent coming into force in 2009. The opening paragraph of the 2009 Constitution states:

The people of the Cayman Islands, recalling the events that have shaped their history and made them what they are, and acknowledging their distinct history, culture and Christian heritage and its enduring influence and contribution in shaping the spiritual, moral and social values that have guided their development and brought peace, prosperity and stability to those islands, through the vision, forbearance, and leadership of their people, who are loyal to Her Majesty the Queen; Affirm their intention to be:-

*And there in follows 21 statements of intent*.

(The Constitution of the Cayman Islands 2009, p. 9).

## Population

The population of the Cayman Islands grew from the first few settlers who were recorded as British soldiers from Jamaica in around the 1660s and were given land grants in the 1700s by the Governor of Jamaica. They acquired slaves from Jamaica to farm the land. Other settlers were claimed to be shipwrecked sailors and slaves. Some historians question whether there were indigenous peoples on the islands at the time of sighting by Columbus and Drake (New Resident, 2016), but there has been no archeological evidence to show that the islands were at one time inhabited by Amerindians. In the latter part of the 19th century the population was largely homogenous with roughly equal numbers of persons identifying themselves as whites, coloureds and blacks. However due to miscegenation, the whites and coloureds increased while the number of blacks decreased. In 1911 the Caymanian population consisted of 41.7% whites, 39.7% coloured and 18.5% blacks. The foreign born population was also increasing with about 5% (275) of the population of 5,518 listed as foreign born. That number was represented by 133 Jamaican born persons with smaller amounts of British and Americans. Fast-forward to 2011 and the population in the Cayman Islands is listed as 55,517 with 43.6% non-Caymanians. The percentage of non-Caymanians does not reflect foreign born persons who have since acquired the right to be Caymanian. The number of non-Caymanians is reflected as expatriate workers on work permits or on permanent residency. Questions on race are no longer asked during the collection of data on population.

## Economy

As stated previously, in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the economy consisted primarily of seafaring opportunities and industrial opportunities outside of the physical Cayman Islands. This meant that the men went off as expatriate workers while the women stayed on the islands and maintained the communities.

Toward the middle to late 1900s the country began to gain recognition as a popular tourist destination because of its climate, beaches, diving and proximity to the American mainland. The islands also grew to be the fifth largest financial centre in the world through strategic partnerships and regulations setup to govern the operations of banks and trust companies on the islands. They were following the model of Bermuda and the Bahamas where there were two categories of businesses – those conducting business on the islands and those conducting offshore operations. The latter only required an address in the Cayman Islands through registration but little physical presence of manpower was required. The former required specially skilled persons who were frequently expatriate employers and employees. The environment was stable and secure for these businesses and while there was no direct taxation, fees and duties were paid to the government.

## Immigration Law in the Cayman Islands

Yet through this process and these economy changes, Caymanians heavily guarded their citizenship. The laws of 1934 were the first to define a Caymanian as “a person born in the Cayman Islands or to parents born therein or of parents, British subjects and residents more than twelve month therein…” (Craton, 2003, p. 369). The Caymanian Protection Law of 1971 described Caymanian status as being limited to British subjects and those born in the islands, married to Caymanians or having a Caymanian parent or grandparent and residing in the islands. One could apply for Caymanian status through this law after having resided in the islands for 5 years continuously. The Caymanian Protection Law of 1972 also defined the terms of work permits. The work permit, which is issued by the immigration department, details the terms and conditions under which a person can be employed on the islands and for which employer. The employer pays the necessary fees to the government. The immigration law of 1992 spelt out the requirement for employers to advertise new jobs and work permit renewals, as well as show that they (employers) were offering training to Caymanians. This provision has continued in subsequent revisions of the immigration law. Regulation 4 (1) of the 2010 revision states:

Subject to subregulation (2), an employer or prospective employer shall use his best endeavors to ascertain whether or not there is a Caymanian, or a person legally and ordinarily resident in the Islands, ready, willing and able to undertake the job in question before making an application for the grant or renewal of a work permit in respect of a worker or prospective worker whose gainful occupation in the job is sought to be authorized by the work permit.

Subregulation (2) pertains to the Sister Islands and allows them to vary the law to suit their unique needs.

The immigration law of 2003 introduced the term limit (or roll over policy), which stipulated that a work permit holder could not work beyond seven years continuously. The law initially stated that the person must leave the islands for two years but this was later amended to one year by the Legislative Assembly in 2006. He or she may return after a 12 month period but then will again be considered to be at year 1. This ruling did not apply to “exempt employees” as designated by Immigration Board or the Business Staffing Plan Board nor to contracted Government employees (which included public school teachers). An exempt employee was a designation applied to certain workers where the several conditions were met. These include, “work permit holders possessing required skills not available in adequate measure on the island…..as would someone with business contacts that are important to the continued success of a business or of the Cayman Islands”, (Markoff, 2005b). The law further lists that the key or exempt employee should be involved in training Caymanians or developing their skills in the area of employment (Key Employee Publication, 2012). There was the recognition that after Hurricane Ivan, retaining key employees was becoming a problem. The then leader of Government Business, Mr. McKeeva Bush acknowledged that

The survival of our financial community and other key businesses on the island depends on the ability of such institutions to attract and retain top business professionals from around the world…This remains the policy of the Government in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Ivan and this gesture serves to assure the business sector that government is a willing and sensitive partner in the Cayman Islands economic prosperity. (Markoff, 2005b)

The fixed term work permit or roll over policy was developed to prevent persons from reaching 8 consecutive years on island which then allowed the individual to apply for permanent residency. After fifteen consecutive years resident in the Cayman Islands a person could apply for the right to be Caymanian (Caymanian status). The roll-over policy was a contentious issue when it was first introduced, but since then many people seem to be resigned to it. Companies have been known to move employees to subsidiaries and return them to the islands after the 12 months have passed.

It should be noted that the Economics and Statistics office list the following labour indications for 2003, 2004 and 2005

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Employed** | **2003** | **2004** | **2005** |
| Caymanian | 13,973 | 14,775 | 18,025 |
| Non-Caymanian | 14,854 | 14,171 | 17,439 |
| **Total** | **28,827** | **28,946** | **35,464** |

The number of work permits issued for the same period are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Work Permits** | **2003** | **2004** | **2005** |
| Construction | 2,892 | 6,005 | 6,448 |
| Business and Financial services | 4,134 | 4,123 | 4,210 |
| Private Households with employed persons | 3,753 | 3,825 | 3,799 |
| Education, Health & Social Work, other Community, Social and Personal services | 1,433 | 1,662 | 1,790 |
| Restaurant, Bars, Hotel and Condominiums, Wholesale and Retail | 4,444 | 4,273 | 4,593 |
| Other | 467 | 620 | 923 |
| **Total** | **17,123** | **20,508** | **21,763** |

In 2003, and continuing into 2004, under pressure from the British government, the Cayman Islands Cabinet granted over 3500 persons ‘the right to be Caymanian’ (Caymanian status). This was necessary because in the years preceding, the number of grants varied from 171 to 449. There were many people who have been living on the islands for years with renewing work permits and hence should have been granted status based on the 15 year residence provision introduced in an earlier revision of the Immigration Law. However, this status grant remains controversial as it was seen as being politically motivated. Many received status by government decree which means it could not be rescinded. A challenge from the Caymanian Bar Association in 2005 questioned the legality of the status grants, stating “if 2,850 grants of status were made in one meeting of Cabinet or in a small number of brief meetings of Cabinet, and if 1,400 grants were made in one meeting, it is impossible to understand how [the Cabinet] can properly have assessed whether there was a ‘special reason’ in each case.” (Chisholm, 2005). While it was recognized that many deserved to be granted status, it was also felt that many did not, and the proper checks did not occur, (Markoff, 2010; Bodden, 2005; Higginson, 2005). Many civil servants and teachers who had been employed for several years in the government service were able to benefit from the status grants. Persons with Caymanian status are then able to bring their dependants to the islands and apply for Caymanian status for the dependants, hence increasing the population of Caymanians.

In 2005 the government of the Cayman Islands imposed a visa requirement for Jamaican nationals visiting the Cayman Islands (Mac Gillivray, 2005). It was seen then as a recommended strategy in the fight against crime by the Chamber of Commerce, which felt that Jamaica was a ‘high risk’ country. However, the Jamaican consul felt it was more a reaction to the high number of Jamaicans who were coming to Grand Cayman to seek employment since Hurricane Ivan. He questioned the Chamber’s assertion about the link between Jamaicans and crime as he did not find that there was evidence to support the link. Mac Gillivray added two statements in her article which shed more light on the visa decision:

Jamaicans now make up around 50 per cent of the ex-pat workforce in Cayman.

The Cayman Islands government recently issued guidelines urging employers to seek staff from a number of different nations rather that one particular geographical area. (Mac Gillivray, 2005)

The backlash to this decision was that it was seen by some to be discriminating against Jamaicans. The then Prime Minister of Jamaica, Mr. P J Patterson, in an address to the Chamber of Commerce, warned again such discrimination and inferred that Jamaica will reciprocate with its own visa restriction against Caymanians (Mac Gillivray, 2005b). Mr. McKeeva Bush, then leader of the opposition, expressed the concern that “Jamaicans were being singled out for the increasing crime problem in the Cayman Islands.” (Markoff, 2005a). Like the Jamaican consul, he questioned the empirical proof that linked Jamaicans to crime in the Cayman Islands. Bishop Fagan (2006) reminded the Cayman population, especially those who had been speaking negatively about Jamaicans on the radio talk shows, about the “many hard working gardeners, builders, teachers, nurses and those domestic helpers” who were an integral part of Cayman society and deserved to be treated with respect and recognition for all they had contributed. However, as mentioned earlier, many of the persons calling into the radio programmes expressed support for the measure and felt that there needed to be greater restriction on the entry of Jamaicans. Many callers also expressed support for the view that Jamaicans were responsible for the increasing crime in the islands.

In 2011, the number of employed persons was listed, by the Economics and Statistics Office, at around 35,000 of which 16,000 were Caymanians and 19,000 were non-Caymanians (expatriate workers as work permit holders or permanent residents). Yet the country listed a 6.3 % unemployment rate. Further analysis of why there is an unemployment figure when there are more persons as expatriates in the labour force than local Caymanians, are beyond the scope of this research study. Caymanians make up the majority in the managerial, professional and clerical occupations but are significantly outnumbered in the craft/skilled manual and unskilled manual careers. This is further supported with figures that show the majority of work permits are issued for construction, servers, and private households (helpers, nannies and maids). Although there is the visa restriction for Jamaicans, they still represent the largest number of work permits issued. Jamaica is followed in number by the Philippines, then the UK, USA and Canada in that order in terms of work permit figures. To put these figures in perspective, Jamaican represented 38% of the work permits while citizens of Trinidad and Tobago represent 0.72%. There were over 60 different nationalities residing in the Cayman Islands during 2011.

While there is no income tax in the Cayman Islands, the central government generates substantial revenue from taxes, fees and duties. There were 92,964 companies registered in the Cayman Islands in 2011. The total number of companies registered included ordinary resident companies (6,193); ordinary non-resident companies (9,060); foreign companies [incorporated outside the islands but doing business on the islands] (2,929) and exempt of offshore companies [business carried on outside of the islands] (74,782). The total recorded revenue for 2011, from the Economic and Statistics Office was $550 million. A little over $149 million was generated through import duties while $90 million in revenue was generated from the financial industry through company fees and bank and trust licenses. Administrative fees and charges accounted for around $56 million and a further $49 million, the fourth largest source of revenue, was generated in work permit fees. Hence it can be seen that the government obtains significant revenue from work permits. The complaint can be heard on the ‘marl road’ that government does not have a vested interest in reducing the number of work permits granted annually since the work permit fees are a key revenue stream.

## Education

Similar to other British colonies in the early 19th century, the early schooling of the Caymanian population was established in the 1830s by the churches – Anglican and Methodist, and by the Mico Charity, which was an educational trust specifically geared towards the education of the newly freed slaves (Campbell, 1971). The Presbyterian Church established its schools in 1840s and continued to have a major influence on education in the Cayman Islands well into the 21st century. Craton (2003) described, from historical records, that one of the major obstacles to starting and maintaining schools (and to some extent, churches) was the ability of the community to provide an adequate stipend and accommodation for the teacher (or minister)*.* Along with this challenge was the concern as to who should be educated. Initially it was believed that the white settlers were first, followed by native inhabitants and lastly the former slaves (p. 113). Two trained teachers, supported by the Mico Charity, were sent to the islands around 1838 and remained for about 2 years. These teachers often fulfilled the roles of clergy or lay ministers and even tended to the sick as needed. The teachers sought to provide educational opportunities for all Caymanians, including the former slaves. This was not supported by the local whites at the time. A petition was sent to the Mico Trustees in London by the Black and Brown people, recognizing the contribution of one of the teachers, Mr. Malcolm, when he left Grand Cayman:

….our sincere thanks for your great kindness in sending amongst us our beloved teacher, Mr. Malcolm. Was it not for your Honorable Charity and the attention of Mr. Malcolm, we would have been this day as we were 6 years back.

(Craton, 2003, p. 117)

The first recorded trained Caymanian teacher was Mr. John Jarrett Wood, a white man, who took up a formal posting in 1844. He was the first of many future Caymanian teachers to be trained at Mico Teachers College in Jamaica. Unfortunately, Wood eventually left Grand Cayman and moved to Jamaica in 1854 where there was more money being paid. All of the teachers on record from the 1860s to the early 20th century, came from Jamaica (some were originally from Britain) and were being supported by grants from the churches, predominantly, the Presbyterian Church. All these teachers were either white or of mixed race. The only opportunity open for tertiary education until the 1920s was teacher training colleges in Jamaica – Mico, Calabar and Shortwood. The expectation was that these colleges would produce the “qualified native teachers that the Cayman Islands sorely needed” (Craton, 2003, p. 245). Schools were established in the six main districts in Grand Cayman.

The first Cayman Education Act was established in 1902, with the mandate that each district have at least one elementary school. While the schools were government sponsored there was still the reliance on the churches for the salaries of the teachers. Parents were also expected to pay annually, but many did not or could not. It should be noted that this Education Act did not make education compulsory, even though free compulsory education had already become law in Britain from the 1870s.

A new Education Act was established with the Education Act in 1908 when education was deemed compulsory for 6 – 14 year olds in the Cayman Islands, however this was not enforced. Education was still not free. Colonial reports from 1908/09 stated that there were four schools owned by government and one by the Presbyterian Church. The Governor to the Jamaica, in his reports on the Cayman Islands in 1905/06 described the people as “tall, are chiefly fishermen and sailors; they are religious and moral”, (Colonial Report 1905/06, p. 11). Caymanians strove to maintain the infusion of Christian virtues and values in education so the church continued to influence local education.During the period 1908 to 1920, it was recognized that there was a shortage of qualified local teachers and hence there would be a major Jamaican and British influence in the schools since they formed the bulk of the teaching population

The Education Act of 1920 specified that government was responsible for all schools and established mechanisms to monitor student attendance, teacher quality and curriculum. There had been the recognition earlier and documented in the Colonial Report 1912/13 that the state of education was less than satisfactory, “not attractive to good and reliable teachers. Teachers fit or unfit must be tolerated or schools will close especially in eastern districts.” There was also the feeling that education was not considered important by the residents. The Governor at the time made the damning statement in the Colonia Report, “there are many who attach no importance whatsoever to the education of their children, and who do not consider even reading and writing as in any way essential to a child’s future welfare”.

The pupil teacher examination was adopted from the Jamaican Education department and in 1925 there were 43 students recorded as sitting the examination, with 14 passing. In the ensuing years these figures remained generally stable. Pupil teachers were used to teach the junior students. After three years they could earn a government scholarship to attend the Mico or Shortwood teachers’ colleges. Unfortunately, less than 10 percent of the pupil teachers reached this level (Craton, 2003, p. 250). The first documented reference to the numbers of teachers in general was made in the Colonial Report of 1947, where it was recorded that there were 9 male and 12 female teachers of whom 6 men and 2 women were certified teachers. It doesn’t specify whether some or all or any of these teachers are local Caymanians. The number of teachers continued to grow in the following year, with a marked increase in the number of female staff, along with with a marked decrease in the number of male staff.

No secondary schools were established until 1964. Prior to this, a small number of academically excellent students, as determined from the curriculum and the examinations they pursued, were sent primarily to Jamaica followed by the UK and to a lesser extent, the United States and Canada. Private secondary schools were created in the 1940s and 1950s but public secondary schools were not established until 1964 when government assumed full responsibility for the Cayman High School. This school had previously been set up by the Presbyterian Synod in 1949. It was renamed the Cayman Islands High School and was expected to cater for the top academic students (based on the eleven-plus Common Entrance examination) while the remainder were to attend the Secondary Modern School modeling the British system. This did not work as intended as few students sat the Common Entrance examination.

A new Education Act passed in 1968 made education compulsory from 5 – 15 years. In 1970 both the Cayman Islands High school and the Secondary Modern School were combined. The common entrance examination was abolished in all primary schools in the Cayman Islands. The Middle school was established in 1979 to provide schooling for children aged 10 to thirteen.

This modified junior high school, which has an enrollment of 230 students in its first year, was designed to strengthen the primary base of students entering the Cayman Islands High School by focusing on the needs of this age group in a separate environment. (Craton, 2003, p. 389)

Cayman Brac had established its own secondary school in 1967 catering for students directly from their primary schools.

The issues of adequate local teachers continued over the years. A report on the history and development of education written in 1981 described an effort in the Education Law of 1968 to change teacher recruitment practices, “for the first time in our history, government looked beyond Jamaica for the recruitment of teachers….our major source of supply became the United Kingdom, particularly for graduate teachers for the comprehensive (secondary) school system”, (p. 13). However the report did recognize that West Indian teachers were still being recruited at all levels. McField (1969) made the comment in his History of Education in the Cayman Islands, that “this is 1969 and teachers are still being recruited from Jamaica. As a matter of fact there are as many overseas teachers in the colony schools as there are natives”, (p. 11). As the researcher, I will go one step further and say that we are in the 21st century and we still have a preponderance of overseas teachers in the public school system, and the number of *native born* teachers is extremely low. Financial issues and conditions of work have continually plagued teachers in the education system. As Craton noted, “The problem of keeping teachers and training local replacements persisted for decades”, (p. 249) and continues to do so to today. It was identified in the 1981 report that there were 47 students on government scholarship of which 22 were studying teacher education. Teacher education continues to be one of the priority areas for government scholarships however it is not as popular an area of study as finance or business or engineering and sciences. Economics and Statistics data for 2010 reflects figures of a total of 322 students studying overseas on government scholarships. These scholarships are only available to Caymanians. However, of that number, only 29 were pursuing education qualifications whereas 128 were studying towards qualifications in social sciences or business, while a further 102 were pursuing engineering, technology or science degrees. Minott (2008) discussed the necessity of offering teacher training programmes on island that at least met the government minimum requirement of a Bachelor’s degree, as a means of encouraging native Caymanians to enter the teacher profession, especially males. The University College of the Cayman Islands (the recognized tertiary institution on the islands) has introduced a Bachelor of Science in Primary Education as well as the PGCE (Postgraduate certificate in Primary education). However, these are not well subscribed by Cayman students.

The applications for employment as a teacher in the Cayman Islands, when I applied in 1997, specifically required a diploma in education as well as 5 or more years teaching experience. Within recent times, persons have been recruited with only two years teaching experience. The government contracts are renewable in two-year intervals. The length of notice required for termination has varied, over the years, from 30 days to three months on both sides (employee or government).

The teaching population in the government schools in 2011 was listed by Economics and Statistics Office as 429, of which just over half were employed in the secondary schools. The majority of teachers are expatriates. As of May 2011, the ratio of Non-Caymanian: Caymanian teachers in the secondary school was 2:1. Those figures changed greatly between 2002 and 2004 during the Caymanian Status grants by government decree as discussed previously. Many teachers acquired the right to be Caymanian via this route. Before this status grant, the non-Caymanian teachers were more than double the number of the Caymanian teaching staff.

On the main island, Grand Cayman, there are 8 primary schools that automatically feed into two full 5-year secondary schools based on locale. This is a new measure that was instituted in September 2010 removing the separate middle school and high. The government school population in 2011 is about 4900 students, while private schools account for the education of about 2900 students. There is a stipulation that only Caymanians, status holders and children of government employees can attend government schools. Public schooling is free for all students having the right to be Caymanian. Others pay a small fee – KYD $750 - $1,200 per annum. Expatriates employed in the private sector are forced to send their children to the private schools. There are, however, many Caymanians who attend private schools as well. Private school fees range from about KYD $3,000 per annum at the low end for kindergarten to as much as KYD $18,000 per annum for the upper grades[[6]](#footnote-6).

### The New Secondary Schools

In September 2010, there was the creation of two full five-year secondary schools in the form of John Gray High School (the previous senior secondary with students from aged 14 – 17 – Key Stage 4) and Clifton Hunter High School (from what was previously the George Hicks High School – a middle school for students aged 10 – 13 – Key Stage 3). The catchment for each school is based on where one resided/s on the island. During the course of this study, the schools remained side by side in the capital, while construction continued on the John Gray campus for the new John Gray High School and 20 miles away construction continued on the official Clifton Hunter campus. There were many political and socioeconomic issues surrounding the construction of these two schools which may be referred to in the accounts given by the teachers.

Although I originally intended for the research to focus on participants from John Gray High School exclusively (where I am employed), the transition to the two full secondary schools resulted in an exchange of staff between the schools. This was necessary as expertise at the different key stage levels needed to be shared. Hence, there was an influx of key stage 3 teachers to John Gray High School while many key stage 4 teachers were moved to Clifton Hunter High School. While teachers already in the system were initially given the opportunity to state their preference, other factors were considered to ensure the full complement of staff in each school. Hence, some teachers were moved against their wishes. New teachers were assigned to one school or the other on arrival.

Each secondary school is divided into academies. Each academy has its own senior management team consisting of a Deputy Principal, a Teaching and Learning Coordination and a Learning Mentor. They all report to the school principal. Each academy has a student population of about 260. John Gray High School has four academies while Clifton Hunter High School has three.

Both schools follow the British system of education synonymous with the rest of the Caribbean and the UK. External examinations in each subject are offered in the final year of secondary school– year (grade) 11. Examinations are conducted in both Caribbean boards (Caribbean Examinations Council, CXC) and British boards (Alliance of Qualifications Associations, AQA; Business and Technology Education Council, BTEC; Welsh Joint Education Committee, WJEC). Therefore, there is a recognized need for teachers with experience in these courses. The government high schools do not offer an Advanced Level curriculum. This can be accessed through the private schools.

A freedom of information request counted 72 Caymanian teachers and 154 non-Caymanian teachers as of March 31st 2011 in the secondary school system. It was not possible to get formal information on nationalities. Informal information shows that Caribbean teachers are predominantly from Jamaica, but Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Antigua are also represented in smaller numbers among the teaching staff. This is interesting considering the deliberate effort that was being made since 1968 to limit the number of Jamaican teachers. Non-Caribbean teachers are predominantly British but there are also Irish, Welsh, American and Canadian teachers.

## Hurricane Ivan

On September 11, 2004, only one and a half weeks into the new school year, Grand Cayman was hit by a category 5 hurricane named Ivan. This storm ravished the island for 2 days. The devastation was widespread with over 70% of the building on the island sustaining severe storm damage[[7]](#footnote-7). There was also significant damage/loss of private and public vehicles and as well as infrastructure such as roads, electricity, water and gasoline supplies.

The schools on the island were also damaged, with the two government secondary schools – George Hicks High School (middle school) and John Gray High School (senior high school) suffering major structural damage. They could not be used until months later and, then, only on a modified basis. The Sister Islands suffered little impact from hurricane Ivan and some residents chose to send their children to Cayman Brac. This meant that more teachers were needed on the Brac. The Ministry of Education assigned teaching staff from Grand Cayman to move to Cayman Brac temporarily to support their increased number of students. Other residents chose to send their children to Jamaica or the US as the adults remained on island to try to restore some sense of normalcy and rebuild homes and businesses. Many teachers were among those affected, having damaged homes and lost vehicles. However, most teachers remained on island and were busy helping to salvage what they could from the schools and working to restore some measure of workability to the schools and the education system. It was a very challenging time for everyone on island yet for the first two weeks, it was seen as the great equalizer - everyone was in the same situation and there was a sense of camaraderie among residents, Caymanian and expatriate alike. This began to change as the financially able began acquiring key possessions such as gas powered generators.

## Conclusion

It is clear from the information relayed, that the Cayman Islands have a complex history and development over the years. This has impacted the educational provision and the prevalence of expatriate teachers in the government schools. There has been a dependence on foreign labour. There is a lack of interest in teaching, demonstrated by the local population when alternatives exist, has continued. Although the Cayman Islands retains a governance structure with the UK in its status as a British Overseas Territory, this does not appear to have any direct or documented impact on teacher recruitment. The interaction with Jamaica has always been a major issue between the islands and this dynamic may be reflected in the accounts of the Jamaican participants as they recount their experiences as teachers in the Grand Cayman government school system. The recent changes to the education model in the government schools may also hence impact the culture and ethos existing in the school environments. This may have an impact on the sense of stability that teachers may feel existed in the schools.

# CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

## Introduction

This research focuses on the experiences of a group of expatriate teachers in the Cayman Islands. Through this literature review I will be examining aspects of teacher migration with a view of how modern globalization and world economies have impacted the movements of teachers. I will also delve into the protocols and policies that govern migration. How does one adjust in the new culture? This is a major factor in the successfulness of any overseas job posting, and the issues around cross-cultural adjustments will be discussed in this literature review. There is very little written thus far specifically about the Cayman Islands and its expatriate teaching population. This research aims to filling some of the current deficits while referencing the literature available on expatriate teachers in general.

## Globalisation

It is difficult to select one definition of globalisation as it is a term and theory that continues to evolve as it is affect by economic, political and social factors. However, I have chosen to use explanations given in the literature that closely reflect the expatriate and migratory situation of my research study. Oman, in a brief for the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) described globalisation as follows:

‘Globalisation’ is the growth, or more precisely the accelerated growth, of economic activity across national and regional political boundaries. It finds expression in the increased movement of tangible and intangible goods and services, including ownership rights, via trade and investment, and often of people, via migration. It can be and often is facilitated by a lowering of government impediments to that movement, and/or by technological progress, notably in transportation and communications. The actions of individual economic actors, firms, banks, people, drive it, usually in the pursuit of profit, often spurred by the pressures of competition. Globalisation is thus a *centrifugal* process, a process of economic outreach, and a microeconomic phenomenon.” (Al-Rodhan and Stoudmann, 2006, p. 11)

A similar explanation can be found at SUNY Levin Institute (2011) on the webpage, Globalisation101.org, which defined globalization as the “acceleration and intensification of economic interaction among the people, companies, and governments of different nations”, (p. 2). The Levin Institute, however, focused on the spread of American culture and the Americanization of world civilisations through the spread of American companies. Globalization is not a static or one-time occurrence but rather, it is a movement – not just of people, but also of power relations across the regions of the world.

Globalization as an economic process has been occurring increasing in significance since the 19th century with the increase in ease of transportation across physical borders. The actual term “globalisation” is a more recent phrase that has been used to describe the process. Traditional borders are being eroded, and both developed and developing countries and their politicians actively pursue interdependence.

In this investigation of expatriate teachers, the free movement of labour and the spaces or diasporas (communities formed by people who have dispersed from their country of origin) that have developed are what have become most important. Migration has an effect on economics, culture and the politics of both the source and host nations. One source of economic impact is the free flow of capital in disbursements back into countries of origin as remittance (Dawson, 2007; JTA, 2012). This interdependence, while viewed as a positive aspect in this global climate, can have serious repercussions for small states like the Cayman Islands which has a workforce of 36,000 of which about 18,000 are expatriate, and over 20,000 short and long term work permits were issued for 2010.[[8]](#footnote-8) The work permit figures do not reflect expatriates employed in government since they are not issued work permits, though they are contracted officers.

## Teacher Migration

Migration, the movement from one country to another, is not a new phenomenon among teachers. Oucho in Brown and Schulze (2007) defined teacher migration as “educators leaving their home country to work on a contractual basis for a period, exceeding one year, in another country.” (p. 2). The recorded history of formal education in the Caribbean documents the movement of teachers from the United Kingdom to its colonies. Initially, teachers were needed for the educating of the children of the plantation owners, merchants and other officials who were far from the United Kingdom. After emancipation, teachers were also needed for the education of the children of the now freed slaves (Williams, 1945). In the 1800s, education focused on equipping for ‘white collar’ or professional occupations. Williams referred to the people who choose to fill these occupational roles as the “intelligentsia” (p. 11). The people who populated/filled these roles in colonial times were the children of the officials, plantation owners and the merchants. The curriculum taught sought to fill the void created by the distance from the metropolitan home country. Efforts were made to maintain and reinforce the same values, norms and influences of the metropolis where possible.

The quality of educational provision, whatever it may be, ultimately depends on the teachers; they are asked to interpret in the classroom the new values and challenges of the community in which they and their pupils live and work. It is hard to see how this is to be done to anyone’s satisfaction, unless they know how the community’s values and challenges do in fact affect their work. (Gordon, 1963, p. v)

This quote from Gordon, in her book on West Indian education spanning a period of 1833 to 1933, is still provocative today, especially when examined in the context of expatriate teachers. I view teaching as more than just the transfer of academic knowledge or skills. The sociocultural aspects that impinge on the hidden curriculum are equally, if not more important in the classroom. Sives, Morgan and Appleton (2005) view any teacher as a “perpetual persuader” (p. 350) as he or she supports the goals of the community and hence the society’s development, especially in the developing world. This, I believe, makes the job as an expatriate teacher more challenging, when the goals of the community are not clearly defined, understood or not fully supported by the expatriate teacher. Any discord or disconnect between the teacher and the community in which the children live can result in psychosocial ‘noise’ brought to the classroom as preconceived notions or prejudice from either teachers or students or both. Semantic ‘noise’ is demonstrated in the accents, language and terminology used by both or either parties in the classroom. All ‘noise’, as it is described when discussing effective communication, can be a barrier to learning (Lunenburg, 2010, p. 4, 5)

While the norms and values of the society can be explained to the expatriate teachers, the important role of native teachers with regard to establishing and perpetuating the values and goals of the society cannot be minimized. Williams (1945) saw it as a strategic position to be in:

In any education system, the institutions for the preparation of teachers are potentially the most strategic centres of development and progress…….As is the teacher, so is the school. (p. 18)

If credence is to be given to this theory of Williams, then there is a need for teacher training facilities, populated with locals, especially in a small island state like the Cayman Islands.

During the late 20th century, with developments in travel and technology, and with some decline in the economic and social fabric of Caribbean societies (Nurse, 2004), teachers began an exodus from the Caribbean for ‘greener pastures’. The jurisdictions of choice (and where there was a need for both personnel and the expertise of these trained teachers) were England, Canada, the United States and other Caribbean territories such as Cayman Islands, Bahamas and Turks and Caicos islands. Caribbean teachers’ unions and Ministries of Education had recognised that there has been a continued migration of many of the more experienced teachers from the regional education systems and they recognised the deficit that this causes (Dawson, 2007) in expertise rather than personnel since newly qualified teachers ready to fill the gaps were being produced by the regional universities and teacher training institutions.

The idea of training teachers for export was one discussed in 2003 by then Jamaican Prime Minister Patterson as a way of dealing with and managing the migration of teachers predominately to the United States (Jackson Miller, 2003). This idea was supported by the then President of the Jamaican Teachers Association, as long as there were no adverse effects to Jamaica. He recognised that though there was no hard evidence on the reasons for migration, he could theorise that the main reason was teachers seeking to improve their economic situation. He goes on to state further:

The reality of the situation right now is that teachers, nurses, other professionals are being trained and they are leaving us, and so if we can (agree on) some arrangement with other countries to assist in the training, that would be to our benefit. (Wentworth Gabbidon in Jackson Miller (2003))

Penson (2012) sees the migration of teachers as an opportunity for the more effective use of the global teacher resource:

managed well, teacher migration can result in increased efficiency in deployment, as teachers move from countries with a surplus to countries with a deficit (p. 205)

While teacher migration is not a new concept in the global scheme of things, advances in technology, engineering, travel and communication have made it easier and more accessible to most individuals. Therefore, it has become an option for teachers who want to experience a different environment for various reasons which are unique to their self-interest. The Cayman Islands has become one of the destinations of choice for both Caribbean and non-Caribbean teachers as the teachers seek out that new experience. As I look at these expatriate teachers in this research study, I will explore their reasons for migrating and, more specifically, their reasons for migrating to the Cayman Islands. I will also explore aspects of their recruitment and orientation as expatriate teachers in this new environment.

### Why migrate?

As defined previously, teacher migration is the movement of teachers from their home country to work, on a contractual basis, for more than one year in another country (Brown and Schulze, 2007). For this research study, I focused on teacher migration that was generated out of teacher shortage, as opposed to professional exchanges or language/curriculum programmes (Caravatti, McLeod Lederer, Lupico & Van Meter, 2014). In the Cayman Islands, there was a labour demand/supply continuum operating that served to regulate the actual movement of teachers into the Cayman Islands. As discussed in the background for this research, the teaching profession has traditionally not been an attractive option for Caymanians.

Ravenstein presented his first paper on migration in 1885. He based his conclusions on information for the British Census of 1881. He revisited this topic in 1889, this time with a broader range of data and proposed his “Laws of Migration”. Lee (1966) and King (2012) lists seven laws from Ravenstein (p. 48). I have chosen to focus on three of those laws that, I think, are most applicable in my situation with expatriate teachers migrating to the Cayman Islands. The first law looks at migration and distance, where Ravenstein states that most migration happens within a short geographical distance (as demonstrated by the number of Jamaican expatriates in the Cayman Islands). Where there is a larger geographic distance, Ravenstein suggested that the attraction will be shown as movement to an industrial or economic centre. If we continue to consider the Cayman Islands, once the fifth largest financial centre globally, as being a centre of commerce then this assumption can also be viewed as factor in the movement of non-Caribbean expatriate teachers. Ravenstein discussed the law of technology and migration and he looked at how the locomotive had resulted in an increase of migration. As stated previously, Ravenstein was writing his laws on 1881, yet they are still very applicable today with the continuing advancement of technology, travel and commerce and its support for global movement. The third of Ravenstein’s laws that I want to focus on is what he terms the “dominance of the economic motive” (Lee, 1966, p. 48). While he recognises factors such as oppression, unattractive climate, social surroundings, slave trade, etc, he felt, in1889 that the overriding reason for migrating was to improve one’s lot in life. Ravenstein recognised the push-pull or demand-supply aspect of migration which is applicable in this situation being researched. This describes the neo-classical economic paradigm of migration (King, 2012, p. 13) where migrants move from situations of low earnings to that of higher earnings. That may fit the model of the Caribbean expatriate movement to the Cayman Islands but the differential is reversed for the non-Caribbean, predominately British expatriate.

I agree that economic is a viable consideration when viewing migration however there are other factors that need to be considered. Lee (1966) in his theory of migration, continued the push-pull analogy from Ravenstein, and looked at factors at the origin, factors at the destination as well as intervening obstacles (p. 50). Lee recognised how varied and personal the decision to migrate and the migrant experience was. Hagen-Zanker (2008), in a review of literature on migration, references several papers and reports on research that focused on the neo-classic economic factors of migration. However, since 1966, Lee lamented the fact that research had focused primarily on economic factors and not focused significantly on “the reasons for migrating and on the assimilation (adjustment) of the migrant at destination” (p. 48). More recently, however, there has been continuing research on the reasons for migration especially in relation to particular communities (Appleton, Sives, & Morgan, 2006; Miller, 2008; Manik, 2009; Nunez, 2014) and in the assimilation or adjustment to the overseas posting. My research seeks to extend the body of literature with particular emphasis on the Cayman Islands experience.

Wu (2012), while focusing on teacher migration, suggested a tripartite model of transnational mobility. This is separated into the “colonial model”, the “cultural-exchange model” and the “market demand model”.

The colonial model, according to Wu, focuses on the strategy used by the colonizer to create a “civilized” colony by bringing teachers from the colonial power. Early education in the Caribbean took this form. Today there may still remain that lingering perception that teachers from the developed world are *better* than either native teachers or those from other developing countries, (Van Der Vienhart, 2005).

Wu described the cultural-exchange model as using teacher-exchange programmes to broaden the exposure of both teachers and students to diverse cultures, languages and customs. One such example is the Visiting International Faculty (VIF) programme that involves several states in the US. With this model of mobility, non-American teachers are partnered with k-12 schools on a three-year cultural exchange programme with a J-1 visa. The J-1 non-immigrant visa is offered specifically to persons on cultural exchange programmes. While this programme includes the opportunity for participants to study for a Master’s degree at a recognized university in the state during their stay, it does not offer any rights to permanent residency (green card) or citizenship. The European Education Perspective, in a similar vein, recommends “teachers spend time abroad as part of their initial teacher training, as well as regularly during their teaching careers. Stays abroad and exchanges can provide valuable experiences, motivation and continuing professional development”, (European Commission, 2009 in Iucu, Panisoara and Panisoara (2011, p. 252)).

The third model – the market demand model, forms the basis for teacher recruitment in the Cayman Islands. There is a demand for teachers since the local supply is grossly inadequate to meet the education needs of the population. The Cayman Islands is not unique in this. While the global demand for teachers is decreasing in general, there are still regions that show deficits especially in certain subject areas such as Mathematics, Science and Special Needs. And we may be seeing, according to Penson (2012) that some countries begin to facilitate the “manufacture of teachers for export”, because of the significant remittance to the home country (Miller, Ochs and Mulvaney, 2008).

Remittance is defined, by the World Bank, as the transfer of money by migrants who are employed or intend to remain employed for more than a year in another country in which they are considered residents. World Bank data on remittances for three Caribbean islands and the United Kingdom show the significance of their contribution to the economy:

Table 1: Remittance Inflows (in US$ millions)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year/ Country | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012e | % of GDP |
| Barbados | 114 | 82 | 82 | 83 | 2.2 |
| Jamaica | 1,908 | 2,044 | 2,123 | 2,172 | 14.1 |
| Trinidad & Tobago | 109 | 91 | 91 | 94 | 0.4 |
| United Kingdom | 7,252 | 7,399 | 8,078 | 8,318 | 0.3 |

The most significant remittance, as referenced to the country’s GDP, as seen from this tabled data, is the inflow to Jamaica where about 14% of the country’s GDP falls into this category of income. The figures are much less significant for the other Caribbean territories listed. No World Bank data is available for outflows from the Cayman Islands.

### Pull Factors

Pull factors (or demand or market factors) can be characterised in this study as the vacancies that arise due to shortages of teachers either through attrition, population increases or the inability to fill the positions with local personnel, especially in certain countries and for certain disciplines. There is a demand for the skills and expertise of the migrating teachers and, therefore, they move to the new territory (Sives et al, 2005). Manik (2014) describes these demand factors as the macro-level influence, which are external to the individual teacher, but instead are set by economic and social development in the host country. Manik studied the movement of teachers who chose to migrate from South Africa to the UK.

Paul Washington Miller, in his research on Caribbean teachers migrating to the UK, recognised that there was active recruitment of Caribbean teachers because of the changing student population in certain school districts. As more Caribbean immigrants settled in the UK, the student population reflected this and the overseas trained Caribbean teachers were seen as filling the role of mentors, disciplinarians and being able to model behaviours for these students (Miller, 2008; Morgan, Sives, & Appleton, 2006, p. 5).

### Push Factors

As long as the demand exists there will be teachers willing to fill it. The teachers who decide to fill these posts are characterised by the micro-level influences (Manik, 2014) which will affect the individual and his or her immediate family unit directly. He or she initiates the move, hence forth, being classified as a self-initiated expatriated. This is as opposed to someone who is moving on the directive of a multinational corporation. The push (or supply) factors impact upon the individual and his or her personal circumstances. For example, a teacher may view the conditions of employment in his or her native country as less than satisfactory. Low salaries, poor discipline of students, increasing workloads, frequent initiatives, and issues with administration are all employment based factors that may serve to push the teacher to start looking for other teaching opportunities (Manik, 2014; Miller, 2008; Ochs, Miller, Mulvaney, 2008). All of these factors can form emotional concerns or “stress” which affect the individual and his or her family. On an even more personal level, an individual teacher may feel the need for the career and professional advancement that a new posting may offer – an increase in responsibility, a promotion to a new position or the ability to pursue further qualifications may now be within reach in the new job and location. Further, a teacher’s personal situation such as age, stage in life, a desire to explore, a quest for adventure and even the weather, all may play in part in the decision of a teacher to migrate (Appleton, Morgan and Sives, 2006).

Iucu, Panisoara and Panisoara (2011), in research on mobility of Romanian teachers in a diverse Europe, found that younger teachers had a more flexible approach to career change and development and hence were more likely to move beyond the interest level (talking about it) to the point of actually migrating. This can be justified, especially as younger teachers are expected to have fewer ties or encumbrances that will affect a move such as spouse, children, mortgages, etc. However, this does seem to contradict the assertion by Ochs, Miller and Mulvaney (2008) that more experienced or master teachers are often the target of recruiters.

While a sending government might do all it possibly can to make the conditions of employment for teachers more attractive, such as good salaries, professional development, incentives for success, etc, the decision to leave still lies with the individual. When we think about it, why do some leave, while the majority remain in the same working conditions? And why do some teachers migrate for one year, two years, even ten years and then repatriate, while some become citizens of the host country? These decisions may be “pushed” by the circumstances but the choices made are unique to the individuals involved.

Fieldwork conducted on migrant teachers in the countries such as Botswana (Brown and Schulze, 2007), United States, England, Jamaica (Appleton et al, 2006; Washington-Miller, 2009; Beck, 2010), and Southern Africa (Degazon-Johnson, 2005) found that salary gain was cited as the leading reason for migrating. A more recent study undertaken by Education International found that among male teachers, better pay ranked as the highest motivating factor, but among female teachers, opportunities for professional development was ranked first. The traditional view of men as the breadwinner or main financial source for the family may be one reason for this motivating factor voiced by the male participants. Hence, male teachers may view their migrating as a way to achieve more financially for their families. Interestingly, women, in this study also placed a “desire to see the world” before salary issues (Caravatti et al, 2014, p. 31). Based on what was said earlier about flexibility of younger teachers, it would have been informative for the report in Education International to provide the age range of those surveyed.

The motivator of financial gain, coupled with the exchange rate of many Caribbean currencies to the Caymanian dollar makes the Cayman Islands attractive indeed. The table below shows the exchange rate of the Caymanian dollar to major regional currencies and to other global currencies.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **$1 Cayman Islands =** | |
| $7.41 | Trinidad and Tobago |
| $103.73 | Jamaica |
| $241.11 | Guyana |
| $3.18 | Eastern Caribbean (St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St. Lucia, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Anguilla (BOT) and Montserrat (BOT). |
| $2.38 | Barbados |
| €0.89 | Euro |
| £0.78 | British pound |
| $1.20 | United States[[9]](#footnote-9) |
| $1.21 | Canada |

**Table 2: Exchange rates (as of May 2, 2010) from** [**www.oanda.com**](http://www.oanda.com)

While for most Caribbean expatriates, working in the Cayman Islands can seem to have a positive gain in terms of the conversion of the Caymanian salary to their home country currency, for non-Caribbean expatriates, the exchange rate does not have the same effect. For European and British workers, the value of the Cayman Islands dollar is less than the Euro or the pound. I am by no means stating that Caribbean expatriates have migrated to the Cayman Islands solely for financial benefit but the financial aspect must be acknowledged. It would therefore be very interesting to find out how the non-Caribbean and Caribbean teachers viewed the financial aspect as they reflect on their reasons and actualities of migrating.

By taking a qualitative approach to this research study and actively interviewing the participants I sought to focus on all their possible reasons for migrating, rather than solely on economic factors.

Halfacree (2004) cautions that in research on migration, credence needs to be given to non-economic factors as reasons for migrating. Halfacree provides a quote from Fielding which I found explains the rigors of migration:

We know, often from personal experience, but also from family talk, that moving from one place to another is nearly always a *major event*. It is one of those events around which an individual’s biography is built. The feelings associated with migration are usually complicated, the decision to migrate is typically difficult to make and the outcome usually involves mixed emotions….Migration tends to expose one’s personality, it expresses one’s loyalties and reveals one’s values and attachments (often previously hidden). It is a statement of an individual’s world-view, and is, therefore, an extremely *cultural* event. Fielding in Halfacree (2004, p. 240)

### Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol

In many territories in the Caribbean, teacher training is heavily subsidised by the governments. There is a significant investment of money into teacher training, money that is often not available in abundance. When these teachers chose to migrate, other communities/countries then reap the benefits of the training. This is troubling for the sending countries (Sives, Morgan and Appleton, (2005), Appleton, Sives and Morgan (2006**)).** Concerns about protecting their teaching human resource to avoid over recruitment and also avoid exploitation in the form of broken promises led Commonwealth countries, after much research and discussion, to develop the *Protocol for the Recruitment of Commonwealth Teachers.* Ministerial meetings of Commonwealth member countries had addressed their deep concerns about the targeted recruitment of their teachers, in particular, for their perceived skills at handling more challenging students (Miller, 2007) and the problems this recruitment can cause, especially for small states such as those in the Caribbean. While acknowledging the benefits and opportunities for individuals in their professional development through teacher exchanges and teacher mobility, it was recognized that this should not be at the detriment of the national education systems of the sending countries (Protocol, p. 5; Sives, Morgan and Appleton, 2005).

Striking a balance between teacher retention to improve educational quality at home and the free movement of ambitious, highly skilled teachers to improve those individual’s opportunities as well as educational quality elsewhere is now a priority on the international development agenda.

(Miller, Ochs and Mulvaney, 2008, p. 90)

All Commonwealth countries adopted the Protocol for the Recruitment of Commonwealth Teachers in 2004. While not a legally binding agreement, signatories do agree to abide by its dictates and recommendations.

I have selected and listed below those recommendations in italics which I believe can occur among the expatriate teaching population in the Cayman Islands.

* *3.1 Recruiting countries have a responsibility to manage their teaching force so that they will not need to constantly import teachers.* This does not seem to be a part of the Caymanian government’s priorities based on the fact that there is a constant stream of expatriate teachers recruited annually. While teacher training is encouraged, it is not incentivised, as was discussed in Chapter Two.
* *3.2 Recruiting countries must be willing to enter into bi-lateral discussions when requested by source countries to ensure that any harmful impact of recruitment is mitigated.* There is no documentation on whether these discussions have ever occurred with the Cayman Islands government but it has been acknowledged that at one time over 70% of the teaching population was expatriate and over 50% was from the Caribbean, mainly Jamaica (GIS, 2002).
* *3.3 Every effort must be made to ensure that teachers do not depart/end their contracts during the academic year of the school.* This proves to be a serious detriment in education as often posts vacated during the school year, remain so until the new school year begins. Hence, adversely affecting students and other teachers.
* *3.4 Checks and balances should be put in place to monitor the status of recruited teachers. This information should be available to source countries and/or the Commonwealth Secretariat upon request.* While the Economics and Statistics Office collects data frequently, direct surveys of teachers is minimal. The Human Resource department of the Ministry of Education is also limited in its quest to collect ongoing information from recruited teachers. However, voluntary exit interviews are conducted with teachers leaving their posting in the Cayman Islands.
* *3.6 A recruiting country should ensure the establishment of a complaints mechanism and procedure in regard to recruitment to be known to the teacher at the start of the process.* The complaints mechanism does not formally exist in the Cayman Islands, however efforts are being made to give teachers more of an avenue to express their concerns.
* *3.10 Recruited teachers must be afforded the same or better working conditions as the nationals.* Ironically, in the Cayman Islands nationals are the lowest paid in the system which causes some resentment and lack of permanency in the job among nationals. While the salaries for locals are fixed, recruited expatriate teachers have the opportunity to negotiate their salaries as part of their contract.
* *3.14 Newly recruited teachers must benefit from an orientation and induction programme centred on the cultural aspects of the country as well as background on the school.* The orientation programme has been developed and enhanced with tours of the island, visits to museums and other important historical sites. The schools have also improved their induction provision and the use of mentor teachers and buddies have become established practices.

Interestingly, the Protocol also spells out rights and responsibilities for source countries. Most crucial of these is that the source country is responsible for managing its teacher supply within the country. Essentially, a teacher should not be penalized or prevented from leaving. Rather, the source country needs to “improve the attractiveness of teaching as a profession, and to ensure the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers in areas of strategic importance” (p. 14). The Protocol recognized the need for further action and recommended a comprehensive study of formal and informal modes of teacher flow. It was hoped that this Protocol would be adopted as an international standard of best practise as it pertains to teacher mobility and recruitment, by agencies such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). In 2005, the Organisation of American States (OAS) and UNESCO endorsed the Protocol. The ILO signed an agreement with the Commonwealth Secretariat in 2006 to work together to “advance the status and protection of teachers in the interest of educational quality”, (Miller, Ochs and Mulvaney, 2008, p. 6). The Commonwealth Secretariat maintains a monitoring and evaluating role with regard to this Protocol – monitoring the status of recruited teachers such as number, conditions of employ, integrity of recruiting practices, and evaluating the impact on developing countries. A memorandum of understanding between the two countries would be developed and standing reporting forms are available to ensure that relevant data is collected and analyzed. But the Commonwealth Secretariat has recognised that the flow of information is not as readily available as it would expect to aid in drawing conclusions and making recommendations, as stated in the CTRP Advisory Council Report for 2012.

The Protocol, I believe, is an extremely useful document and more so has the support of the international bodies. However, it is very disheartening that the same teachers that the Protocol is designed to protect are in fact completely unaware of its existence. It was only in reviewing the literature for this study that I myself discovered that said Protocol existed. Miller, Ochs and Mulvaney (2008), in assessing the impact of the Protocol, found similarly that over 97% of the teachers surveyed had not heard of the Commonwealth Teachers Recruitment Protocol. While that number should be much lower today, a non-scientific poll of colleagues continued to show a complete ignorance of the existence of the Protocol.

## Cross-cultural adjustment

cross cultural research has increasingly investigated what happens to individuals who have developed in one cultural context when they attempt to re-establish their lives in another one. Berry, 1997, p. 5

As teachers move to a new school, new district, new country, they are faced with changes in their environment. As self-initiated expatriate teachers, that change may often be part of the attractiveness of the move. Adjusting to the new environment is part of the success of the posting (Fu, Shaffer and Harrison, 2005; Richardson, von Kirchenheim and Richardson, 2006; Zhou and Qin, 2009)*.* Research suggests that there is a (largely unspoken) expectation that expatriate teachers will have the sort of cultural knowledge about, and adaptability to, their new environment that will allow them to fit in and do their job effectively (Earley and Ang, 2003). Sims (2011) in his thesis on Cultural Intelligence, quoted the United States Department of Education which stressed that “a teacher’s satisfaction with his or her career may influence the quality and stability of instruction given to students.” (p. 18). Therefore satisfaction in the job of teaching is important to the individual and to the students that are under his or her responsibility for curriculum delivery (both direct subject based and the hidden curriculum). Teachers are also expected to adapt to new cultural norms and establish a social life in the new environment, beyond the school.

Failure to make the necessary adjustments may often lead to a rejection of the overseas posting – both physically (as demonstrated by early termination) and mentally (by an inability to give one’s best in the classroom). Both of these have serious ramifications for teaching and learning. The decision to leave the posting early will cause a higher than expected turnover rate of teachers. While some researchers argue the benefits of teacher turnover in terms of removing struggling teachers who were not a good fit for the organization (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2010, Abelson & Baysinger in Ronfeldt, Loeb and Wyckoff, 2013). I agree with other researchers who recognize the disruptive effect that a high teacher turnover has on the school culture and on the student achievement (Ingersoll, 2001; Guin, 2004; Ronfeldt et al, 2013). The period needed by newly hired teachers to adjust to the new school, new curriculum, new colleagues and new country will collectively delay the effectiveness of the individual teacher. Effective teaching involves the ability to focus on teaching and learning, to develop appropriate strategies, to understand and relate to the students and to learn the general ethos and culture of the school and the society in which it exists. Essentially, these requirements suggest that each newly recruited expatriate teacher can be treated as a newly qualified teacher for this new environment, even though he or she may have years of previous teaching experience. Miller (2009) recognized that “teachers teaching in countries other than their own can experience shock and confusion if they do not receive adequate and appropriate induction and orientation support” (p. 97). This also will negatively affect the progress of the students (who also have to adjust to the teacher). Often ignored is the toll on the remaining staff to support, mentor and train new staff in both the academic and social aspects of the organization, which increases the disruptiveness of the process in a situation of high teacher turnover. In this section, I seek to examine the factors that affect the adjustment of the newly recruited teacher to the new cultural environment and look at the process of acculturation for the individual in the new posting. I will be examining what the literature suggests are the key aspects to the survival and even thriving of expatriate teachers in a new environment.

### Self-initiated Expatriates

Much of the research on expatriates has focused on employees of multinational corporations who are being sent to work for the organization in another country. Within recent studies however, there has been greater recognition of self-initiated foreign workers. For these workers, a number of factors will influence their decision to relocate, such as career progression, age, family life, community commitment, and in some cases, particular characteristics of the destination such as population size, housing, health care, and safety, (Wagner and Westaby, 2009). Inkson, Arthur, Pringle and Barry (in Fu, Shaffer and Harrison, 2005, p. 1) identified the following characteristics that differentiate the self-initiated foreign employee from the expatriate employee sent by its organization: (i) they are not employed by multinational organizations, but rather have made the personal decision to move (and deal with all the ramifications surrounding that choice) and have actively sought the international posting, (ii) their decision is normally centred around career and personal goals as opposed to the corporate goals of an organisation, (iii) they often fund their own relocation expenses (though some postings may include an allowance as happens for teachers in Cayman Islands) and (iv) they see no limits to their career and personal goals and development and hence they may move from one country to another as opportunities arise.

### Cultural Distance

Research around cultural distance generally question whether expatriate adjustment is more greatly facilitated in a similar cultural environment. Zhou and Qin (2009) in doing a study on American and Japanese expatriates working in China concluded that the Japanese expatriates found it easier to adapt to life in China than their American counterparts because of the closeness geographically and of the similar culture of Japan and China as opposed to China and America. This supports the assertions by Berry (1997) that adaptation (used here as synonymous with adjustment) will be more difficult in cases where there is more cultural distance as typified by differences in language, religion, environment, socialization, history etc. Berry goes further to state:

Greater cultural distance implies the need for greater culture shedding and culture learning, and perhaps large differences trigger native inter-group attitudes, and induce greater culture conflict leading to poorer adaptation. (p. 23)

Following this conjecture, one could perhaps reasonably assume that the adjustment for Caribbean teachers should be easier than for the non-Caribbean teachers. It will be interesting if the findings bear this theory out, since though the Cayman Islands are geographically close to Jamaica and in fact historically were managed by the same Governor, the anti-expatriate sentiment and anti-Jamaican sentiment makes the adjustment of the Jamaicans more challenging. Horenczyk (1997) notes that the attitude of the host country nationals can have a strong effect on the adjustment or adaptation of the expatriate worker. A counter to this point, however, is that with the number of Jamaicans present on island, the family links which can be both Jamaican/Jamaican and Jamaican/ Caymanian and the Diaspora are established and therefore, these can serve to reduce much of the anxiety in the adjustment process through the social support and networking, (Hechanova et al, 2003; Kooy and de Freitas, 2007). Although Zhou and Qin used a questionnaire research method, they do advocate for the use of other methods like interviewing (as I have chosen in my research study) and observations (pp. 203) to gather more detailed information on the adjustment of individuals.

Cultural distance can be debated back and forth with the expectation that this distance would be less among between the Caribbean participants and the Cayman Islands than culturally between the non-Caribbean participants and the Caymanians. The bigger issue is less about Cayman culture and more about the sociocultural network of support that is present from one’s country of origin. With this angle, I would expect that the Jamaican participants (who make up all my Caribbean participants) would feel less culturally distant in this process with the vast amount of Jamaican networks present on the Cayman Islands.

Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) did a meta-analysis of research literature available on cross-cultural adjustment, and looked at implications for further research. They focused on two main phases in the process – anticipatory adjustment and in-country adjustment.

### Anticipatory Phase

The anticipatory phase looks at issues that arise before the expatriate leaves to go to the new country, but which can have an effect on how successful the expatriate is in that new culture. Many multinational corporations provide culture specific training for their employees who are being given new international postings, but in the case of self-initiated foreign employees, which describes the teachers in this study, the individual teacher will need to do his or her own research and fact-finding mission on what the post will entail and will require on a psychological level to be successful. With the increased access to information through the internet, blogs, Wikipedia, social media such as Facebook, etc, a teacher can find many important factors about the posting before arriving on the island and therefore, the mental preparation can begin. This will help to manage some of the anxiety and fear of the unknown that may arise through a lack of knowledge. The information, which cautiously, may or may not be factual, can provide details and examples of both social and work related situations for the individual and can also describe the culture with respect to host country nationals and their views of expatriates. Research is not conclusive on how significant an impact this has on adjustment, but it is hoped that “fore warned is fore armed”. As Black, Mendenhall and Oddou recognized,

The more accurate expectations individuals can form, the more uncertainty they will reduce and the better their anticipatory adjustment will be. The better the anticipatory adjustment, the fewer surprises and negative affective reactions of less culture shock individuals will experience, the more appropriate behaviours and attitudes they will exhibit and the smoother and quicker their adjustment will be. (p. 305)

Previous international experience, whether the employee had lived overseas or worked temporarily or even vacationed in a different culture, all should have a positive impact on one’s ability to adjust. Here, the expectation is that the previous experience was positive or at least manageable with some personal or professional reward in itself for the individual.

### In-country Phase

Again, using the Framework of International Adjustment (from Black et al, 1991 and supported by Strubler et al, 2011), they viewed adjustment factors as they pertain to in-country adjustment as individual factors, job factors, organizational culture, organizational social factors and non-work factors**.** While I do believe that this five tiered approach has merit in looking at the adjustment, for my study and in interviews I have simplified this approach into two areas - personal and professional factors. Included among the personal factors will be the individual’s level of self-efficacy which is a key characteristic in how the individual views the new posting. High levels of self-efficacy translate into high levels of self-esteem and confidence in one’s ability to be successful. This confidence can manifest itself in a positive outlook to situations, viewing them as opportunities, rather than obstacles and seeking coping mechanisms and solutions. (Fu et al, 2005). High efficacy leads to reduced stress and an enhanced coping ability. This ‘positive framing’, as termed by Fu et al was found in research to have a positive effect on adjustment. The individual’s ability to build relationships with other expatriates and with host country nations was also found to have a positive effect on adjustment, (Fisher and Hartel, 2003; Fu et al, 2005; Strubler et al, 2011). The network(s) that develop through these relationships provide social support and hence decrease the feelings of loneliness and social isolation. But, also important, is that these networks can provide important information about ‘how we do things here’, providing informal feedback to help reduce confusion and anxiety as well as facilitating changes in behaviour to increase the chances of successful adjustments and fit. Also important in the personal aspect is the teacher’s family – spouse and children and how they are adjusting to the new environment. If the family is struggling, this will have a negative impact on the individual.

Professional factors include clarity of workplace expectations and roles, the dynamics and ethos of the work environment and how they will impact the demonstration of skills and ability of the teacher. Again the ‘how we do things here’ needs the support of buddies or mentors for the teacher during the in-country phase. Job satisfaction has been found to contribute to intercultural adjustment, (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998; Liu and Shaffer, 2005). Strubler, Park & Agarwal (2011) describe job satisfaction as “a reflection of good treatment (fairness and respect), emotional health, organizational functioning, benefits, co-workers and bosses, and the work itself”, (p. 109). The organizational culture and its socialization do have an impact on job satisfaction. Systems established within an organisation can provide a means of making new employees feel a part of the organisation. The systems could also communicate clearly the expectations and goals both for the organization, in general, and the role of the employee in particular. Also critical in the workplace, but often overlooked is *how* these expectations and goals will be communicated and what feedback will be provided. As has been suggest earlier by Miller, etc, there might be a need for mentoring of newly recruited expatriate teachers, though they may have years of teaching experience, in the same way as the school would provide mentoring for a newly qualified local teacher. As an example, when I functioned in the role of Head of Department, I always provided a mentor within the department for my new teachers even as I remembered that I was basically left to flounder and learn by osmosis when I was newly hired. The buddying of teachers with persons from the same country or the similar geographic locations or cultural backgrounds can allow a feeling of the familiar to help the new expatriate teacher to settle in. I always viewed my experience as fortunate, being recruited with so many fellow Trinidadians, so that we were able to form our own support network. Up to that time, there were few Trinidadians on the teaching staff. But might it have aided my integration into the culture and society of the Cayman Islands if I had bonded with home country nationals (HCNs) more in the early stages of my in-country phase? I have to admit, my initial exposure which included my landlady, my neighbour, and a colleague who helped me find the apartment were all very positive. But once in the school system, the persistent rumor was not to trust or take at face value the home country nationals with whom you came in contact if you wanted to remain in the job. There seem to be a constant concern about what was said and to whom, especially if it was in anyway critical of the school system, the children or anything else in the society.

### Adjustment and Acculturation

As research looks at individuals in a new environment, the terms adjustment and acculturation are often used when describing the process and the changes that each person has to go through in order to manage his or her self in the new situation. Merriam-Webster defines the process of acculturation as the ‘adapting to’ or ‘adopting traits from’ the new cultural environment as the individual interacts with culturally dissimilar influences. Black (1988) defines adjustment as “the degree of psychological comfort the expatriate feels” when faced with the new job and living situation. Berry (1997), in focusing more on the suitability of the individual, developed a more refined definition of adjustment as “a state whereby changes occur in the individual in a direction of increased fit and reduced conflict between the environmental demands and the individual attitudinal and behavioural inclinations”, (in Fu et al, 2005). I view the ‘reduced conflict’ as reducing the stress of culture shock that the individual may experience as part of the acculturation/adjustment process. Culture shock is not a permanent state of being. It is a recognition of the differences in the original and new cultural environments and the challenges that develop in adjusting. New strategies for coping will have to be created by the individual if he or she is to successfully overcome culture shock. Failure to cope leads to depression and anxiety and as stated previously, this can manifest itself by early termination and/or mentally rejecting the posting (switching off on the job). Berry further describes the long term effects of these adjustments as “highly variable, depending on social and personal variables that reside in the society of origin, the society of settlement, and the phenomena that both exist prior to, and arise during, the course of acculturation”. The personal variables lie directly with the individual, hence, while one can theorize about the process of acculturation and the adjustments that need to occur for this to be a success for the individual, there will be variation among individuals in how this process actually occurs. von Kirchenheim and Richardson (2005) define adjustment, in a very narrow way for their study on expatriate teachers, as the teacher’s ability to “function effectively, personally and vocationally, in the new environment,” (p. 409). von Kirchenheim and Richardson were investigating quantitatively specific characteristics of individuals and how it will affect their adjustment to the relocation in the Cayman Islands. For my study, I do not focus on specific character traits or variables, but rather from the narratives generated, I look at what changes the individuals made, directly and indirectly to order to manage their new environment and their relocation successfully. All these definitions recognize the importance of the resulting psychological state of the individual during the process – the need to feel in control of one’s life.

Berry (1997) describes acculturation as the process that results in the change of cultural and/or psychological patterns of either or both groups when they come into “continuous first-hand contact” (pp. 7), as occurs with expatriates/immigrants and host country nationals. He identifies what he has determined as the two main issues that affect acculturation: the effort to maintain one’s culture while residing in the new society; and the amount of contact and participation that one has with the dominant culture in the new society.He posits four tenets to his framework that describe the strategies that non-dominant individuals or groups will utilize as they attempt to adjust to the new society and setting: assimilation, separation, integration and marginalization. Berry describes each of these tenets in detail as follows:

1. Assimilation into the culture, where individuals lose their own cultural identity, and instead adopt that of the host, is often seen as the predominant strategy in cultural adjustment among permanent immigrants and refugees.
2. Separation involves holding on to and finding ways and means to maintain one’s own culture while avoiding interaction and participation with the host culture.
3. Integration describes the maintaining of one’s own culture while actively participating in the cultural functions of the host.
4. Marginalization shows little interest in maintaining one’s own culture (or being forced to give up one’s cultural practices) while also avoiding or rejecting participation in the host cultural practices, where feelings of loss, exclusion and discrimination predominate.

In terms of ethno cultural groups in the Cayman Islands, Caymanians run the gambit in ethnicity and racial profile, hence, it is hard to identify a “true Caymanian” on sight. However, when a person ‘opens his or her mouth to speak’ the accent is often a clear indication of country of origin and cultural society. Therefore, as much as assimilation might eventually be the target especially for those expatriates who become residents or status holders, it becomes challenging when societal prejudice, intolerance or even favouritism is directed at an individual due to his or her country of origin or accent. A person may have the legal right as defined by the immigration law and held in Caymanian status to be Caymanian but when he or she begins to speak and a Jamaican accent or a Canadian accent or a Barbadian accent is identified, the stereotypical positions on these countries comes to the fore. This can be especially problematic in the classroom and may be one of the reasons why teachers who have Caymanian status are still treated as foreigners and may feel a sense of separation rather than assimilation. This feeling of separation will also affect their desire to integrate more fully into the cultural norms of the host society.

Integration or the multi/bi-cultural model of acculturation (Berry, 1997; Yang, 2009) describes the ability of individuals to “fit in with the norms and values of the host culture, while maintaining the sense of identity with their original cultural context.” (Yang, p. 152). Berry (1997) further explains that for true integration to occur the host society must be open and willing to accept the right of the expatriate to maintain his or her cultural heritage while allowing the expatriate to participate in the cultural norms of the host.

When discussing acculturation there is a dichotomy of existence between personal life (home, social setting) and professional life (work place, classroom). While every effort may be made at home to maintain one’s original culture, especially in the presence of children, the composition of one’s social circle may impact the personal acculturation experience. In the work place, the environment will also affect what strategies are used and how successfully the teacher can adjust. For example in the social setting, if one is able to become a member of a group reflecting the same culture (such as me being a part of a social group that is Trinidadian) there will be more opportunity to maintain my cultural norms. However, if such a group does not exist or if I am not an active member, or if my social grouping reflects a multicultural persuasion then there would be more need to adjust and adapt my behaviours. The work world provides a different complexity. Especially in teaching, I believe that expatriate teachers make a deliberate attempt to suppress their culture to avoid the ‘noise’ that the cultural differences may bring to the learning of our students. While anecdotal sharing of our culture and cultural practices or expressions may have its place in the classroom, much of that will be dictated by the relationship that has developed between the teacher and the students and societal prejudice towards nationalities. Total suppression is impossible. As I described earlier, just by talking and the accent, you are revealing who you are. And your cultural upbringing (as well as your inherent personality) would have shaped the persona you are now presenting. My own classroom experience has me trying to adjust my language use so as to reduce the use of dialect, and try to flatten or reduce the accent if possible to reduce the distraction that it may cause as a barrier to learning. Depending on the workplace dynamics even more adjustment may need to occur. Important here are the number of host country nationals in the work place and the opportunity they provide for interaction. In this research study where Caribbean and non-Caribbean teachers are being interviewed, the numbers and interaction of host country nationals and the expatriate teachers in the work place may also affect how the individual adjusts to the new environment.

There are a number of factors that appear to affect the process of acculturation and the resulting adjustment such as gender, educational background, economic status, reasons for migrating, cultural distance, and even the length of posting (Berry, 1997; Brown and Schulze, 2007). Research specifically on the gender of expatriate workers conducted by Sinangil and Ones (2003) concluded that there was no significant difference in the job performance of female compared with male expatriate employees nor in the adjustment to the cultural environment. The economic status and reasons for migrating will all be discussed with the individual participants as their stories are generated.

## Conclusion

The literature, in recent years with the expansion of the globalised society, has recognized the need for research to support the processes of acculturation and adjustments and to use the conclusions to inform policies and practical approaches to immigrants and expatriate workers. This has taken on a much more important role because of the financial ramifications to companies and government as well as the psychological ramifications to individuals and societies. Research continues on expatriate populations and immigrant studies especially with emphases on business and management. I view the school environment as a different complexity where some of the generalisations made at the business and management level may not apply. My intention, in this literature review was to identify theory and research that mirrors the issues that I have found as I analysed my own experiences as an expatriate teacher in the Cayman Islands.

I have separated my literature review into two main parts – the reasons for migrating, and how one adjusts to the new posting. These two sections may enjoy some overlap in that if the reasons for migrating are powerful and motivating enough, they will give the teacher the self-efficacy needed to make the necessary adjustments. The process of acculturating and adjusting to the new job and the new culture and society cannot be ignored as they directly affect how effective the individual with be at his or her job and even how long the person will remain in the job.

# CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

## Introduction

More than any other part of this study, the methodology I used has forced me to consider who I am and, therefore, what I brought to *the buffet* that was my collected data. I have to admit, rather begrudgingly, that the menu was totally dictated by me! I say begrudgingly because I had initially intended in my naivety to let previous research studies and review of the literature guide the choice of methodology and methods, but I have realised that I could not divorce myself from the process. I was as intertwined as my participants because I was one of them. We co-existed through a common phenomenon which formed the basis of this research study – we were all expatriate teachers. In this chapter, I discuss the methodologies that shaped this research study and guided my decision making throughout the process.

The research focused on the expatriate teacher in the public secondary school system in Grand Cayman. The research study used a qualitative approach with a particular emphasis on the specific case bounded by the group (expatriate teachers), location (public secondary schools in Grand Cayman), and time (recruited between 2005 and 2010). This eliminated expatriate teachers from the private schools, public primary schools or the other public secondary school in Cayman Brac. The account of my personal expatriate experience, while not within the time parameter of the case study, represented an autobiographical narrative of my experiences.

As a Caribbean expatriate teacher, I have often questioned if my feelings, concerns, disappointments, joys, surprises, expectations, attitudes, etc, were similar to those of my colleagues both my non-Caribbean colleagues and those from different Caribbean countries. Much is exchanged while passing on the corridors of the school, but what about those not directly in my ‘circle of influence’? What are their experiences of being an expatriate teacher? I also wondered if the fact that I have been here for over 10 years may have *tinted my glasses a little rosier* or *cleared some of the fog* to the realities of living and working here as an expatriate. I fully realise that all the experiences, including mine, are subjective and dependent on one’s stage in life, goals, dreams, expectations, gender, family, and so on. These experiences will be as multiple as the participants, but they/we all share a common characteristic – expatriation. Hence, in this study and in my own life, I seek to provide an avenue to construct meaning to and interpret meaning from these experiences in this setting.

## Qualitative research

### Who am I?

I have always considered myself a natural scientist, with a love for Science and Mathematics and having pursued an undergraduate degree in Chemistry. I viewed research in a positivist paradigm which sees truth as true, fixed, and quantifiable. Initially, I sought to use a mixed methods approach to this study, whereby I could quantify, using various indices, the responses of participants to a survey to provide information on how they viewed the expatriate teacher experience. But even as I mused on this approach, I questioned what the real aim of my study was – what did I really hope to learn, what knowledge was I seeking, and was that ‘knowledge’ fixed or experiential? And if my growing view that what ‘we’ perceived as knowledge was actually shaped by our experiences, what advantage would be served by a detailed survey method? I realised that for me, the individual’s view of what they had/were experiencing was the mainstay of my research. Originally I thought *the* research could be sterilized or sanitized from emotions and be focused on the phenomenon of the expatriate teaching experience, but I quickly realised that the whole experience is tied intricately to an individual’s subjective view of his or her life! It cannot be separated. I then tried to be objective about the process and not let my own experiences as an expatriate teacher in the jurisdiction impact the study. But again, I realised that this was impossible for me. It was also tied to my life as the lenses with which I questioned, where I interacted with body language and comments, and the lenses with which I interpreted what was said, are all intertwined with my life – my own experiences as an expatriate teacher and one who was also working in the current system alongside my participants. In fact, the whole reason and purpose for this research study hinged on the fact that my own experiences served as a starting point for the research. Therefore, the concepts and theories for the collection of data through the interviews, and through which the collected data was analysed and interpreted would be affected by my experiences, my lenses. Hence, I was forced to own the research in a different way – the *the* had to be changed to *my/our*. I was providing an opportunity for both my participants and myself to reflect on a particular time period of our lives and to share that biographical account as part of a research study.

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recording and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalist approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 3)

In the third edition of the handbook on Qualitative Research, Denzin and Lincoln present what they term as a generic definition of qualitative research, which I have quoted above. I chose this approach to research because I was situated in the natural setting, the ‘world’ of the research and I was attempting to make sense of a phenomenon experienced by myself and others around me. Qualitative researchers aim to study people in their natural setting and to understand the ‘why’ and ‘how’ to their patterns of behaviour. As Flick (2009, p. 21) describes it, “qualitative research is oriented towards analysing concrete cases in their temporal and local particularity and starting from people’s expressions and activities in their local contexts.” Flick’s description emphasises the timeliness and subjective nature of the accounts that we recount as we live and our situations change.

My initial research question centred on a particular phenomenon – the experience of being an expatriate teacher in the Grand Cayman public secondary school system. Therefore, this meant that I was focusing on a particular time in our lives, rather than a full biographical account of a person’s life history. Only the predefined time that represented the active expatriate phenomenon was to be examined though interviews and conversations. Any stories or life experiences outside of that frame could be referenced only as they impact or influence the expatriate phenomenon for the individual. I realise that I am partitioning my life and the lives of my participants, and while I believe that we are all products of our lived experiences, which work together to shape us into who we are. I also believe that we are consistently evolving, whether willingly or with resistance. Hence, I see this research as taking a snap shot of our lives. At first, I expected to look at two cases for comparison – the Caribbean and the non-Caribbean experiences, but after much conflict, I resigned myself to a single case with common yet unique individuals that could not simply be pigeon holed by geographic origin.

Before I delve more into the use of a case study approach, I want to focus on one line from the quote above by Denzin and Lincoln:

These practices transform the world.

My research practice – would it transform *the* world, transform *my* world? What are the parameters of my world? Did it exist in my mind or was it more tangibly aligned to my expatriate existence? As I mused on these questions, I recognised that the transformation of my personal world would come as I made sense of my own experiences and how they fit in with the experiences of other expatriate teachers – the recognition that I was not alone in how I viewed my experiences through my expatriate lens. But did I want to attempt to articulate a transformation of my wider expatriate world within the Cayman Islands or even beyond the geographic borders? I realised that yes, I did want more people to benefit from my research than simply a comfort level for myself. Whereas the research is personal, it is also shared by those who participated actively by disclosing their experiences, and by those who will read the accounts and analysis in this study. I also hoped to add to the academic literature on the lives and experiences of Caribbean and non-Caribbean expatriates in the Caribbean. However, in the wide view of transforming my world, I must acknowledge the political and ethical issues that arise in the presence of an expatriate culture. Some of this has been discussed in the background to the study and in the literature review, but in this chapter I will look at how ethical considerations will be addressed through the methodology and the research methods used.

## Case Study

There are different schools of thought around the use of a case study approach to research. While researchers such as Denzin & Lincoln (2005), and Creswell (2007, referencing Merriam and Yin) view case study as “a strategy of inquiry, a methodology or a comprehensive research strategy” (p. 73), I adopted the view described by Stake (1995) of a case study approach as less of a methodological choice and more an identification of what will be studied by setting the parameters and context of the study. Lauckner, Paterson, & Krupa (2012) described Stake’s case studies as explicitly seeking out “the multiple perspectives of those involved in the case, aiming to gather collectively agreed upon and diverse notions of what occurred” (p. 5). This quote, I believe, actively reflected the aims of my research, recognising there would be both agreed and diverse perspectives gathered during the interview process. For my study, the parameters of were set as follows:

* expatriate teachers,
* in the public secondary school system in Grand Cayman who were
* recruited between 2005 to 2010 (after Hurricane Ivan).

However, I must declare that my personal narrative fell outside the parameters of the case since I was recruited before Hurricane Ivan. However as the researcher, I took the liberty to include my autobiographical account of my experiences as this formed the impetus for the research study in the first place.

Stake (1995) highlighted the importance of identifying the main issues or research questions that affect the case being studied. These issues help to situate the context of the case study and are used as sign posts in the data collection phase of the research study. The sign posts, as I termed them, were used to guide the interview questions and the data analysis. For this study, my research questions were:

1. What are the reasons for migrating and becoming self-initiated expatriates?

2. How did the process of recruitment and orientation prepare teachers for the reality of teaching as an expatriate in the government secondary schools in Grand Cayman?

3. How did expatriate teachers adjust to the teaching experience at the government secondary schools in Grand Cayman?

4. How were the personal and social lives of the expatriate teachers affected by living in Grand Cayman?

### Autobiography

if you are investigating a life experience that you yourself have had, then this has to be declared (Sikes, 2010)

This statement by Sikes, in discussing the ethical position of the researcher, was a guide for me when I decided to include the autobiographical account of my experience as an expatriate teacher. An autobiography is defined as the narrative account of a person’s life written by the person (her) self (Creswell, 2007). I use the term narrative here to refer to “an extended story about a significant aspect of one’s life such as schooling, work, marriage, divorce, childbirth, an illness, a trauma, or participation in a war or social movement”, (Chase, 2005, p. 652). I have treated that extended story as data. A coherent story is made up of bits and pieces of a person’s life that has meaning around an event (Bochner and Riggs, 2014). By telling a story, a person is interpreting and giving meaning to the experiences around a particular event. (p. 202). In the autobiographical sense, the data involved me writing my account from memory and memoirs or artefacts. The story referred to here is not a fictional fable but rather the narrative that combines a succession of incidents in my life into a unified episode or chronicle (Polkinghorne, 1995). However, Bochner and Riggs warn researchers not to view the story as a mirror or map of what occurred but rather should be viewed as “fluid, co-constructed, meaning-centred reproductions and performances of experience”. (p. 203). Therefore, I am not looking at the full life story or life history of my existence but rather I have chosen to focus on a particular aspect of the life. But there is the realisation that one’s previous experiences would have shaped the way one is able to react to, reflect on and make sense of one’s current situation. Life is a continuum rather than partitioned. This approach, of viewing the life history around a specific series of events associated with being an expatriate teacher, was carried into my semi-structured interviews of my participants and my interpretation of the data generated. The interviews and the written transcriptions are treated by qualitative researchers as narrative – “to describe the form of the collected body of data they have gathered for analysis”, (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 6).

There are different schools of thought around the generation of life his/stories. Some researchers believe that since we are natural story tellers, participants should be given as few prompts as possible and allowed to let their story flow (Denzin, 2001; Ellis, 2007). On the other hand, I believe, as other researchers (Fontana and Frey, 2005; Kvale, 2006), that for the research questions constructed and because of my insiderness as an expatriate teacher, that a more interpretive approach was necessary both at the data collection and the data analysis phases of this study. As an insider going through the same transitions and having once been a new expatriate teacher, I was able to empathise with all participants (Bryman, 2008). However, it did mean that I had to reflect on where I was and how I felt 14 years earlier. This brings to the fore questions of what is remembered and recounted. Questions of what aspects may have been romanticised and what may have been demonised over time. The stories we tell are shaped by culture, relationship, memory, even historical perspectives. Which stories get foregrounded or highlighted in telling and which are marginalised or ignored and why? Memory is active, dynamic and ever changing. Bochner and Riggs (2014, p. 209) reference statements from Hampl (1999): “as we grow older and/or change our perspective, our relationship to the events and people of the past changes as well”; and Ellis (2009): “the past is always open to revision and so, too, are our stories of past experiences as they are recounted and what they mean now” that describe the how we view our experiences.

## Philosophical assumptions

Any researcher reflects his/her philosophy of research in the assumptions and positions taken in the approach to the research process. Kiernan in Nind (2008) developed a summarising statement which, though discussing research on persons with learning difficulties, I think clearly explains the positionality of all qualitative research:

(while) the goal of qualitative research is quite explicitly to ground studies in the experience and views of respondents, it is the researcher (or in externally funded research, the funding body) who determines the overall research questions, and the researcher who gathers, analyses and interprets the data and draws conclusions. (p. 4)

Inherent in that statement is the view that the researcher has of the world, of research, of truth, of the use of language and of research methods. The ontological assumption questions the nature of reality and recognises that much of what we believe as real or true is actually filtered through the subjectivity of our own experiences. This subjectivity does not invalidate the experience but rather demonstrates that multiple realities can co-exist around a particular phenomenon, as I expected to find in this study. As an insider, experiencing the same phenomenon being studied, my epistemological position has me intricately involved in the process. Epistemology is concerned with the science or nature of knowledge and how our interpretation of knowledge is filter through the schema, beliefs, views and experiences of the researcher. Though every effort will be made to avoid my biases influencing the interview process as described later, it is unavoidable that the biases will surface during the analysis phase of the study. I must acknowledge my values and biases and the effect these will have on analysis, interpretation and presentation of the data gathered (axiological assumption). Creswell (2007) while including the three principles already listed, goes further to discuss the assumptions made in the approach or style of transmitting to or communicating with the audience – specifically, the rhetoric or language of the research. Creswell also looks at the process of the research – overall research design and the methodology and methods chosen.

There are several factors in this study that are independent of the researched, for instance, the continual need for teachers in the Cayman Islands, the policies and decisions made by the Department of Education Services, the structure of the schools, the curriculum and examination boards, the times of the school day, the students and the catchment of the school population, to name a few. What is subjective and what is the focus of this research study is the impact these independent aspects have had on the individual and how he or she sees his or her life story as a reflection of these independent realities.

### Validity, Reliability or …

The traditional view of validity focuses on whether the study gives the researcher what she expects to find. Mason (in Bryman, 2008) describes a view of validity that is very close to the definition used in quantitative research: “validity refers to whether you are observing, identifying, or measuring what you say you are”, (p. 376). This was also discussed by LeCompte and Goetz (1982) in how much the conclusions accurately represent the findings. They viewed validity as the coherence between theory and practise observed, hence, they advocated for the use of terms such as “comparability and translatability” (p. 34) of the findings. These terms still maintain a positivist view of validity, when in fact, I came to believe, there should be less of an emphasis on comparing and more of a need for an authentic representation of the life experiences of the participants (Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Neuman, 2003 in McKenzie, 2005). By true and authentic, I am referring to the perception of the participant in sharing his or her experience since the experience is subjective.

Reliability, in quantitative circles, is built into the design of the study, where the question of, ‘whether independent researchers would generate the same conclusions using the same or similar instruments or parameters’ is answered. Essentially, reliability is looking at the replicabiliy of the research situation. In qualitative research, however, reliability focuses more on the “fit between what is recorded as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting” (Bilken, 1992, in McKenzie, 2005). LeCompte and Goetz state that “because human behaviour is never static, no study can be replicated exactly, regardless of the methods and designs employed” (p. 35). This is compounded further when we recognise that in qualitative research, the main “instrument” used is the researcher ourselves, emphasising the subjectiveness of the research. Therefore, the focus has to shift from replicability, and more to accuracy and comprehensive coverage of the material.

I am partial to Elliott’s (2005) use of the terms stability, trustworthiness and scope of findings rather than reliability and validity. Stability, I interpret, to mean the coherence of the story across participants experiencing the same phenomenon. While recognising and acknowledging a certain uniqueness to each experience, there should not be such dissidence in the accounts from various participants or even within the same account to leave the researcher and the reader doubting the trustworthiness of the stories shared through the interview.

The meaning is attached to telling the story as the participant reflects on the experiences s/he is relating. However, there is an inherent danger in the type of questions that I may be asking as the interviewer. Leading questions elicit particular responses that may not be authentic – rather the participant may be giving me (as the researcher) what they think I want to hear. This becomes even more of an issue as an insider when, essentially, the dynamics of the interaction and our positions as expatriate colleagues mean that certain attitudes and approaches are expected. To reduce the familiarity I selected participants who were outside my immediate circle of friends and with whom I had not sent countless hours discussing the variance (challenges and joys) of being an expatriate teacher in the Cayman Islands.

## Research Method

In this research study I sought to examine the subject of expatriate teacher experiences in Grand Cayman government high schools. I decided the best way to gather such experiences was by interviewing expatriate teachers. Seidman (2006), in discussing the purpose of interviewing expressed the belief that in-depth interviews were not about getting answers or testing hypothesis but rather sought to understand “the lived experiences of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p. 9). In contrast, I believe that the interview can serve dual purposes, where questions can be answered and hypotheses tested alongside the analysis of the meaning that persons make of their experiences. Humans use language as a tool to symbolise their experiences. To verbalise those experiences is one means of making sense of the experience. Semi-structured interviews are defined by Kvale (1996) as “an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting meaning of the described phenomenon” (p. 5-6). I choose to use semi-structured rather than an unstructured interview since I wanted the formal interview to be guided by the main themes of the research questions but I also wanted to allow topical trails to develop that may stray from the main themes but help in the understanding of or providing a richer, more detailed explanation of the experiences. Cowburn (2005) recognised that it will only be “(some) memories” which are recounted or revealed (pp. 5) and therefore in the interview process what is recounted becomes as important as what is ignored or glossed over in the verbal accounts of the phenomenon being discussed.

### Participant Selection

I decided to narrow my field of possible participants by using the following criteria:

1. must be an expatriate classroom teacher
2. must have been recruited after 2005 (the island was devastated during Hurricane Ivan in September 2004, hence I wanted to interview persons who arrived after this event
3. must be teaching at either John Gray High School or Clifton Hunter High School (the only two government high schools in Grand Cayman)

With these criteriain mind, I settled on interviewing 8 teachers, of whom four were Caribbean expatriates and the other four, non-Caribbean. I did not select for gender nor age, though, the final participants were evenly distributed around gender. I felt that a sample size of eight would be manageable for me in terms of collecting and analysing the data yet provide a rich diversity of stories. I felt that the stories of these eight people will provide tiles in the mosaic that is the lives of expatriate teachers in the Cayman Islands.

Following an online demographic survey which is detailed in chapter 5, and based on the criteria I had established, I was able to select four participants from the non-Caribbean respondents. For the Caribbean respondents only 2 proved to be viable candidates based on my predetermined criteria. However, in one case, the contact information may have been incorrect as I was unable to physically contact the individual. Therefore, I approached three Caribbean teachers directly. The three teachers I approached were willing to participate and be interviewed and were not in my immediate circle of friends.

The number of participants in each category was proportionally similar to the actual number of expatriates from that category. Hence, all of my Caribbean participants were from Jamaica simply because, especially in the time frame researched, the vast majority of newly recruited Caribbean teachers were from Jamaica (65) as opposed to other Caribbean countries (19). Similarly, non-Caribbean teachers also reflect the predominance of UK based recruits (42) as compared with other non-Caribbean countries (16).

### Interview

Qualitative research interviews are a means of gaining an understanding of how the interviewed sees the world, and how the lived experiences have shaped that view (Kvale, 1996). These ‘conversations’ initiated a process of reflecting and generated new understandings of previously taken-for-granted assumptions and actions for both the interviewed and the interviewer. I had chosen to adopt, according to Roulston (2010), a romantic conception of interviewing, whereby my place as the researcher is openly expressed and used to “establish rapport and empathic connections with the interviewee in order to produce intimate conversation”. This rapport should, theoretically,lead to the interviewed revealing his or her ‘true’ self, (pg. 217). Sikes (unpublished) and Fontana and Frey (2005) recognise that the researcher should be willing and prepared to share his or her own experiences to facilitate reciprocity in the interview process.

This research sought to understand how teachers recruited to the Cayman Islands government secondary education system view their lives as they reflected on their time of recruitment and the ensuing months or years in the teaching service of the Cayman Islands. As self-initiated expatriates, the decision to move to the Cayman Islands was totally their own as opposed to being sent overseas by a parent company. Hence, the interviews explored why they decided to make the move. The social reality of individuals, according to McKenzie (2005), “is seen as constantly being redefined and reconstructed through all interactions within the social world that people live in” (p. 64). Woods (in McKenzie) argued that, ideally, this social and symbolic interaction should be sampled over time. I attempted to facilitate this in the interview process by questioning specific periods in the timeline of expatriate employment in the Cayman Islands, from the reason for the move, to recruitment, orientation and the working period. My interviews were usually planned to be about an hour in length. The questions were not fixed but the themes were set. Each participant was questioned in the following areas: (i) life before application, (ii) recruitment and orientation, and (iii) life after posting. Life always included both professional and personal aspects. In all but one case, the interviews were completed at the same time. I also interviewed all available participants a year later. Speaking to the participants a year later allowed them to further reflect on their feelings and impressions of various events in their lives in retrospect and through the lens of time. Did they view the lived experience in a new light, a year later? Were some of the issues that seemed unsurmountable, still given the same weight or value a year later? Were new issues coming to the forefront?

In all cases, the teachers were interviewed at school during non-contact sessions or after school, at a time mutually convenient. I produced a list of questions that I wanted to ask, based on the themes I had found in the literature and from my own narrative account. However, I did not use these questions as a prescription, rather the interviews took on much more of a conversation, with the responses fuelling the direction of the process. All but one interview was digitally recorded with the permission of the participants. The interview that was not recorded was due to equipment failure and because this interview was at the end of the school year, I decided to proceed and make notes on the interview in the absence of the recording equipment. Each participant was interviewed for between 20 minutes to 60 minutes in the first instance. The second interview, a year later, was much shorter, in many instances, lasting no more than 25 minutes.

### Data collection and analysis

Analysis, by definition, means the breaking into smaller parts to reveal its elements and structures and hence, to go beyond just a description but rather to explain, interpret, and therefore understand (Dey, 1993). I viewed the interview as generating one big story around the individual expatriate experience. However, that big story can then be broken down and analyzed as a collection of smaller thematic stories such as recruitment, orientation, personal live before application, professional life after accepting job and living in Grand Cayman.

While again recognising the uniqueness of each story told by the interviewees and experiences as described through the specific lens of the individual, I attempted to draw general conclusions where I saw commonalities expressed across the participants. As this quote from Larsson (2009) states, “educational researchers often express hopes of contributing to public debates, “(p. 3). Lincoln and Guba (1985) question whether qualitative researchers should attempt to generalise across large populations from a small sample size and, rather, should focus on the re-presenting of the experiences. But others (Firestone, 1993; Larsson, 2009; Polit and Beck, 2010) recognise that even in small samples, some themes may be so pronounced in the data of the narrative/life story described and interpreted as to make them generalizable. As I viewed the generalizability of this research, I concentrated on two aspects of Firestone’s arguments for generalising in qualitative research. Firstly, using the analytic approach allowed me to make generalizations during the analysis and interpretation of the data generated from the interviews. But the second approach, what Firestone termed “case-to-case translation” or transferability or reader generalizability (Polit and Beck), allow for the reader or audience of the research to apply or transfer the findings to situations which are proximally similar to those in the research study.

I intended to do a thematic analysis of the data collected. It should be noted, as Burgess (in Dey, 1993) stated “interpretation and explanation are the responsibility of the analyst, and it is his or her task to develop a meaningful and adequate account; the data merely provides a basis for the analysis, they do not dictate it” (p. 41). Viewing data analysis as a spiral and using Creswell (2007) as a source of instruction, the first stage was the management of the data. Interview data collected was recorded on a digital recorder, with the permission of the participants. The recordings were transcribed verbatim, saved and filed. The second phase involved the reading and rereading and making notes or memos as I reflected on the interview data. In the third loop of the spiral, the describing, classifying and interpreting of the data occured. This step involves the coding of the data. I used a spreadsheet matrix to record the themes and selecting statements or phrases that illustrated them. The coding allowed for the establishing of categories and sub-categories based on the themes and provide clear distinctions of similarities and contrasts. Although research of the literature and my own experiences had established pre-existing or a priori codes, I was not limited by these, and did not include them unless they were also present in the data being analyzed.

What is include and what is lost? Am I able to capture the meaning that the story teller intended when viewed through my lens – can I? Am I on ethically sound footing in terms of what I choose to highlight in the retelling? Have I transformed the story into something unstorylike (Bochner, 2014, p. 213). As stated previously, I used a thematic analysis of the stories, where the focus is on what is said rather than on the telling itself. As a fellow story teller, I was mindful of the fact that during the interview, I am interviewing a person first and that I therefore cannot ignore the effect that the telling would have on him/her psychologically as I seek responses to my questions. If there was any hesitation shown, I allowed that and avoided being overly probing in my quest for rich detail and description. Generally, though I asked the questions, some of the power still remained in the hands of the participant, as the choice to respond remained with them. Also, where the participant did not wish to answer the question was avoided – there was no insistence on my part as the researcher. Again, though I asked the questions and initiated the discussion, much control of the interview process remained with the participant.

Muchmore (2002), in his study of a teacher over a five year period found that he had accumulated copious amounts of data in the form of interview transcripts, field notes, documents, newspaper clippings, etc. He had to make some decisions about what to include in his study. Having found no direct literature on this issue, he created his own criteria using these four guidelines – relevance, accuracy, necessity and ethics; and he constantly measured these against the aims of his research study. Though my data was collected solely via interviews, I found his approach a useful one to adopt. Relevance looked at how did the data inform the research question; necessity focused on how the data supported the research study; and ethics focused on the need for anonymity with participants themselves and with others they may have mentioned in their interviews, and avoiding issues that would harm the psychological and social well-being of the participants, their families or other persons mentioned such as ministry or school officials. This goes back to the issues of research in small states. Though, interestingly, in some cases, my participants were not as concerned about anonymity as I was. Some of them were quite willing to have their names used, but as I had promised them this initially, I maintained that stance throughout the retelling. If even one participant preferred to be anonymous then that would be applied to all. I saw the use of pseudonyms as protecting the individual from ‘harm’ – criticism, exposure, censure, even dismissal. Recognising that this research was in a ‘small state’ and hence this designation came with its own issues around the identification of the participant from the story told, I still maintained as much anonymity as I could without affecting the accounts given. Accuracy, however, is a bit harder to maintain since I depended on the ingrained honesty of my participants. Did they weave me a tale? I don’t know, but if they did, it was an interesting one. I do think that from my own experiences as an expatriate teacher, the accounts shared did not raise any red flags. The ‘year later’ interview was also a means of assessing the accuracy of the initial accounts given.

## Ethical implications

When the researcher has a shared history with research participants and plans to continue in their work role after the completion of the project, extra care needs to be taken to manage interdependence in working relationships and boundary issues during the research process. When reporting research findings to an external audience, issues of validity, such as bias and subjectivity and ethical issues, including anonymity and coercion, need to be addressed. Both internal and external credibility issues need to be considered during the initial planning phases and there is a need to address impact on the organization, quality of the research and demands on the researcher. (Smyth and Holian, 2008, p. 34)

This quote from Smyth and Holian articulates all aspects of researching from the inside where I will be positioned as a teacher in the school who expects to continue in that role after the research has been presented. The main ethical issues in this research study surround informed consent, confidentiality and consequences of and to the participants which all will be recognised and accounted for by the duty and virtue of the interviewer (me) as well as the utility of the study. Kvale (1996) reminds us that “ethical decisions do not belong to a separate stage of interview investigations but arise throughout the research process”, (p. 110). One of the objectives of the initial survey was to identify participants for the interview stage of the research study by having them volunteer their names and contact information and indicating their agreement to participate. I also inform my participants of the nature of my research both when they were first contacted by email or directly and again before each interview session. Recognising the subtle nature of the research, pseudonyms were used for all participants. All participation was voluntary.

While the narrative is filled with rich descriptions in the participants own words, as the researcher, the onus is on me - I have to interpret. I must say how I feel and what I understand by what is said, going beyond a mere description of the narrative. The question must be asked – ‘Whose story is it, anyway?’ Researchers have an ethical and moral responsibility in the retelling. However, with my role as the researcher and an insider being key factors in the process, the interview interaction was also an important element in this process. My insiderness would have affected my relationship to the participant as well as the content shared.

My real aim was to treat the story as data. I used the analytical stance as described by Atkinson, of narratives-under-analysis (Bochner and Riggs, 2014), where the focus was more on my interpretation of what was told, and less on dissecting the meaning the story teller made of the telling. Positionality of the researcher (me) and the influence on the story being told cannot be ignored. However, as an ethical researcher I must also recognize the storyteller and be conscious of the impact that telling the story and reflecting on the experience would have on the individual. This view of the story as a story to be appreciated, is supported by Denzin and Trinh (Bochner, 2014) who caution against losing the meaning behind the story in the quest for predetermined themes. Hence a balance needed to be struck between the stories as stories and the stories as data and sources of themes. In the semi structured interviews, the themes from my autobiographical account and the literature guided (but did not limit) my questioning of my participants. Therefore, the narratives generated were impacted by the themes found in the literature about the expatriate teaching experience.

My presence as an insider who had experienced the same phenomenon meant that on an emotional level I could connect with and appreciate the story told as I compared it, often indirectly and on a subconscious level, with my own story. This fits the model of narrative exceptionalists as supported by Bochner and Riggs (2014) and Frank (2010). However, as can be seen in my own case as the researcher, the two points of view do not have to be such extreme ends of the spectrum of narrative inquiry that they cannot co-exist in the same methodological practice.

## Conclusion

The methodological choices made in this research study were dictated by the goals of the research and demonstrated what I thought at the time were the most effective methods for collecting and analyzing the data from the representative sample of the population. My presence as both researcher and participant was declared and discussed in detail as my insiderness proved to be a key aspect in the research study.

All of my participants selected matched the criteria I had established though they were actually drawn from two sources – a general pool of volunteers from the online demographics survey (see chapter 5) and opportunity sampling from the general population. As I conducted my semi structured interviews, the research questions remained in the forefront of the conversations, but because the questions were very general, they allowed for the full description of each participants lives during the predefined time.

The analysis and interpretation followed the themes generated from the literature, my experiences and my participants’ stories. The results of the analysis follow in chapters 6 to 10.

# CHAPTER FIVE – THE ONLINE SURVEY

## Introduction

Quantitative research on expatriate teachers in the Cayman Islands by Richardson, von Kirchenheim, & Ricardson (2006) recommended further indepth analysis using personal interviews with participants. The personal participant interviews were to form the backbone of my data gathering method. However, in an effort to increase the pool of available participants and to reduce my familiarity with the participants, I decided to administer an online survey using the distribution lists for the two government secondary schools in Grand Cayman. While, in some cases familiarity may be seen as an advantage, I wanted to allow for experiences diverse from my own, which I expected I would have a greater chance of achieving with persons outside of my immediate circle of reference. I already knew my story, I was living it. I had discussed the stories/experiences through the years with my friends and circle of acquaintances. I wanted to hear from others.

Another purpose of the online survey was to gain a basic picture of the expatriate teachers in the government secondary school system in Grand Cayman at that time. Hence, the questions focused on the demographics and the teaching experiences of the expatriate teachers who chose to respond to the questionnaire. In this chapter I discuss my decision to use the online survey as I delve into the strengths and weakness of this method. I also discuss the response rate and data gathered and how this impacted the choice of participants for the qualitative interviews.

## Online survey research

Questionnaires and surveys have been a popular method of data collection for both quantitative and qualitative researchers for years. Advances in technology and the development of online tools and programmes have resulted in the popular use of online surveys and questionnaires. The questionnaires and surveys can be created, edited and distributed quickly and at reduced costs via email, social media, and webpages. Researchers, however, have had to evaluate the effectiveness of the online approach to meeting the goals initially established for the use of the survey method as a data collection instrument in research (Mertler, 2003; Evans & Mathur, 2005; Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006; Yetter & Capaccioli, 2010; Roberts & Allen, 2015). It should be noted that the questionnaire is one of many different types of surveys that can be conducted. The type of basic background information I wanted to gather to determine the eligibility of participants and their willingness to participate, was met in the design of a simple questionnaire. This was effective since I had some experience and idea of the possible responses. Most of the questions were not open ended, but rather were closed with possible responses provide in check lists.

As with all forms of research methods, the use of web surveys has both positives and negatives aspects. For any researcher, these need to be considered against the aims and goals of the research study. Evans and Mathur (2005) conducted a comprehensive review of the research literature available at that time to identify and develop a list of what they termed the strengths and weaknesses of online and web surveys as research methods. As I reviewed their list, I chose to focus on the aspects that pertained to my research. Hence, the strengths they identified such as speed and convenience of delivery, as well as low administrative costs (p. 197) were also strengths in my approach. Using a web survey allowed me to reach all teachers in the schools chosen, with one email, through the schools’ email distribution lists. The distribution lists are generated by the computer services department in the Ministry of Education and contains all staff members on that domain, e.g. [xxxxxxx@jghs.edu.ky](mailto:xxxxxxx@jghs.edu.ky). Therefore, by sending one email to John Gray High School, the email will be delivered to the inbox of each member on that domain. All users were quite familiar with this method of distribution of survey material as the Ministry of Education also uses it frequently. It also allowed me to easily send out a reminder email two weeks later. Another strength identified by Evans and Mathur was the use of diverse types of questions which, though not unique to online surveys, can be easily created and edited with the available online survey programmes. Therefore, I could ask dichotomous questions, multiple choice questions and open ended questions on the same survey. I used a free web survey site, Survey Monkey™ to design and administer the web survey. This survey programme is useful as it provides an easy means of designing the interface as well as an ease of entering the responses. It also can report the results in various formats such as summary tables or per question, automatically. Survey Monkey™ was also familiar to all staff members as it was frequently used as the online survey programme of choice by the Department of Education.

While Evans and Mathur viewed the impersonal nature of the web survey as a weakness, I viewed it as a strength as I intended to limit my familiarity with my participants and wanted to limit my interaction with them initially (p. 208). One recognised weakness that I did perceive in this method, similar to what Evans and Mathur terms as junk mail, is simply the amount of email that is received daily by teachers. While not formally termed as ‘junk’, some items can be viewed as irrelevant and, therefore, be ignored or deferred for a response at a later date or time. This survey email may have been viewed as such by some intended respondents. Low response rate is one of the major concerns with any type of survey. Researchers differ on whether the response rate of web surveys as compared to paper surveys is lower, higher or the same (Yetter and Capiccioli, 2010, p. 271; Fan & Yan, 2010, p. 132; Evans & Mathur, 2005, p. 203). I found low response rate to be an issue as is discussed later.

It should be noted, even as I read Roberts & Allen (2015) and their discussion on ethics in online surveys, that in my research, participation in the online survey was 100% voluntary. There was no tracking of emails addresses or IP addresses. There was no request for read receipts. There were no incentives offered to respondents. Even though I used the term ‘anonymous’ in describing this survey method, Mahon (in Roberts and Allen, 2005, pp. 101) argues that online transactions have the potential to be breached by external forces, such as hackers, which are outside the control of the researcher, hence, true anonymity cannot be guarranteed but for the level of this process that was under the researcher control, responses were anonymous unless the respondent wished to become a research participant.

## Conducting the online questionnaire

To begin the process, I sent the link to the survey via the email distribution lists of both government secondary schools in Grand Cayman. This removed the concern about non-delivery, though, I could not account for opening and reading since no read receipt was requested. A read receipt would have identified the teachers who had opened the email but it would not necessarily have identified who actually completed the survey. However, I did not want any teacher to feel that his or her interest could be traced. I wanted to maintain their anonymity as far as possible. These lists included teachers (Caymanian and non-Caymanian), administrators and support staffbut the questions were phrased so that non-teachers could be identified easily and eliminated as possible participants after the analysis of the results. Teachers are expected to check their email at least twice a day, hence, concerns about lack of expertise with the use of email and the interface were not issues in this method.

I consulted research literature for suggestions or guidelines on steps that can be taken to increase the response rate to the survey and these were incorporated into my approach. Nulty (2008), in comparing response rates for paper and web based surveys, examined two websites (Zuniga and Quinn, p. 304) and summarised their recommendations. I have listed the recommendations that I adopted in my practise:

1. Push the survey by sending the URL in an email directly to each member of the target audience.
2. Provide a reminder which I sent out two weeks after the initial email.
3. Ensure respondents of the anonymity, within controllable limits, of their responses.
4. Ensure familiarity with the method as this was the preferred method used by the Department of Education
5. Keep the questionnaire and the questions short.

A blog site provide further suggestions of

1. the need to introduce myself, explain the goal of the survey and thank my respondents in advance; and
2. keep the questions short and understandable, as well as give an approximate length of time needed to complete the survey. (Hanser Sophie, 2010)

The approach of using the web survey was not affected by concerns expressed by Bethlehem (2010) about any part of the population being under represented since all teachers had the same access to computers, and internet use. While there would be varying levels of individual comfort with the use of technology, this was not seen as a major factor since as stated previously, the method of distribution was familiar to all. I also did not offer any incentive for completing the survey, as had been suggested by Zuniga (in Nulty (2008))

## Results and Discussion

As stated previously, the primary goal of the online survey was to identify teachers who were willing to participate in the interview process. There were 196 secondary school teachers in Grand Cayman on record at the time of the survey. Of that number 137 were expatriate teachers, while 59 were Caymanian or Caymanian status holders.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | John Gray High School | Clifton Hunter High School | Subtotal | **Total** |
| Jamaican | 50 | 24 | 74 |  |
| Other Caribbean | 6 | 12 | 18 | **92** |
| UK | 25 | 12 | 37 |  |
| Other non-Caribbean | 5 | 3 | 8 | **45** |
| Caymanian |  |  |  | **59** |
|  |  |  |  | **196** |

Table 3 Breakdown of Nationalities among the two secondary schools in Grand Cayman

Due to the nature of the topic stated in the introductory email, none of the Caymanian staff responded to the survey. Fifty five expatriates responded to the survey, of whom 29 were Caribbean teachers and 24 were non-Caribbean teachers. I was initially concerned about what I considered to be the low response rate of 40%. However, Cook, Heath and Thompson (2000) in a meta-analysis of email surveys found an average response rate of 39.6%. Nulty (2008) actually suggested that in a sample of over 100, a response rate of 21% is considered adequate for an online survey. Of the 55 who responded, only three did not answer all the questions in the survey.

Further analysis of the responses led to more food for thought, especially when the response data was examined using the major category of my research which was the Caribbean and non-Caribbean demarcation. Of the 92 Caribbean teachers in the system, only 29 responded (32%) while of the 45 non-Caribbean teachers, 24 responded (53%).

Of the 55 teachers who responded, 20 expressed a willingness to be considered for the interview stage of the research project. These 20 were distributed as 9 Caribbean respondents and 11 non-Caribbean respondents.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Nationality** | **Response (out of total number)** | **% response of total** | **Number “yes” to further interviews** | **% response** |
| Jamaican | 24/74 | 32 | 6 | 25 |
| Other Caribbean | 5/18 | 28 | 3 | 60 |
| UK | 18/37 | 49 | 6 | 33 |
| Other non-Caribbean | 6/8 | 75 | 5 | 83 |

Table 4 Responses by nationality

Among Caribbean teachers, most of those who volunteered did not meet the criteria I had identified. Of the 9 Caribbean, only 3 met the criteria in terms of years employed in the Cayman Islands, while 7 on the non-Caribbean respondents met the criteria of the years employed in the Cayman Islands. There were more suitable non-Caribbean volunteers and hence, I was able to randomly select my participants from among the non-Caribbean teachers. It should be noted that of my Caribbean teachers who met the criteria, all were Jamaican.

## Conclusion

While the online survey method did serve as a means of identifying future participants for my interviews, it did raise several questions to me about its use as an effective data gathering instrument and what I consider to be significant differences in the response rates between the Caribbean and non-Caribbean teachers. In reviewing Fan & Yan (2010) in their discussion about the factors that affect the response rate, I question whether the topic was of equal interest to both the Caribbean and non-Caribbean participants (pp. 133) or whether social or cultural issues may have factored into the differences observed. The full survey results are included in Appendix two.

# CHAPTER SIX – WHY MIGRATE?

## Description of participants

### Non-Caribbean

Lucy was a 60 year old female Canadian national with 40 years teaching experience. She had previously worked in the Bahamas before moving to Grand Cayman. At the time of the initial interview she had been teaching at the John Gray High School for 4 years. She has four adult children. Her husband was also a teacher and accompanied her, though he had no confirmed job at the time. Her youngest daughter followed her to the Cayman Islands and accepted a job teaching at the international school. At the end of the first year of interviews, Lucy retired from the system. Fortunately, as the year after interviews were being prepared, she was on island visiting her daughter and therefore was available to be interviewed.

Logan was a 28 year old unmarried Irish man who had 2 years of secondary teaching experience. He had taught ‘English as a second language’ in China for three years before going back to university to get his formal teaching qualification. At the time of the interview, Logan was on the second year of his first two year contract. He left at the end of this year, and was not available for the ‘year after’ interview.

Carol was a female teacher from the United Kingdom who was in her late 40s. She was recently married to a foreign national (Dominican Republic). With the move to Grand Cayman, she left behind an adult son. She had 12 years teaching experience with several as head of department. When interview initially, Carol was on the second year of her second contract.

Justin was a 40something year old British teacher who moved with his family – wife and 2 young sons, 7 and 10 years old, to take up a position in the Cayman Islands high school system. At the time of being interviewed, he had only been in the system for about 8 months. He had formally been a head of department immediately before moving to the Cayman Islands.

### Caribbean

Daniel was a 35 year old male from Jamaica. Daniel had 1 year secondary teaching experience, followed by 4 years post-secondary teaching experience. He and he wife were both recruited to fill positions though sent to different schools. At the time of initial interview, he had no children, but a year later they had a son. The Cayman Islands was his first international posting. Daniel, at the time of the initial interview, was on the first year of his second contract.

Amanda was a forty something year old married Jamaican female with 14 years teaching experience. She came to the island, her first international posting, with her two boys, ages 6 and 10. She was on the second year of her first contract when interviewed. Her husband accompanied her to the island though he did not have a confirmed job.

Samuel was a forty something year old Jamaican male with 15 years teaching experience. He previously worked in the UK for 5 years before returning to Jamaica for a few months and then to the Cayman Islands. His wife and two children remained in Jamaica but visited frequently. He had only been in the Cayman Islands for 8 months on the initial interview.

Olivia was a new teacher, employed only 8 months at the time of initial interviewing. She brought her two teenage children with her to the island, leaving a fiancé at home in Jamaica. This was her first international posting. She was recruited late because of the late resignation of a Caymanian teacher. She came to this job with over 10 years of teaching experience. In her job in Jamaica, she had functioned as the Head of Department, grade coordinator and the examination coordinator in a school of over 1200 students.

Me – at the time of recruitment to the Cayman Islands, I had been teaching for 7 years in Trinidad. At the time of conducting the research study I had been teaching for 13 years at the same high school in Grand Cayman and I had been the outgoing head of my department. I was a single female with no children. This was my first and only international job posting to date.

## Introduction

The teachers had various reasons for choosing to leave their home countries and in some cases, their previous expatriate posting. As might be expected these reasons were very personal and closely tied to what stage they were in their lives and were also affected by age and professional experiences. These form the push factors as described by Manik (2014) as was discussed in the literature review.

Only two of the participants were in contractual situations: the others were in secure positions, and were not being forced to make a change. Samuel was returning to Jamaica from a previous five year expatriate posting in the UK, while Lucy was leaving a previous expatriate posting in the Bahamas. She and her husband had been teaching there for four years prior to her move to Grand Cayman. But what was clear is that they all felt a need for something else to be happening in their lives. They all wanted to change their status quo. For many of them, including myself, a desire to see more of the world had prompted the initial interest to start looking at migratory teaching opportunities. Olivia, Daniel, Amanda and Justin indicated that they had thought of the moving for a few years before the actual application to Grand Cayman. Olivia had gone as far as to apply on previous occasions to Canada, the UK and the US. She was successful with the application to work in the US through an agency but the agency required money to complete the application and recruitment process, which she did not have. Her application to teach in the UK did garner a response but it stated that there were already many Jamaican teachers in their education system needing placements so they had no job to offer her at that time. Like Olivia, I had applied previously for an international posting. I had applied to the Cayman Islands for a post at the then Community College but had not been successful.

Amanda, Daniel and Justin admitted thinking about it, but none of them had taken actual application steps. Justin said that he and his wife had always felt that, in his words:

If the opportunity ever arises for us to do what we are doing but to do it in another country and give our children the experiences of another culture, another experience then we would take it. I never really looked very hard which meant I probably wasn’t very honest with myself about doing that. But then one day, I started looking. (Justin, p. 4)

Daniel admitted that he and his wife had considered different countries and cities such as the UK, the USA and other parts of the Caribbean. Amanda concentrated her research on the US and Canada. She admitted to not seriously giving the rest of the Caribbean much thought. Logan had decided early on in his teaching career, after his experience working in China teaching English and his return to the UK to complete his postgraduate diploma in Education that he did not intend to remain in the UK for more than two years. “I was always looking to work abroad. I much prefer working abroad than working at home” (Logan, p. 1), he said. He admitted that the Cayman Islands were not his first choice but after finding the advert, he applied.

## The weather

When questioned further on why he did not want to work in the UK, Logan listed several reasons: “I am not a big fan of the weather at home. I find working abroad much more interesting and I enjoy living in different cultures”, (Logan, p. 1). He further expounded on the weather: “the weather is a big influence because I play a lot of sports, I go diving, so the weather suits my life, that is my current stage in life”, (Logan, p. 2). He recognised that as he was young and active, the weather in the Cayman Islands was a major plus for him. Justin also described an appreciation for the Caribbean sun and sea. His wife had a family connection to another Caribbean island and they have vacationed there and enjoyed it. It had opened his appetite for things Caribbean, “there was something about the West Indies that we felt we needed to explore more”, (Justin, p. 4). The other two non-Caribbean participants did not mention the weather as a factor in their decision. Lucy had already been in the Caribbean on her previous posting so she was used to the sun and the sea. Carol had a connection to the Dominican Republic so the weather was less of a novelty for her.

The Caribbean participants were all Jamaican (except for me). Jamaica is only 300 miles from Grand Cayman. Therefore the weather is the same for both countries. The weather actually proved to be a positive for Daniel, as he chose Grand Cayman because he wanted to avoid the UK weather. Trinidad and Tobago, my home country,are the southernmost islands in the Caribbean and are closer to the equator and in a different time zone from Grand Cayman. This actually meant that I had to adjust to cooler temperatures in the Cayman Islands in the ‘winter months’[[10]](#footnote-10), forcing me to wear jackets and sweaters more frequently that I would have in Trinidad.

## Proximity

The closeness of Jamaica and Grand Cayman was cited as a reason for its selection by Daniel. He welcomed the ability to travel back and forth for weekends and short breaks. Although the other Jamaicans did not specifically list the proximity as a factor, in conversation they all listed connections to Jamaica that would make the fact that there is one 45 minute flight connecting the two countries an attractive option. For Samuel, although his wife and two children remained in Jamaica, he was conscious of the need to be available for his children. Olivia had a fiancé at home in Jamaica and Amanda had stated that she had an elderly mother who she supported financially. For me, although we were still in the Caribbean, any travel between Trinidad and Grand Cayman required a full day, involving two flights with either Kingston, Jamaica or Miami, Florida as the main hub. I was fortunate to take advantage over the years of special chartered flights that would fly directly from Grand Cayman to Trinidad. In fact my relatives and friends took more advantage of the direct flight charters, as they used it as an opportunity to visit Grand Cayman at a reduced costs and with less travel time.

For the non-Caribbean participants, the further the distance from the country of origin was viewed as a positive aspect since Grand Cayman represented a cultural experience which was diverse from what they were used to. The longer distance, however, was not viewed as a hindrance to maintaining contacts at home. Both Logan and Lucy spoke about returning to their countries of origin during the long ‘summer’ break and the 2-week Christmas holidays. Carol spoke about returning to the UK but also she travel to her new home in the Dominican Republic. This is a territory 726 miles from Grand Cayman but requires two flights to get there. Her husband was from Dominican Republic.

Another positive was Grand Cayman’s proximity to other countries and islands. The non-Caribbean participants discussed using their vacation and school breaks to visit Cuba, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Miami, Orlando, etc. Justin remarked in the second interview, that he and his wife had made a conscious effort to enjoy “this side of the planet” (Justin: a year later, p. 4) so for the vacations they did not go back to Europe but, visited US cities instead. My experience was similar to the non-Caribbean participants as I visited Miami, Orlando and Cuba for the tourist experience. None of the other Caribbean participants discussed visiting other countries on their vacations.

## Finance

All participants, either directly or indirectly, made reference to finances being a consideration in their move. For some, it was listed as the primary reason for the move while for others, it was viewed as a consequence. There is no income tax in the Cayman Islands, therefore the salary listed is the full take home salary that you earn in the position. For the Caribbean participants, we were all moving to a country with a higher valued currency as demonstrated in the literature review (Table 2, p. 40). Therefore, when remitting funds back to one’s country of origin, the exchange rate would be very beneficial indeed. Olivia listed finances at the top of her list of reasons for migrating. Daniel, from his investigations of other destinations, compared the pay scale among countries in the Caribbean and found the Cayman Islands to be the most lucrative. For Samuel, he had made the initial move to the UK for financial reasons (and for the experience and opportunity to complete his Master’s). He echoed that sentiment for the move to the Cayman Islands:

Well, I am a father as well so I’m thinking futuristic for my children so basically I want that experience in order to maximise my economic gain as well..…I would love to know that I can pay my son’s tuition when he is in high school and in college and so on as he goes up. (Samuel, p. 4)

Samuel recognized that what he could earn in the Cayman Islands was significantly more than he could gain economically teaching in Jamaica, even with a Master’s degree in a post-secondary institution. Amanda recognised that the money would be better than she was getting back home in Jamaica. Even though her husband was not offered a permanent job on island, she was still in a better financial position than she was in while teaching in Jamaica. According to Amanda,

Well to be honest with you, both of us were working back home and it was really difficult to make ends meet. We had two vehicles, we had our own home and we had a fight to balance. And I am the only one who is permanently employed now and we can still see our way through. (Amanda, p. 4)

For me, the favourable financial conversion was more of a residual positive effect than a reason for the move. I knew I would be working for about six times more, when converted, than I had been earning as a teacher in Trinidad after tax, but I really had not focused too much on the exchange rate. This was until I spent $20 USD during my first night in Grand Cayman. I was paying for something costing $5 KYD and received $11 KYD as the change. I kept thinking, when is 5 from 20 ever equal to 11??? But I realised after that $20 USD was equivalent to $16 KYD. So whereas in Trinidad, the US dollars was *the* significant foreign currency, here in the Cayman Islands, I was dealing with, and being paid in a currency that was of even greater monetary value than the US dollar.

For the non-Caribbean participants, the UK based participants did not have a situation like the Caribbean participants where the Cayman dollar was of greater value than the pound or euro. For them, the salary was not a major inducement to make the move to the Cayman Islands beyond the tax free status. Our Canadian counterpart, Lucy, however, did have a Canadian dollar that was lower in value than the Cayman dollar but the difference was not as significant as the Trinidad dollar or the Jamaican dollar. For Lucy, though, she had found that the Cayman Islands almost tripled her previous salary from her posting in the Bahamas, which made it an attractive inducement from the Bahamas to Grand Cayman.

## Low crime

Three of the women, Olivia, Amanda and Lucy, listed concerns about crime as one of their reasons for the move. Both Olivia and Amanda felt that the crime situation in Jamaica was serious enough to encourage them to move elsewhere. Lucy felt that the Bahamas was no longer a safe place:

I heard it (Grand Cayman) was a very safe place. That was a big attraction for me because the Bahamas was getting very scary. And I am in Canada from a very small island where there is not a lot of violence. I did not know or even close to know anyone in my life who owned a gun, let alone killed. And there were several murders in the Bahamas of parent of children in school and stuff like that. Wasn’t comfortable. There were a couple of very vicious break-ins of good friends of mine, knives held to backs of their necks and so on and so it made me uncomfortable. I didn’t feel safe walking. (Lucy, p. 4)

No one else mentioned the crime situation as a factor in their decision to migrate.

## Professional Growth

Daniel, Justin and Samuel all felt that there was need for new professional challenge and growth which was not available in their current job situations. Daniel felt like he had reached a glass ceiling in his current position and he felt stifled there.

I and my wife wanted to experience other stuff. We were with that company for about 4 years. We were taken up in the company but we didn’t see how we could go much further. (Daniel, p. 1)

Daniel also expressed concern about the goals of the institution. He had begun to feel like the focus had shifted and he was not happy with the professional direction the institution was now adopting. He thought it best to leave.

Justin, a newly recruited teacher from the UK expressed his professional situation in such a way:

I was leaving an outstanding college, a grade 1 department, the best statistics I have had in years. So obviously, it was time for me to walk away (jokingly). I could have stayed and have a very nice remainder of time but I felt it was, for all those 17 years of teaching, I just felt like I was too young in my career to stay there. There is more to do, the world is a bigger place and time to see if I could make a difference elsewhere. (Justin, p. 4)

Samuel also repeatedly cited the need to make a difference. He had been able to study and complete his Master’s degree during his 5 year UK posting and he welcomed the experience and exposure that he received there. As he made the move to the Cayman Islands he felt that he had much to offer and the ability to grow personally and professionally:

Whenever I take a job, really, I take a job to make a difference and to raise standards, especially as a teacher. I want to see, with my experience….I want to contribute globally, not just in my sect (Samuel, p. 4)

## Other factors

The participants listed other factors that were unique to their situations of where they were in their personal and professional lives and what they were interested in at the time.Carol had the unique situation of being ‘forced’ to migrate due to the immigration requirement for her foreign born husband. As she emphatically stated, “I did not leave for professional reasons!” She went on to explain where she was in her career at the time:

I had just been promoted and was very much looking forward to it. I was going to a new school. I was going to be the equivalent of an assistant head teacher. (Carol, p. 2)

But a change in her personal life caused her to look for another international location where she can have her personal and professional lives co-existing in some harmonious accord. As she described it, “I had met a man from the Caribbean (Dominican Republic) and I came here (Grand Cayman) so that I could basically live with him.” British immigration would not allow him to live in the UK until they had been married and residing together for at least 2 years. Carol did not see that as a practical situation:

You want me to marry him for two years, prove that I have lived with him for two years so that he can come and live here? (In the UK). How is that going to happen? In the school holidays? How many years will that take then? (Carol, p. 2)

Although, as stated, her husband was not from the Cayman Islands, Carol felt that it was close enough geographically to his country of origin for them to travel back and forth frequently rather than from the UK:

…the fact that I could have him here on contract and we could build a life here and it was five or six hours journey home for him was preferable to being in the UK. It made our life together a possibility… (Carol, p. 2)

Amanda expected that the behaviour of children in the Caribbean would be more manageable and she viewed this as one of her reasons for choosing the Cayman Islands and not pursing the US as an option. As an IT professional Daniel was very interested and intrigued by the then department of education website that laid out the plans and policies for the use of ICT in education. Justin realised that the education system was going through a major transition and having been a part of such a change in the UK he felt that he had the ability, tenacity and resilience to participate in such a change. Lucy felt that the diversity of the staff, coming from so many different countries, was an added bonus.

## Discussion

As can be seen there are several factors listed by my participants and myself that show our reasons for migrating to Grand Cayman. As self-initiated expatriate teachers, we all sought and applied for our posting to the Cayman Islands. The fact that there were advertisements, means that there were vacancies – the pull or demand or market factors, set up by the employment situation in the Grand Cayman school system, which were external to us (Manik, 2014). As individuals, we had no control over who stayed or who left but that movement created gateways and avenues for our recruitment into the education system.

One of the observations Ravenstein (in Lee, 1966 and King, 2012) wrote about in his “Laws of migration” was that most migration happens within a close geographical proximity. While this study did not attempt to quantify the movement of the teachers, the closer geographical distance was listed as a positive reason for the Jamaican participants, while in contrasts, the longer geographical distance was also listed as a positive for the non-Caribbean teachers, but for different reasons. The Jamaican teachers welcomed the ability to maintain the close links with Jamaica (one 45 minute plane ride), especially with family who had not accompanying them on the overseas posting. Most of the non-Caribbean participants, with the exception of Carol, found the longer distance to be a positive because of the cultural contrasts it offered from what they were used to.

To be fair, none of the Caribbean participants expressed the view that the Cayman Islands would present a living similar to what they had become accustomed to in Jamaica. Again, the attractiveness, the push to migrate, stemmed from the contrasts to what they currently knew. But, for the Jamaican participants, they still welcomed the proximity of Grand Cayman to Jamaica and the ability to return to the familiar in Jamaica with just one short trip. Carol can almost be seen as a hybrid since she was from the UK and employed in the UK when she applied, but she was also establishing a home in the Caribbean, specifically the Dominican Republic with her husband. The fact that the Cayman Islands was generally close to Dominican Republic where her husband was from, did play a part in her decision.

In most cases, we had been thinking of migrating for some time, and in a few cases, had applied to other jurisdictions or for other jobs.

Research sited by Education International (Caravatti et al, 2014) found that males ranked finances as a higher migratory push factor while women ranked professional development more highly. My study did not attempt to quantify either factor in the reasons given for migrating. However, based on gender, both males and females recognised that finances would play some part in the transition, though this seemed to be less of a consideration for the teachers who were recruited younger, namely, Logan and myself. One possible reason for this, could be, with the lack of family responsibility, there was more an interest in the opportunity to experience living in a foreign country and viewing this as new and exciting – finances taking a back seat. When focusing on professional goals, only males mentioned the expected opportunity for professional development as a factor for their move to migrate. I am by no means suggesting that the women were not interested in advancing their careers, only that for them, other factors were given more prominence. As an example, for three of the women, the low crime rate in the new jurisdiction was more of a draw than the perceived opportunity for professional growth.

## Conclusion

As these results show, there were many varied reasons for each person’s migration to the Cayman Islands and while some attempt can be made to generalise it is clear that the factors were unique to the various individuals. This population represented these eight individuals and myself and discussed the commonly related factors such as improved finances, professional development opportunities, the weather, the low crime rate. Other factors such as the diversity of the staff, the perceived behaviour of the students, spousal immigration situation or the ability to participate in the major transformation of education appeared to appeal to an individual rather than a consensus.

What is clear in any issue of migration, is the quest for something new, the desire to leave behind, temporarily or permanently, what one is used to and what one considers the status quo and be open to a new experience. In the following chapters we consider how the participants viewed the other experiences they encountered as expatriate teachers – from the recruitment and orientation, to how they adjusted professionally and personally to the new posting, and how they felt about the process a year after the initial interview.

# CHAPTER SEVEN - RECRUITMENT AND ORIENTATION

## Introduction

The recruitment of new teachers and the orientation of the successfully hired persons all form key stages in the process of being an expatriate employee. The host or recruiting territory, the Cayman Islands in this case, is directly responsible and in control of both of these stages. The goal of recruitment, from the standpoint of the employer, is to select the best person for the job. But, my emphasis is going to be from the standpoint of the employee. Prospective employees would have completed an application introducing themselves, indicating their interest in the position advertised and stating why they should be consider for the job. At the interview stage, he or she is trying to portray his or her best self but also hopes to get more information about the posting to ensure that he or she is making the best decision in accepting or declining the offer if successful in the interview.

Orientation has a different purpose from recruitment. Recruitment selects you and gets you there, while orientation takes care of you when you arrive. The goal of the orientation is to provide specific details on the operations and expectations in the work place and in the society. The expected hope is that the employee will be more able to adjust and acculturate to the new posting, both on a professional and on a personal level so that there is less anxiety and more effective performance. The Education Department and the schools in Grand Cayman all utilize a buddy system where the newly recruited teacher is paired with another teacher who has been working at the school previously. While there is no rule for how buddies are selected, efforts are usually made to pair along the following similarities: gender, age, nationality and where possible, subject/curriculum area. This section analyses how each participant viewed the recruitment process and the orientation which followed his or her arrival on island.

## Recruitment

Lucy and Carol admitted that they were directed to consider the Cayman Islands by work colleagues who knew that they each had an interest in moving from their current situation to something new. In Lucy’s case, she was impressed by what she heard and saw online at the Ministry of Education Brighter Futures website and she contacted the Education Department directly. However, they informed her that there were no positions available in her subject area. With her interest now piqued and her desire to leave the Bahamas firmly established, she was now on the lookout for positions in the Cayman Islands. When she saw her area of interest advertised she promptly sent in an application. Carol was actually working with and, as head of her department, had trained a teacher from the Cayman Islands. At the time, Carol stated, “I didn’t know where the Cayman Islands were.” However, when she saw the advertisement, and on the advice of her colleague, she applied.

The other participants did not reveal any pre-knowledge of the Cayman Islands that prompted them to focus on it, though Samuel had family living in the Cayman Islands. Although the largest number of expatriate employees are Jamaicans, the Caribbean participants did not know any teachers who were already working in the Cayman Islands. It was much the same for me, with no first-hand information about living and working in the Cayman Islands. We were operating on what we could glean from online media.

For each of the participants, the application was in direct response to an advertisement for teachers. In the Caribbean, the ads were placed in the daily newspapers of the various Caribbean countries, while in the UK the advertisements were sourced from the Times Education Supplement (TES). The advertisements were placed at varying times during the years. Some participants indicated that they saw the advertisement around Christmas, others found it appeared much later. In some cases, second ads were run in the media.

The responses from the Cayman Islands government to the submitted applications was not consistent. Logan told of having to wait two months for any communication, and when the communication came, it was to arrange for a telephone interview. He did two telephone interviews and a further video conference was planned. Logan recalled, “I prepared and organised the video conference facility at my end and then they called back and said, ‘you’ve got the job’” (Logan, p. 2), making all his preparations unnecessary. He found this made the recruitment process seem disorganised.

Justin also felt the process was disorganised. He had a similar wait time as Logan, but for him, the response from the Cayman Islands read like a rejection:

Having submitted the application in January, I didn’t really hear anything until about eight weeks, couple of months. And then it was, thank you, we acknowledge your application and - I can’t remember the exact phrasing but I read it as “thanks but no thanks”. But it in actual fact it was “thanks and we are processing.” (Justin, p. 6)

Thinking it was a rejection, he told his wife that things had not worked out. However, he was contacted about 4 weeks later and asked if he was still interested in the job. When he responded in the affirmative, a telephone interview was set up. He was quite familiar and comfortable with teleconferencing and he found that this part went quite smoothly and was well planned and he greatly appreciated not having to go to London to be interviewed. Even so, Justin wondered how appropriate this method of interviewing would have been for someone less familiar with teleconferencing or video-conferencing.

Though she was also in the UK, Carol was contacted for a face to face interview at a hotel in London. She described the interview as “rigorous”. She had to prepare a presentation on how she would use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to promote learning in her subject area. In total, her interview lasted more than an hour.

The response of the government of the Cayman Islands to the applications also varied among those participants residing in the Caribbean (I have included Lucy in this group).According to Lucy, who was flown from the Bahamas to Jamaica for the day to be interviewed, the process was ‘amazing. As she remarked, “... you see I am from a poor province. We don’t fly people in for interviews. No, no, no, we get a conference call – that’s the best you can afford” (Lucy, p. 5). Moreover, she found that everything went smoothly – her flight got in at 1 pm, the interview as at 2 pm and it was all done by 3 pm. She found the interview process “quite good” and she felt that she had learnt a lot. She left the interview feeling that she had a lot more information on which to make a decision. They said they would contact her in two weeks. They called her after five days and said, “Would you like the job?” Lucy admitted hesitating somewhat before accepting since there was no guarantee that her husband would be employed.

Daniel found the recruitment process to be “uneventful”. He and his wife had both applied. They were interviewed over the telephone and contacted by email about 2 – 3 weeks later to say they had been hired. Daniel found the whole process was late in the school year – around April, and because of this he suspected that someone else may have been hired and did not accept the job.

Olivia describes an even more rapid turnaround time. She responded to an advertisement in July, an interview was set up in early August and she was offered a position a week later. In her case, she was being recruited to fill the position left vacant by the late resignation of a Caymanian teacher.

Samuel was still residing in the UK when he applied for the position but by the time of the interview he had returned to Jamaica.

Amanda applied by email to an advertisement seen in the Jamaica press around November/ December. She received a response setting up an interview in February and was made a job offer by April. She was interviewed at a hotel in Kingston, Jamaica by the visiting panel. She recalls the information that was provided during the interview process and upon acceptance of the job offer:

In the interview they told me who could travel with me, what my salary would be like, and whatever travel arrangements that would be made. And then I got it by FedEx – the same information, what I am allowed to carry with me, what the government would pay for – things like that. (Amanda, p. 3)

My recruitment process was similar to Amanda’s. The advertisement was seen around February and the interview set up for May with the visiting panel. Like Amanda, I was interviewed at a hotel in the capital city, Port of Spain, and I remember the interview day being a public holiday so it did not require me to take time off my current job. I remember being questioned repeatedly about my ability to manage a class and having to respond to classroom scenarios. I was told the person I would be replacing had mainly taught lower ability groups. I remember asking about the frequency of advertisement for teaching positions as I referenced the advert I had responded to the previous year. All I was told was that it was another institution. No response was made about the turnover of teaching staff. My job offer came on the last day of the school year around July 5.

From the responses, it is clear that standard practice dictates that all newly recruited teachers are sent a package of documents that provide information on what rent was like, what average utility bills costs, what it’d be like to get a car – as Carol called it, the “mechanics” of living on the island. We were sent our contracts to be signed and other personnel information such as health care benefits, pension details, number of sick days allowed per annum. We were also sent instructions on flight arrangements for our travel to Grand Cayman as well as sent packing and shipping instructions. Daniel found that some of the costing information provided was not accurate, when compared with the actual expenses when he started to live in Grand Cayman.

Olivia, because of her uniquely late recruitment, had to do her own research online since there was no time for the government to send her the information package. From the information she found, she was able to draw the following conclusions about the cost of living: rents – high, utilities – high, food – manageable. What she didn’t realise is how hard it would be to move around without her own car, since she could not drive.

The information package did not include specific school information since, the same package is sent to all recruited teachers, whether primary or secondary teachers. There was no contact details specific to the school and no curriculum information was provided. In fact, Justin had noted that his interview panel did not include anyone specifically from the school which struck him at the time as a bit strange. In many other cases, at least one school principal was a part of the interview panel. But, still it remained a recurring theme that very little information was provided directly about the school you would be employed at beyond what you could research on your own online. Logan recalled not being told which school he would be working at (even though at the time the schools were divided into middle school, KS3 and high school, KS4). He found that this was not unique to him as there were other newly recruited teachers in the same predicament. “They just knew they were coming to work in the Cayman Islands in the secondary school system and that was as far as, as much information as we were given,” (Logan, p. 3), he said. Justin, from his research had begun to realise that the public secondary schools in Grand Cayman were in a state of major transition so he understood why certain details could not be provided.

With the prevalence of blogs, vlogs and other social media, it is now possible to get an extensive amount of opinions on living in the Cayman Islands and on teaching in the public school system. I emphasize the opinions since these reports can skew ones perception if an objective approach isn’t adopted.

## Orientation

All participants spoke positively about the first week on island. This involves the arrival on island and being received by ministry or school personnel, being assigned to the hotel for five to seven days with all the other newly recruited expatriate teachers and having to undertake the ‘mechanics’ of living in Grand Cayman, as Carol has termed it earlier. Many were amazed at what could be accomplished in the course of a week. The standard expectations were to find an apartment, find a car or a means of moving around the island, open a bank account, sign up for utilities (although more landlords are keeping the utilities in their own name), register accompanying children into schools, while at the same time attending the various events that characterise the beginning of the school year such as national and school specific meetings, set up classrooms, and get department and curriculum information. It was a whirlwind few days. Justin expressed amazement at what he was able to accomplish in such a short space of time to get himself and his family settled, but as he remarked, “I wouldn’t want to do that to myself again.” (Justin, p. 7)

Three aspects that were specially mentioned as areas of focus during the orientation process were the interactions among teachers at the hotel, the Cultural Caravan and the assigned buddies. The time spent at the hotel allowed the new teachers to get to know each other and form links which would prove important to their adjustment and acculturation in the Cayman Islands. Amanda mentioned that she noticed at the hotel that teachers generally grouped themselves according to region of origin, with the Caribbean teachers, mainly Jamaicans, sticking together and the European teachers, staying together. I know in my case, out of a delayed flight situation coming out of Jamaica, we were able to connect as newly recruited Trinidadian teachers and those links remained in the hotel. We were able to form roommate bonds when apartments were chosen and that sharing and support proved to be crucial. Daniel recalled a similar experience as he found that his flight to Grand Cayman from Jamaica was filled with newly recruited teachers and many of them have remained his closest friends.

The Cultural Caravan is a guided bus tour of the historical sights of Grand Cayman and is offered free of charge to new recruits and their families. The participants who took advantage of this opportunity all gushed about the insight it provided into Cayman’s history and background. This was not available when I was recruited several years earlier, but it has become a standard part of the process within recent years.

All newly recruited teachers are provided with a buddy. Most teachers had very positive comments about that interaction and how it supported their ability to accomplish the many things they had to do in a very short space of time and get themselves physically and mentally prepared for the new school year. Although my personal buddy experience was not positive in that I did not meet my buddy until my first day at the school, I was able to see the system in operation as my roommate had a buddy who supported us both.

Olivia, because of her late recruitment, was unable to take advantage of the Cultural tours and the buddy system. She arrived on island about 5 days after the other teachers, and while she was still put up at the hotel, she had to hit the ground running. I collected her and her children from the airport and she was brought to the school, straight into an ongoing staff meeting. She had to do all the essentials of finding an apartment, opening bank accounts, etc. on her own. By the time she became a part of the system, everyone, including her buddy, was trying to find their own footing in a chaotic structure. She recalled that she was supported with transportation by fellow Jamaican teachers as she sought to get her living accommodations and to move around, especially to and from school since she did not have her driver’s license[[11]](#footnote-11).

## Discussion

As the participants recounted their experiences during the recruitment and orientation phases of their expatriate teaching experience, they reveal their impressions of both the government of the Cayman Islands in terms of its planning and organisation and also they formed impressions of the schools, the jobs and the society. Essentially they were looking at how their anticipation and pre-knowledge measured up to what had now become their reality. While the placement of the advertisements for the vacant positions made use of the media specific to the region to ensure maximum coverage, the communication, interview and information processes were not standard across the participants, and there was little consistency across region of recruitment. At times, the participants found the process disorganised and expressed frustration with the lack of information. While the information package was standard, the time of its arrival and the accuracy of the information was questioned by some of the participants. They were also concerned about the lack of direct information from the school or subject department being provided before they arrived on islands.

While this was the first international job posting for most of the participants (three had worked overseas for extended periods previously – Logan, Lucy and Samuel) all have vacationed overseas at some point previously. As discussed in the literature review, any previous positive international experience would have a positive impact on the individual’s ability to adjust to the new setting. Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) coupled provision of information with the reduction in culture shock as one would be better able to prepare psychologically.

Another positive for their adjustment was the orientation offered. As stated previously, all the participants found this to be a supportive, informative and enjoyable experience. This orientation met the need of protocol 3.14 in the Commonwealth Teachers Recruitment Protocol which states

newly recruited teachers must benefit from an orientation and induction programme centred on the cultural aspects of the country as well as background on the school.

## Conclusion

The recruitment and orientation are two important steps in the life of the expatriate teacher and play a major part in his or her ability to adjust to the new posting by being an avenue to collect necessary information about the job and the society.

While the recruitment process varied per individual, the goals of the interview panel would have been the same - to recruit the best person and the best fit for the position being advertised. The anticipatory research and the orientation all aid in the adjustment process of the individual teachers. The government seemed to have met the expected international standard with the orientation. The three aspects mentioned of hotel stay, Cultural Caravan and the buddy system all seemed to have worked well and got positive reviews from the participants, although, it was noted repeatedly that more school and subject specific information needed to be provided for the new recruits before they arrived on island.

The next two chapters focus on how the participants viewed the professional and the personal aspects of their migration to the Cayman Islands and how they were able to adjust to the posting.

# CHAPTER EIGHT PROFESSIONAL ADJUSTMENT

## Introduction

As stated in my literature review, I have separated the adjustment factors to the overseas posting into two main categories – professional factors and personal factors. The professional factors focus on the issues and concerns in the work place that affect the individual and his or her ability to be effective in the classroom.

In the literature review, I talked about the anticipatory phase and the in-country phase of expatriate adjustment. In these next two chapters I focus in the in-country phase, though, these phases are more a continuum without fixed boundaries. As the teachers discussed their experiences they often refer to what they knew before and how it impacted with what they were experiencing now.

## Curriculum

Many teachers complained about the fact that they did not know before they arrived what they would be teaching specifically and what examinations the students were being prepared for. However, they all credited the teachers and Head of Departments or Subject leaders with providing the necessary guidance and support for them to help them adjust and function effectively in the classroom once they were ‘in-country’.

Logan felt that he needed contact with his Head of Department before he arrived to provide some more detail on what he would be teaching. He was coming from the UK system, and he was being tasked with teaching to the Caribbean Examination Council curriculum which has some differences to the UK based curriculum and examinations. Logan believed that his department colleagues helped him as much as they could to adjust to his new teaching role, but he still insists that more needs to be done at the ‘before you get here’ end of things – the anticipatory phase as the literature called it.Olivia had the same issue but from the reverse position as she was coming from the Caribbean system and was not familiar with the UK based General Certificate of Secondary Education examinations. I remember having a similar experience when I first started as there were 6 different examinations that were new to me, that I was called upon to prepare students to sit and pass. Logan, Olivia and I were teachers in the same subject department and in that department, we prepared students for both Caribbean and British examination boards. At the time when I started, we also did Welsh examinations.

Samuel was coming into a newly created area of the curriculum in his department, so there was no previous plan in place for him to follow. He was in the position of having to create the teaching plans and modules on his own. While Samuel admitted that he did not have a problem with the planning, of greater concern to him was the fact that as a technical vocational subject with a large practical component, the materials and equipment he would need had not been planned or budgeted for. Budgets and orders would have been done during the previous school year and it appeared that the new course of study that he had been hired to teach had been omitted from the financial planning and budget. Like Logan, he also advocated for newly recruited staff to be in contact with their Heads of Department/ Subject Leaders and possibly teaching colleagues before arriving. As Logan put it:

I think teachers who are being recruited need to be able to access teachers working in the system already, both in their own subject and being able to talk to teachers of similar backgrounds and I think that to be a big help. So, like if I am talking to you, I get your perspective but I would also like to hear from someone who was from the UK as well. (Logan, p. 3)

Amanda benefited from the ‘before you get here’ interaction. She recalled that the outgoing Head of Department, a fellow Jamaica, had reached out to her in Jamaica during the July/August vacation. “She contacted me and kind of gave me some insight as to what to expect. I think the adjective she used was ‘an interesting place’” (Amanda, p. 4). Amanda recognised that this teacher had taken her own initiative. Amanda has been assigned a buddy by the school to help her settle in and take care of the initial orientation activities, but she was also provided a second, department based buddy or mentor to support her in-school adjustment. This was her ‘go-to’ person on procedural questions and expectations in relation to the job and the classroom. She found this to be extremely helpful.

Carol recalled being contacted by the Principal (Head Teacher) of the school she would be moving to since Carol was going to be assuming the role of Subject Leader. As stated previously, her buddy was the outgoing Subject Leader. This person remained in the department for a few months as a teacher before repatriating after 26 years.

Daniel recognised that he had received a lot of support from his Head of Department and he referenced that his wife had the same experience of support, though she was placed at another school. He partly credits that support to the fact that both Heads of Department were themselves expatriate teachers.

Amanda felt that there existed a support network in her department and there was regular sharing of ideas among colleagues. She did think that part of this comfort in discussing the challenges and sharing the ideas came from the fact that the majority of the department was made up of Jamaican teachers, though the Head was Caymanian. She recognised that she had another sounding board – her husband!

While, I agree with Amanda and the support of her colleagues, I found the support in my department to be crucial for the opposite reason – we were a very diverse group over the years with teachers from Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, Guyana, Cayman Islands, UK, Wales, Ireland, etc so I found the diversity of experiences added a richness to our discussions about teaching when we met as a department and therefore aided in our professional development and curriculum delivery.

## Discipline of students

The biggest challenge described by almost every teacher was the lack of discipline and motivation among a significant number of students. Most of the teachers expressed surprise at how widespread this was and clearly were not prepared for it. All the teachers measured the new classroom experience in the Cayman Islands against what they had been used to in their previous jobs or what they had heard about teaching in the Caribbean. No one admitted to hearing negative comments about teaching in the Cayman Islands before moving here, although I can admit in retrospect that the repeated questions during my interview process on behaviour and classroom management should have been red flags for me The school I was leaving in Trinidad had its own behaviour issues so I had developed the “thick skin” necessary to survive challenging students. This allowed me to adapt more readily to the classroom environment. To be honest, the behaviour issues are not unique to the Cayman Islands as Justin also pointed out. But over the years, I had seen the issues grow because of the lack of constructive and effective management policies at the school and ministry level.

Amanda had indicated that her expectation of a more discipline classroom was one of the reasons she chose the Caribbean over the US. She described her comparison between her Cayman experience and her Jamaica experience thus:

Back home…I would stand in front of a class or 55 and once I stood there, the students knew that I am ready for class. Here, I am with a group of six and I mean three[[12]](#footnote-12) of us are in the room. And we cannot get them to settle and do anything. That for me, that was a rude awakening. Back home too, if you tell some children that, “listen, I am going to call home,” then they would get serious right away and get on task. Here, I realise that for some it works but for others nothing works. I noticed too that they would do little things to get out of class and if they are not allowed to go then – I remember an incident where the boy threw himself on the ground and I was like “come on”. I mean that is a year 10[[13]](#footnote-13) student. You don’t lie down on the floor because you can’t get your own way. It didn’t make sense to me. I mean that is what we expect from toddlers. (Amanda, p. 5)

Carol had a similar experience during her first year. She remarked that she should have been a church goer because all she wanted to do was fast and pray. Her experience with Jamaicans in London and what she had heard about schools in Jamaica gave the impression of disciplined environments. “This small Caribbean island”, as she termed it, was different from what she expected:

With the exception of year 7s[[14]](#footnote-14) in their first few weeks of school, everyone else is ill-disciplined. There is a lack of discipline. There is a great deal of talking that goes on all the time in lessons that seems to be normal. So you start employing all these strategies and you know you win some battles but you appear to be losing the war. I can only say that the first year, certainly the first two terms on island were the worse I have ever experience in teaching and it was a shock. (Carol, p. 5)

Olivia also commented on the incessant talking during the class, even among the more able students. According to Olivia, the students would often complain about all kinds of issues – feeling sick, no equipment, etc – anything to avoid the work. In all her years of teaching, she had not experience this kinds of behaviour and attitude to learning, and this made things difficult in the classroom.

Logan found the students lacked motivation and the right attitude to learning. Justin had the same experience – he found the attitude and the level of poor conduct unacceptable. Like Carol and Amanda, he had preconceived notions of what it would be like to teach in the Caribbean. Having a family connection from the Caribbean, he thought he would be familiar with the cultural influence but what he saw in Cayman was not what he expected.

Justin found that the Cayman students were more wound up and short tempered when compared with students in the UK, who according to him, seemed more relaxed and laid back. He attributed part of that tension of the students at John Gray High School to the whole transition and the physical environment of the school.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Lucy also listed the behaviour of the students as her biggest challenge. The “overriding preponderance of entitlement” as she termed it. She felt that she had never experienced this in either the Bahamas or Canada:

What happens in a day here is half a year’s behaviour at home or in the Bahamas - the behaviour of the children, the disrespect. (Lucy, p. 9)

Lucy, like Justin, also recognised a tension among the students. She questioned whether school was an enjoyable place for the students:

It’s like we don’t have fun here very much with the kids, we don’t interact, there is nothing exciting. Kids must leave this place hating it because what do they do for fun? There is no sports, there is no spirit….you can’t joke even. (They are) very sensitive and when I joke I almost have to stop and explain that I don’t meant this as in insult, I meant it as a joke to laugh. (Lucy, p. 9)

Olivia also felt at times that her words could be used against her and she found that her comments at times would be misinterpreted. As a result of that she tried to keep her comments strictly on the classwork and she did not try to engage the students in any conversation outside of this, being very careful what she said to them. As far as she was concerned, this meant that she had to adjust her personality as she couldn’t relax and joke with some of her students as she would have done freely back in Jamaica.

Carol, who had been teaching in the Cayman Islands for three years before being interviewed, found that over time her ability to connect with students had improved. She no longer took their actions personally and she had been able to find ways to develop relationships with them. Carol found the adjustment to teaching the younger students required a mellowing of her teaching style and personality.

Daniel felt that all teachers had issues with the student indiscipline but he felt that Caymanian teachers had an advantage in the classroom because they may know the student’s family since the island is so small.

## Teaching and Learning

It was not all bad in the classroom. Many teachers had positive experiences which served to motivate them as professionals and encourage them to try varying strategies in their delivery of the curriculum.

Daniel was pleased with some of his students whom he felt had been guided onto a path to success and to realise their potential through his influence. Justinadmitted to enjoying some of the challenges he was encountering on the job. He relished the introspection he was forced to do with respect to his teaching and his support to those learners with barriers to their learning. He confirmed that:

It really helps being a parent because my attitude to teaching changed when I had kids of my own. But here I really have to remember that this is somebody’s child and it this was my child and they were getting it this wrong it would be pointless just losing my temper. It is pointless just shouting at this child. What this child needs is guidance. (Justin, p. 11)

He has found that there were days when it went well and he got it right, but there were other days when he just felt drained and frustrated and angry and he just couldn’t wait for the next day to start over. But generally, Justin tried to maintain a positive attitude – “so far so good.”

Amanda found that her students were interested to hear her experiences and stories from Jamaica and it held their interest and was able to motivate them for about 10 minutes, “but the 11th minute…they are back to their old selves.”

I enjoyed a similar fascination with Trinidad and Tobago and with the other countries I had visited over the years. This fascination allowed me to develop a rapport with the students which made teaching and learning more efficient.

Olivia was pleased to find that she has a similar level of autonomy in her planning and delivery of the curriculum as she had become used to and actively encouraged in Jamaica when she was the head of her department.

Samuel expressed surprise at the number of different nationalities he encountered in the classroom – Spanish, Jamaican, Caymanian, Caymanian-Jamaican, Caymanian-Spanish, Caymanian-Indian, etc. He credited his experience in the UK for exposing him to the multicultural classroom. In the UK he had interacted with students from Africa, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Philippines, and Spain, to name a few. He felt that this experience had equipped him to develop strategies to differentiate his teaching to meet the needs of his students. However, he did not feel that enough was being done by the school system to address the diversity of needs in the classroom, included those for English as a second language learners. He felt proud that he was able to motivate his students to develop their creative sides in his design and technology classes. He recognised however, that despite all his efforts, some students simply did not take the work seriously.

## Senior Management Team (SMT)

Carol raised the issue about feeling underappreciated by Senior Management. However, she did acknowledge that there were some senior managers who supported her and enable her to continue here. Without them, Carol felt she would have left the job prematurely.

Daniel felt that there was a lack of support from Senior Management for teachers as it pertains to discipline in the classroom.

Samuel, with a similar view, felt that there was a lack of a consistent approach by the SMT to dealing with discipline and this made things difficult for the teachers. He acknowledged that the experience of the staff had kept and continued to keep the school stable and functioning in spite of the management issues.

Amanda, on the other hand, felt supported by her departmental colleagues, her Head of Department and the other senior managers with whom she interacted.

Lucy was also pleased with the level of support she received initially from the school administration, Education Department and the Ministry of Education. This support took the form of being accessible, returning calls and emails, respecting her judgement and experience and being willing to give her opinions credence. However she felt in later years that this had changed. Lucy realised all the administrative changes over the four years that she had been teaching at John Gray High School had affected the operations and the support she felt as a specialist head of department. She felt that this frustration was mirrored on the other members of staff:

I know this year (the first year of the transition) has been hard on everyone, that people are frustrated and not able to reach into their souls to make the effort, let alone actually do it. (Lucy, p. 7)

Lucy had experienced success with individual students over her previous years at John Gray High School, but she wished she could have impacted more students and changed the perception of more teachers to special needs.

Justin came to the new job at the beginning of a major restructuring of the public secondary school system on Grand Cayman. While he made friends with his colleagues at John Gray High School and they were very supportive, it was clear that they were also frequently in doubt about what procedures were now being adopted during the transition to a full high school. Justin, because of his previous experience with a restructuring of his school in the UK, was very conscious of a disconnect between the school, the SMT and the Ministry and, in his opinion, there was a problem with the flow of information. He expressed it like this:

You can look around and you can just see everyone like “what is going on?” (laughing). People saying, “I have taught here for 15 – 20 years. I haven’t a clue what’s going on. I don’t know where this room is, that room is”. So everyone – whether you were an expat, a Cayman islander, you hadn’t a clue. You were all in the same boat. (Justin, p. 8)

## Prejudice

In the public school system, the majority of non-Caribbean teachers are Caucasian or White, while the majority of Caribbean teachers are Afro-Caribbean or Black. This majority was reflected in my participants, with all of my non-Caribbean participants being Caucasian and all of my Caribbean participants being Afro-Caribbean.

Amanda felt that the classroom experience and student reaction to the teaching would be different for the Caribbean and non-Caribbean teachers. Samuel and Daniel agreed with this and even admitted to having witnessed the difference first hand. Samuel recounted an example of students clowning around and ignoring his instructions but settling down as soon as a non-Caribbean teacher entered the room:

Now I see a boy already and I say “stop doing that” and the man still doing the foolishness, running around. And a teacher walks in who is a white teacher, said something to him, which is the same thing I said, and he sit down. So I am like, hold on, is the same thing I just said to him. So why am I having this problem? (Samuel - a year later, p. 9)

Neither of them knew exactly why this was so, but Daniel theorised that it could be based on the fact that students had the impression that the non-Caribbean teachers were coming from a more developed country which meant that they were somehow better. He also felt that this prejudice was even more acutely directed at Jamaican teachers, than say, a teacher from Trinidad. He believed that the number of Jamaicans residing in the Cayman Islands was actually having a negative effect and receiving a backlash from Caymanian society. Daniel felt that this backlash was been expressed in the classroom:

Coming in as a teacher from Jamaica, sometimes I am not given the chance to show who I am before you start assuming certain things….As a Jamaican, I have been approached on the onset, perhaps negatively because I am from Jamaica. (Daniel, p. 5)

He felt that he got a more of a negative reaction and attitude from students whom he did not teach on a regular basis, such as where he was functioning more as a substitute teacher:

Once I speak, you know where I am from. I walk into a sub once and said ‘good morning’ and one student said, ‘okay Jamaica’ with a negative attitude. (Daniel, p. 6)

Daniel found, however, that he had developed a positive relationship with his regular classes. He recalled having heard stories from other teachers who had experienced a negative reaction from parents and even other staff members because the teachers were Jamaican, though he had not personally been on the receiving end of such a reaction from parents or other colleagues.

Daniel continued to speak about the general feeling on the school campus that he encountered, where as an expatriate teacher, you are made to feel that your words can be used against you. Daniel further commented:

…just the fact that you are on a two year contract. I mean very few persons have come out and said it but it is the general feeling and we have picked it up too, that if you say the wrong thing to the wrong person it can be used against you when it’s time for renewal. I personally have no hard evidence to say that it the case but it is a general feeling so I just go with it…I think it is a Caribbean issue because I don’t get the feeling that our colleagues from the other regions feel that way. Maybe they do, but I don’t get the feeling that they feel that way. (Daniel, p. 10)

Olivia also mentioned this and she admitted that she kept her comments very strictly focused and narrow.

I had experienced the situation that Daniel describe early in my teaching in Grand Cayman. I had received comments such as “I will report you”, sometimes during a teaching session where I had made my expectations clear or I was forced to reprimand a student. This threat was made to report me to the Principal, Chief Education Office or Minister which would, if the rumours were to be believed, result in the termination of my contract, the loss of my job and my exit from the islands. Usually, my response, if I chose to acknowledge the comment, was to give them the address and the name of the CEO so that they can be sure that they were reporting me to the correct individual. Many stories abounded at those times about teachers whose contracts had not been renewed because of reports made to the authorities by disgruntled parents or other members of the community. Whether these stories were based on fact could not be determined, but the fear and anxiety that they caused among expatriate teachers was real.

Amanda also believed that there is blame placed on expatriate teachers for all the failings of the education system. She recalled a conversation she overheard at a health centre once where a Caymanian was expounding quite loudly, “the teachers here, expats, they don’t care about the students at all. All they come here for is the money.” Amanda believed that Caymanians viewed the British teachers as coming for the fun and sun and Caribbean teachers as coming for the money. She said, in that instance, she felt the need to speak up and correct his misconceptions and to remind him that what is sorely lacking in Cayman society is the support of parents for the learning of their children. Amanda found that in the Cayman Islands the teaching profession is very fluid and she felt that the anti-expatriate sentiment of the society made people very uncomfortable so they left after one or two contracts.

Carol commented on the ethnic mix of the senior management structures of the two new high schools that were created out of the middle and high schools. She was a part of the management team at her school and she recognised that her appointment to that position after an interview process may not be pleasing to some members of the teaching staff. As she described the ‘balance of power’ at Clifton Hunter High School:

Teaching and Learning Coordinators, for example, all three of us are white female Brits. So it has caused comment. Which you can understand. At the same time we have got two Caribbean men who were Learning Mentors, and there is another white Brit male who is a Learning Mentor. We have one Caymanian deputy principal and two white male Brits so the power structure is a little out of balance so I can understand where the talk comes from…I think I would be disingenuous to say it doesn’t exist. It definitely exists but I don’t think it is uniformly felt by any stretch of the imagination (Carol, p. 7)

But Carol was philosophical as she described these issues as teething problems in a transition. As she said, many of these concerns can occur in any setting, even in “an entirely British predominantly white middle-class staff.”

Lucy felt prejudice – not so much prejudice on race, though she has experienced racial prejudice as well. Rather she was more concerned with the prejudice of just being an expatriate in the Cayman society. She went on to explain:

I am colour blind and I always have been. So I go at every situation. It makes no difference to me whatever. I don't give a darn. I never have. I don't know why, I am just colour blind. .... Someone told me at the beginning, first when I came here....it's not the colour of your skin, it's the colour of your passport. So it's not that is either the black, white, oriental or that - that the prejudice that exists is that you are not Caymanian. ....I find this country has got to learn not to be prejudiced towards people because of where they are from and you know, it comes right through to the children. The children look at me and say ‘there is that white lady’ and it is with disdain. (Lucy, p. 7)

She continued to discuss the situations among expatriates and the immigration policies:

I mean, people here who are expats are scared to do certain things because they would lose their jobs because they are expats. This whole roll-over[[16]](#footnote-16) in seven years. My god. Young families. It's fine for me, I go home to my house. I am fine. (Lucy, p. 7)

She detailed an example of a young family who has been significantly affected by the roll over policy.

NCT: that is treating expatriates as second class citizens?

Lucy: second class. And so yes, I think there is a prejudice here against expats and I feel it in the children as well.

NCT: have you ever felt this from your colleagues, Caymanian colleagues that you work with?

Lucy: you do, you do, they are more subtle, they're smarter, they're not blatant, it is not blatant, it isn't but it does exist.

NCT: they remind you that you are an expat?

Lucy: that I am not Caymanian. And I am not aspiring to be. But yeah. I find, and it is foolishness, it is such foolishness. (Lucy, p. 8)

## Resources

Olivia commented on the level of technology that was present – each public school teacher was presented with a laptop to use for the duration of their employment. The classrooms each had projectors and there was wireless internet on the compound. Some class rooms also had Smart Boards or Promethean Boards. Daniel, being an information technology specialist, found that the potential for the use of technology had not been properly tapped. At the time when I first began to teach at John Gray High School, we did not have the laptop programme nor the wireless internet. But I was impressed with the resources such as the photocopiers[[17]](#footnote-17), various text books, reference books and professional magazines on the curriculum area. There were cabinets of manipulatives available for use by teachers and students. Amanda was also impressed by the resources available but she reflected on the fact that in Jamaica, they were able to produce so much more in terms of student performance with so much less in terms of resources:

…they are given everything here. They have the resources. Back home students have to fight for chairs. Here they come, they have chairs, they have AC rooms, they have books to use and they are just nonchalant. They don’t want to do anything. It is difficult to get them motivated….But when you find a group that is good, they are pretty good and they are really into it. So it’s not all bad. (Amanda, p. 6)

## Discussion

During the adjustment to living in the Cayman Islands, the “in country phase” support from colleagues was clearly present and discussed by all the participants. The schools had a culture of support which might be due to the fact that the majority of teachers were themselves expatriates and could empathise with what these new teachers were going through, having been there at one time themselves. Fairness and respect were not always present from the students and the parents, maybe even from some colleagues but that was not definitively stated. The issue of race and prejudice was reported in some form by the majority of participants, but seem to be more of an issue for the Jamaican participants, as they had received direct backlash just for being Jamaican. The reaction to Jamaican teachers would be compounded by the sheer number of Jamaicans on the island, in various immigration levels, such as Caymanian status, permanent residents or work permit holders as well as those married to Caymanians. There was also the backlash against the controversial grants of Caymanian Status mentioned in Chapter 2. There clearly seem to be societal issues about the prevalence of foreign teachers, even as home country nationals show little interest in teaching as a career as discussed earlier in chapter 2.

Another major concern was the Senior Management Team and the support that they offered as well as the tone they set for the school especially as it applied to consistency in the behaviour expectations and dealing with behaviour issues.

## Conclusion

As I looked at the two key areas around which each expatriate teacher needs to view adjustment, this chapter focused on the professional aspect and therefore looked at the discussion on school related matters. But as Amanda said earlier, her husband was a major support to her as a sounding board. Hence the personal also impacted the adjustment of my participants and will be discussed in depth in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER NINE PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT

## Introduction

Teachers’ lives present a dichotomy between the professional and the personal. The previous chapter focused on the professional aspects as relayed by the expatriate participants. This chapter focuses on the personal aspects by looking at the social interactions and family relationships and how they are represented by the participants. These also form part of the in-country adjustment phase.

## Family

The family was an important unit for each participant, whether the members of the family had accompanied him or her to the Cayman Islands or remained in the country of origin. The family could be a support or an added stress to the adjustment process.

Many participants had brought their families with them, even when there was no job offered or guarantee of employment for the spouse on the island. There was the understanding, however, that any children could attend the local public school. Olivia had two teenaged children who were both registered as students at John Gray High School. Amanda and Justin had also registered their children in the public schools. In both cases they each had one son in primary school and the other at John Gray High School. As stated previously, only Caymanians and children of government employees are able to attend the public schools. While Caymanians attended free of charge, contracted government officers paid a small termly fee of $250 for primary school and $300 for high school. Lucy’s youngest daughter had followed her to the island and was teaching at the international school in Grand Cayman.

Daniel’s wife was recruited as an expatriate teacher for the then middle school in Grand Cayman. This was mentioned in Chapter 6. However, Amanda, Justin, Lucy and Carol came with their spouses even though no employment was offered for the spouse at the time of signing the contract. Once on island, however, most of the spouses were able to find employment. Lucy’s husband and Justin’s wife were eventually hired as secondary school teachers in the public system. Amanda’s husband had moved with her even though he was not guaranteed a job. She related that he had been fortunate to find work, “on and off, both with the private sector and with government”. But he had no permanent position. Her husband was also in the process of pursuing his law degree, which she credited to the positive financial position she now enjoyed in the Cayman Islands as opposed to her life in Jamaica. Olivia did not have her fiancé, who was retired, move to the island with her at the time.

While her professional life had been expanding with a promotion and increased responsibility, Carol’s personal life had been a major challenge. Things had not been easy for her husband. He was not enjoying living in the Cayman Islands. As she described, “he has gravitated to every Spanish speaking person he can find. He knows every Dominican on the island. And he doesn’t like Cayman at all.” Carol said that her husband loved Britain, the weather, the energy, all that was happening all the time. There were lots of things to see and do. According to her, he found Cayman very difficult to adjust to and he had some frustrations finding a job as well. This made her situation much more challenging emotionally and financially.

Olivia’s son was in his final year of secondary school and he had completed some of his external examinations at his previous school in Jamaica. She expressed concern about the move and how he would be affected in his academics, but she felt at the time I interviewed her that he had settled in and was doing well. Amanda was pleased at the curriculum that her children were exposed to the public school system here in Grand Cayman, especially the music and instruments that they had access to. She felt that they would not have been this fortunate in their schools in Jamaica.

Samuel was the only participant who decided to have his family remain in Jamaica, even though his wife and children were listed on his contract. They had not travelled to the UK with him when he moved there for a prior expatriate posting that lasted 5 years. His son had just passed for a popular high school in Jamaica and Samuel preferred that he attend that school. Samuel was also concerned about the transitioning that was occurring at John Gray High School. He wanted all the kinks and issues to be resolved before he brought his family over. But he stated that they visited frequently and his wife was trying to find a job on island.

Logan and I were both single at the time of recruitment and only brought ourselves, though we both made frequent trips during school breaks to connect with family and friends in different parts of the world. This is discussed more later.

Both Amanda and Daniel readily admitted that life was much easier as each of them had their spouse on island with them, who could serve (and did serve) as their sounding boards. As Daniel described it:

It was ten times easier because of the two of us, so even in the evenings, when we go home, we would complain about the kids together. We had someone to talk to. It was easier because she was there. (Daniel, p. 4)

I had a similar positive experience with my roommate. We were employed in different schools but being able to discuss the day and have someone to commiserate with was a necessary part of surviving each day. I remember we would often compare our schools. I had more experience than she had in dealing with under-motivated and behaviourally challenged students from the secondary school that I taught at in Trinidad, so I was able to offer her advice and suggestions. We were each other’s lifelines at that time.

For Justin, the biggest plus for him was the new work-family balance that he had found since moving to the Cayman Islands. He described the change as “immeasurably better”. He no longer had the stress that came with being in a middle management position as he did in the UK. He found that he could go home much earlier and spend quality time with his wife and kids and see his kids grow up. As he remarked, “I can sit in the garden and it’s not raining, and it’s warm.” He admitted that the weather is a huge plus for the whole family. He loves the sea, and the beach and he found that he had the opportunity to think over the job stress of the day in a nice relaxed environment. He admitted that he sometimes felt like he was being paid to holiday in the Caribbean.

Daniel recognised life style improvements in his daily commute. He appreciated the size of the island when he focused on how quickly he could get around as opposed to how much time he spent in traffic in Jamaica. He also found that the roads were better and the housing was better, though significantly more expensive.

## Financials

As stated previously when looking at the reasons for migrating to Grand Cayman, each participant factored in the financial implications at some point. Olivia was recruited late and she did not receive the information package with estimates of the living expenses on the island so she initially thought that the salary offered on her contract would meet all her needs comfortably. She was pleased to find that her personal finances were much better than before her job posting to the Cayman Islands. She felt that this validated one of her reasons for migrating. Like Olivia, my financial position was such that I could meet my needs, meet some of my financial obligations in Trinidad and travel frequently.

However, Daniel, Justin and Carol did not have such a favourable impression of the financial situation on the island. Daniel felt that the pay scale was deceptive, because the conversion from KYD (Cayman Islands dollar) to JMD (Jamaican dollar) can give the impression that there is a lot of money, but true cost of living was a different reality. For Justin coming from the UK, he did not find the salary was a major influence for him to move to the Cayman Islands. He knew the salary was tax free but he had also recognised that with the cost of living, he was only going to be “marginally better off” that he was in the UK, and that surplus was quickly used up in commitments he had back home in the UK. But since he did not have the stress of the middle management responsibilities as he had in the UK, he was quite satisfied with the salary, as he recognised that for him, the time he now had to spend with his family was worth more than the dollars. Carol was not as understanding about the prices and the cost of living. She admitted to feeling a bit overwhelmed by the cost of everything, especially in the supermarket:

Yeah it was a shock. The price of everything was a shock. And people would say to me that I couldn’t keep thinking in pounds, shillings and pence. You have got to think Caymanian. Oh, I can’t eat that meat anymore, it’s off my diet, it’s too expensive. And that is how I was for about 2 years I think. It took me a long time to get over the price of everything. I resented it. ……I (eventually) became resigned to the prices. (Carol, p. 4)

As for me, and my immediate circle of friends, we travelled off the island almost every school break. My roommate had an elderly mother at home in Trinidad who had become the sole responsibility of her sister since she had moved to Grand Cayman so she went home on the school breaks for her sister to get some relief. I travelled to family – in the US, Canada or back home to Trinidad. We travelled during mid-term breaks to Miami or even Cuba on short trips. We were financially able to afford these frequent trips and used Grand Cayman as a gateway, with Miami as our main airport hub.

While some teachers complained about the smallness of the island and needed to fly out at every opportunity (myself included), Olivia was quite comfortable to remain on island during the school breaks. Olivia described herself as an introvert, and she did not go out frequently. She preferred to go to her apartment with her children and be very content there. Olivia had not visited Jamaica for more than 2 days in the 8 months that she had been employed. A cost of the ticket for the short 45 minute flight was a major deterrent[[18]](#footnote-18).

## Community/diaspora

The community of nationals from our various countries of origin did have some influence on the adjustment of the teachers interviewed. Daniel felt himself fortunate to make contact, through his church in Jamaica, with a Jamaican currently residing in Grand Cayman and this person tried to assist him with the settling in on the island. While Daniel did not accept the accommodation suggested, he was very grateful for this person’s assistance in purchasing a car and for connecting him and his wife with a church family. Like Daniel, finding a church on island was important to me. I was coming from a dynamic church in Trinidad and a family from the same ministry had moved to Grand Cayman the previous year. I did not know them personally at the time but we connected very early after my arrival and I started attending the same church as they did. The church was a mixture of nationalities including Caymanians. Daniel’s church was different from this, with a congregation that was predominately Jamaican. He felt that his church family provide much support and that this eliminated much of the culture shock that would be possible in the new environment.

But Daniel admitted, “everywhere we walked we saw Jamaicans. At one point we were wondering where the Caymanians were – we didn’t see any Caymanians” (Daniel, p. 3). Carol admitted having a similar question. When Carol came to Grand Cayman, one of her first impressions was the lack of Caymanians that she came in contact with beyond the students, “I kept saying to my mother, ‘I don’t know any Caymanians, and I keep meeting expats all the time’” (Carol, p. 4). Carol realised that in that first year her circle of acquaintances was mainly expatriates with one Caymanian who became her close friend (as evident by his place in a group photo she showed me on her desk). As for the interaction with Caymanians (and some Caribbean teachers), Carol has the impression that many of their activities centre around church and since she was not in that circle, it limited the out of school interactions. She did attend the Catholic Church at times, but “that’s not their church” (Carol, p. 4), with Seventh Day Adventist, full gospel or evangelical churches being more prevalent on the island.

There were many opportunities to get involved in the Cayman society but much of the interactions were dictated by the personality of the individuals. Olivia came to the island with two teenage children and no driver’s license. She was able to get support from fellow Jamaican teachers on island to sort out living accommodation and transportation to and from school. Outside of school, she utilized the limited public transportation system to get her basic chores done. While Olivia did interact with her colleagues, she described herself as generally introverted and not very outgoing. She preferred to avoid crowds and chose instead to keep to herself. Amanda, like Olivia, described herself as being less outgoing, so aside from a few work socials and invitation from one or two people, she doesn’t go out much. Amanda did not go to Cayman Jazz Festival[[19]](#footnote-19) or Taste of Cayman[[20]](#footnote-20). She did, however, go to Pirates week parade since this holds a more historic and academic interest for her. It also helped that her children were usually involved through their schools. Amanda admits that her children are more socially active than she is and hence she interacts somewhat with the parents of her children’s friends. Justin admitted that his family had mainly interacted with European expatriates, and this was actually a source of frustration for him. He found that he met Caribbean and Caymanians more through his children, as they were the parents of his kids’ friends. Samuel considered himself socially diverse and found that he interacted with everyone regardless of nationality or race. He admitted that he had limited interaction with his work colleagues outside of school but he frequented popular mature night spots and the beach.

Lucy found that people were very closed. While she initially was excited about the diversity that the staff afforded, she found that people were not willing to socialise outside of work:

I wish I could have spent and gotten to know more members of staff but I find that people are closed. I find it very difficult. .... I have been invited to maybe two homes since I have been here, and that's in four years. And I have had social gatherings after social gatherings but it just doesn't happen. It's not part of the culture, maybe, I don't know. I don't think it is Caribbean culture but I think it is Caymanian culture. You're an outsider and always will be and don't think there is any way of not being. …..I have my staff in for Christmas [special services support staff of about 6 individuals] and I have done that for the past four years. And we do have people in for dinner and so on but it is not reciprocated. But we do probably at least twice a month. But most times, it is not reciprocated, sometimes but not a lot. (Lucy, p. 8, 9)

Lucy admitted that she and her husband involved themselves in most activities happening on island. But she admitted that at times she felt lonely. She was not interested in joining the Canadian women’s club on the island, and there were only three Canadians on staff at the time, Lucy, her husband and one other individual who had been on island long enough to have Caymanian status. She travelled at least three times a year. She returned to Canada for Christmas and the summer vacation. The Easter break and shorter breaks she would travel either in the Caribbean or to Florida.

## Caymanians

Daniel recognised that he had not done much to integrate into the Cayman society – most of his activities centred on his church, which as stated previously, has a congregation filled with Jamaicans. He did go to a few local events and then mainly at Christmas. But he questioned what there was to do on the island. As he commented, “If you really want to do something different, we have to go overseas….” (Daniel, p. 6) but there is a challenge in going to Jamaica as the flights are usually booked long in advance, even with the high prices. In the meantime, he had become more involved in his church, moving from an ordinary elder to a second elder which is a more senior position in the church.

In contrast, during my first year employed in the Grand Cayman, my roommate, other newly recruited Trinidadian teachers and I attended most of the public events on the island. We went from one end of the island to the other as we visited the district heritage days. We attended the Pirates Week and Batabano celebrations, two of the major festivals in the country. We attended many of the 5K races that were held as fundraisers for various causes on the island. We attended the Parade of Lights (decorated boats) at Christmas time and we also attended popular church concerts for Easter and Christmas. We frequented the restaurants and beaches. Samuel also recounted an active social life in Grand Cayman with visits to the bars and pubs (though with an eye kept on the expenses) and frequent visits to the beach. He mentioned meeting a multitude of persons of various nationalities, including Caymanians in his social time.

Carol thought the beaches were beautiful, but felt in general that the island was flat and small. She compared it to the Dominican Republic, which was where her husband was from and which was the only other Caribbean country with which she was familiar. [[21]](#footnote-21) She found the people in the Cayman Islands had a different “vibe” from those in the Dominican Republic. As she said,

they (Dominicans) are very happy, very animated…..there is crime, poverty and of course Haiti is attached……you go where the people live, not where the tourists are, you see people laughing and joking, lots of music, lots of dancing. (Carol, p. 4)

Even the mode of transportation was different between the countries. In the Dominican Republic, scooters and motorcycles were the more popular means of transport. Carol remarked cynically,

I was impressed by ‘Oh, a diamond shop and another diamond shop’, people must like buying diamonds here….this is what tourists see when they arrive (off a cruise ship) – seven diamond shops plus the T-shirt shop. (Carol, p. 4)

Daniel expressed concern about the sheer number of Jamaicans on the Cayman Islands.

…you see there are so many of us here that sometimes we are in danger of influencing the culture a bit too much. Which can be a bad thing. I think that is the main reason behind the whole sort of negative reaction towards Jamaicans. (Daniel, p. 5)

He felt that this explained and even validated the reaction that he had received personally from Caymanians, who judged him and approached him in a negative way simply because he was a Jamaican. Samuel recounted a similar experience with a reaction of “yeah, Jamaican, you guys just come here to get what you want and then you go,” as he was told by a student. Like Daniel he believed that many Caymanians, while distrustful of expatriates in general, had a particular aversion to Jamaicans. His theory was that Caymanians were jealous of the success of Jamaicans in the Cayman Islands:

I think Caymanians feel threatened with a set of expats….many Jamaicans – they come here, they work, they buy homes, they get status and stuff and live, drive nice cars, and probably have a nice decent job and really performing…so that can be threatening to someone who lives here and underperforms. (Samuel, p. 7)

Amanda had found that her circle remains predominately Caribbean and she found that she had few Caymanian friends. When questioned about this specifically, she offered a theory:

Do you want me to be brutally honest now? I think they are bitter, some of them. They seem so aggressive, and I mean when I say aggressive - I am not talking about making strides. There are times when you happen to meet some of them on the street and it is as though they are saying “why are you here?” (Amanda, p. 8)

She further believes that the reaction is amplified to her as a Jamaican expatriate. Amanda had recognised some segregation among the staff along nationality lines at staff socials. She commented on a few occasions where all the Caribbean people gravitated together.

## How long

Based on how my participants felt in the process of adjusting to teaching and living in Grand Cayman, I thought it would be interesting to find out how long they thought they would each be willing to remain in the current situation. Lucy had mentioned during the interview that this was her last year and she would be retiring for the second time and returning to Canada. She was very excited about that as she felt ready to return home fully. However, her daughter was still working on island at the international school so she knew she would be back to visit her soon. At the time of the initial interview, Logan gave the shortest expected time frame for remaining in the international posting – one or two more years. He was not impressed with the salary and the fact that there were no increments or salary increases possible. He also felt that his skills as a teacher and his ability to advance in his career were both stunted in the current system. Daniel did not feel that he and his wife would remain in the Cayman Islands beyond 6 years in total, unless “something happens drastically to convince us otherwise” (Daniel, p. 9). The main reasons Daniel gave for planning to move on were the lack of opportunities for professional advancement or further study. He was not in favour of pursuing online study as he had already used this modality to complete his master’s degree. He considered Canada as the direction for him to move to, but he was still very concerned about the cold weather.

Amanda intended to leave the Cayman Islands when her husband completed his studies which would require another year or two. Because of the anti-expat feelings she had related earlier, she had refused to invest on the island, such as purchase property. However, like Daniel, she did not intend to go back to Jamaica. She again cited the crime situation in Jamaica as a major deterrent. She further listed two reasons why she did not consider moving back to Jamaica. Firstly, she did not expect to have the opportunity to use technology that she had experienced in the Cayman Islands. Secondly, the professional development available through frequent interactions with colleagues where the emphasis is placed on sharing best practices and supporting each other was a positive which she had not previously experienced in her teaching in Jamaica. She was actively contemplating the US as an option once again, because as she put it, “while I hear the situation there especially in some of the government schools is bad, I am not sure it is any worse than here, “ (Amanda, p. 11).

Samuel was confident that he would renew his contract after his initial two years were up. He stated that he would only reconsider this if the behaviour of students deteriorated. As he put it:

Have you ever been at a school where the students are running the school? Well you want to be in some schools in the UK. Special measures where you as a teacher are even afraid to say certain things to the kids. And the kids tell you, “we are the boss of this school, we decide who leaves and stays”. That is how far it can go. John Gray has not reached that stage yet. (Samuel, p. 14)

When asked how long he thinks he would remain in the Cayman Islands, Justin admitted that it changes almost daily. There were times he felt that he would renew his contract, while there were other times when he felt that this experimental move, while a good one, needs to come to an end and the family return home to the UK:

And I keep telling myself, try not to think about it until you have to. But every week, if not nearly every day it kind of just wanders its way across my mind – how does it feel today? Is it a stay day or it is a go day? (Justin, p. 13)

Justin did confess that there were more stay days than go days, so he believed that they would stay beyond the initial 2 year contract. Another reason he is not ready to leave is that he did not feel that he had accomplished all that he could with the newly transitioned John Gray High School. He felt that he could still be a part of a success story – something that was turning around the community and the students.

Olivia could not see herself settling in the Cayman Islands long enough to become a Permanent Resident (at least 8 years) but she was willing to stay as long as her contract was being renewed.

Carol saw herself spending another 7 years in Cayman. At the time of the interview she was in her fourth year. When she planned to leave Cayman she admitted that she will be 55 years old, and ready to leave. She has planned to retire to “their mountain” in Dominican Republic (DR). But, showing a very pragmatic side of her personality, Carol knew that the life she and her husband envision for the DR required money. When question about the toll this may place on her marriage, she stated:

Just being practical….I have said to him as much as you want to go now, the life in the mountains isn’t going to happen unless we have certain things in place. And we have nothing in place. We have not saved a penny yet…..we need something to get a business. Yes, we need a nest egg for this to happen. (Carol, p. 9)

Her husband visited the Dominican Republic at least twice a year, whilst she went less frequently but at least once a year.

## Discussion

As the second part of the in-country phase, these comments by my participants reflect the non-professional issues to their lives as expatriate teachers in Grand Cayman. The main issues were around the family, finances and the interaction with the other nationals from the diaspora and the interaction with native Caymanians.

Most of the participants migrated with their families, though they were signing a two year contract. This meant uprooting children from schools and having spouses leave jobs. It is clear that for the participants this was not an easy decision and took a measure of faith and risk. But all of those interviewed seemed at peace with their decision, and were making the best of the situation. And in cases where the spouse had been able to find a job and also contribute financially, it was viewed as a positive development indeed. Only one participant had a spouse and children but he did not have them join him, though he did take steps to ensure that they were included on his contract. This meant that they could move over at any time. However, this same individual had completed a previous expatriate posting without his family accompanying him. At least, in this case they were only 45 minutes away, and this seemed to be a situation that he was quite comfortable with.

The reality of earning and spending money in the Cayman Islands was a major issue for most of the participants. As stated previously, the value and exchange rate of the Cayman dollar was something that all participants soon became very much aware of it they weren’t fully cognizant initially. This meant that in cases where remittance was an issue, and this would be a factor for anyone maintaining expenses in another country, participants recognised that the cost of living was high and utilised most of their salary. Hence they were generally not able to save as much as they would have hoped. Those who had financial goals found these being tested. As Carol said, she would have to stay longer than she initially expected because it was so difficult to save.

Berry (1997) described four tenets of acculturation – assimilation, separation, integration and marginalisation. These were discussed in detail in the review of the literature in chapter 3. As I looked at how my participants interacted with the community and by extension the culture of the Cayman Islands, I found these terms to be apt descriptors of where the participants were in the process. From my understanding of the terms none of the participants demonstrated signs of assimilation (losing one’s cultural identity and adopting that of the host) or marginalization (losing one’s cultural identity and also rejecting that of the host). These are the two extreme ends of the acculturation spectrum. Instead, I found that my participants demonstrated various degrees of separation and integration. Most of the participants attempted to maintain their own cultural identity but found ways to actively join in the cultural activities of the host. This integration is shown by the willingness to attend and partake of various activities such as Pirates week, Heroes Day and Taste of Cayman – nationally recognised functions. Participation in popular sporting activities, plays, art demonstrations, even the restaurants and pubs – all these show a desire to integrate and become an active member of the Caymanian community. Three participants described an unwillingness to participate actively in much that was happening on the island – Olivia, Amanda and Daniel. And while they were all Jamaicans, it seemed their unwillingness to participate and their choice to separate themselves might be more based on personality traits than a reflection of them being Jamaican or any deliberate aversion to Caymanian culture. And even in their separation there were differing degrees as Amanda and Daniel still participated in some of the activities while totally rejected others.

Everyone had a plan as to how long they intended to stay and work in the Cayman Islands. And these plans were all measured against their goals for moving to the Cayman Islands in the first place. The most common reason for eventually moving on from the Cayman Islands was the need for professional advancement, which the participants felt was not possible once they remained in the Cayman Island system. Interestingly most of the Caribbean participants did not see themselves returning to Jamaica. Aside from Samuel who had already worked in the UK, the others were all looking to another international posting after leaving the Cayman Islands. Obviously, this first expatriate experience had been positive enough for them to want to do it again in another country when they eventually left the Cayman Islands. But, with the exception of Logan and Lucy, all the other participants were quite content to wait for at least another contract period, if they continued to be renewed by the Ministry of Education. This is so in spite of issues such as poor discipline, prejudice, finances, or administration.

## Conclusion

The participants shared their lived experiences as expatriate teachers and all it entailed. In many cases the issues were similar but not identical. As each person’s situation was unique, there were individual aspects to what was related and discussed. However, the broad headings used encompassed what was seen as important to the participants in general. For all of them, their families (present or absent) was a major consideration in any decisions made. The family was also a source of support, even if as a sounding broad and a trusted and confidential avenue to share one’s fears and concerns about the job and the community.

The reality of the financial situation and how it impacted each participant and their families was also important to their comfort level with adjusting to this new life.

Of course, how much they were willing and able to interact with the local community was also important. For some their church involvement proved to be a source of support. For others, they looked forward to more active community involvement.

It was clear that all the participants had a time related agenda even if their final dates was open ended. This showed that they were constantly evaluating their expatriate experience and using their initial reasons for becoming self-initiated expatriates as the yard stick. Interestingly the desire to repatriate was not big on the agenda for the majority of Caribbean participants.

# CHAPTER TEN: A YEAR LATER….

## Update on Non-Caribbean participants

Lucy had retired and moved back to the Canada. At the time of interview she was visiting her daughter who taught at the international school on island. We met in my classroom and chatted for about 20 minutes uninterrupted. Logan left at the end of his contract and was unavailable to be interviewed a year later. Carol had applied for a more senior position and at the time of the year later interview she was waiting to hear if she had been successful in obtaining the position. Justin had been promoted to Subject Leader of his department and his children were now attending private school.

## Update on Caribbean participants

Daniel had become a father during the year. He has also been promoted to Subject Leader of his department. Amanda continued to function in her role as teacher. Samuel continued to function in his role as teacher. His family still lived in Jamaica. Olivia had married during the year but her husband remained in Jamaica though he visited the Cayman Islands frequently. In my second year I had been appoint as Head of House which meant I was in charge of the sporting activities for the girls in my section of the school.

## Introduction

I found this quote from one teacher summed up the experience of all the teachers a year later:

*NT: So, a year later. How did it go by? Quickly, painfully, painlessly?*

*Teacher: I would say, it certainly has gone quick and easier. I think the second year has been easier. A couple of things, major factors for that, have influenced it….is experience really. I think that first year, you do just need a bit of time to get the adjustment under your belt. But having made that adjustment, I think this year has been easier, a lot more familiar. And the other thing that has had a big impact is greater stability in senior management. I think that has had a massive impact really. Both myself and as I look around at other colleagues, I think the change in leadership had a profound impact. Much, much more positive vibe I feel around the place. Staff morale really picked up I think, because it was tough for a while I think, but it really picked up.*

## Professional

When interviewed a year later, most of the participants were much more positive and appreciated that the system had settled down considerably. Justin felt that the students were more relaxed and that he was able to communicate better with them. Olivia felt that in the year she had learnt a lot about “how things are done here” and she then felt more confident in the classroom. She found that, as a newly recruited staff member in the midst of a transition, there were some things she had to learn on her own because even seasoned staff were not sure what the procedures were. This had been expressed by Justin and Lucy earlier. Samuel found, a year later, that he now knew how to get around, how to get information from, where to find certain kinds of support. Daniel described his previous year as “good”. He went on further to say:

I can’t complain about the year. Re: - school transition, second year at Clifton Hunter so we’re pretty much settled in now. Compared to last year, this was a lot less problematic as we had the systems in place so less confusion. So we had a more productive year. (Daniel – a year later, p. 1)

Both Justin and Daniel had been promoted to subject leader of their respective departments. Interestingly both of them had been Heads of Departments immediately before coming to the Cayman Islands so they were going back to the position of responsibility they had held in the past. Justin appreciated the year he had as a classroom teacher as it allowed him to “concentrate on just the Caymanian context and not worry about other stuff so much” and think about his professional development. But he recognised and was pleased to be in a position to influence the direction of his department. Daniel was pleased that he had been able to meet his targets in a timely manner and so meet his subject leader goals. However, he felt that many of the discipline issues remained – and these were not high level issues, just the constant disruptions, talking, use of cell phones in class, etc, that made teaching and learning very difficult to accomplish. Carol had applied for a new, more senior post but at the time of the interview, she did not yet know if she had been successful.

Like Daniel and Justin, I had been promoted at the start of my second year at John Gray High School and my new role brought me in close contact with a quarter of the school population for the mainly non-academic activities of the students. I also felt much more comfortable with the curriculum and the examinations that I was preparing the students for. I had even become used to them calling me ‘Ma’am’ instead of ‘Miss’. My student successes at the end of the first year was another source of pride and accomplishment. I felt like I had made a tangible difference in the lives of these students, however, I also worried about some students who did not return in the new school year – for serious discipline issues. I questioned whether I could have done more for those.

Amanda, Samuel and Olivia were also still very concerned with student discipline. Olivia felt that she had adjusted to it, “I have got used to it. I have learnt to ignore some things and just choose what to really take up seriously” (Olivia – a year later, p. 3). Samuel appreciated his department approach where he moved up with his class as they were promoted to the other year group, since he felt that has aided with the behaviour issues as he became more familiar with his students. Samuel had observed that students would take advantage of situations – they would behave with one teacher who they might be familiar with and then disrespect or behave poorly with a new teacher.

Amanda recognised that administration was making an even greater effort to support the teachers. She has also found her interaction and expectation from SMT had changed. She had become more confident in what she wanted and she told the Learning Mentor and Teaching and Learning Coordinator what she wanted them to do if and when she sent a student to them. Amanda had found this new empowered approach was giving her better results in terms of student discipline and interaction. She was also pleased with the fact that most students were really trying to succeed in class. As a teacher of English, Language and Literature, often at the same time, she was very hopeful of her students’ success at external examinations. She shared the statistics on her number of successful students – 17 out of 31 for Literature, which is over 50% of the class.

…when the students, when you really see students excel, it is encouraging. And sometimes too, parents call to say “oh, thanks much. Thanks for working with us. Thanks for doing this. Thanks. And that too is encouraging. (Amanda - a year later, p. 2)

Amanda considered herself to be a ‘strong woman of faith’ relying on prayer in several situations to make it through including praying for her students. However she admitted that she does not attend any church on island.

## Personal Finances

“…….the bottom line is that – people are rich because they have money, not because they spend everything that they have……” (Amanda – a year later, p. 5)

Amanda has becoming acutely aware of the expenses that need to be budgeted for with her elder son who intend to pursue the Sciences at University. The younger son, who has plenty of time, is talking about studying Dentistry.

Olivia recognised that the cost of living was an issue for her. But, as she stated, “I just have to know how to spend, what to buy and what not to buy. And where to buy and how to buy. Like I mostly buy wholesale”, (Olivia – a year later, p. 2)

Samuel was able to purchase a vacation house in Jamaica and this was possible because of working in the Cayman Islands. He felt that the financial goals were being met “to some extent” but he still had his overall goal to start a business.

## Family

Carol admitted that her husband was no longer in the Cayman Islands. He had moved back to his homeland of the Dominican Republic. He visited the Cayman Islands only to see Carol. They made a decision that he would be better off in the DR learning a few trades and finding employment. He was also supervising the construction of their home in the mountains. While she acknowledged the strain that is still placed on her salary as the primary wage earner for the family, she felt that he was much happier and much of his frustration while living in the Cayman Islands had been alleviated. The expectation was that he would return to the Cayman Islands by the following year with more skills to be employable. This is going to be necessary because their plans go beyond just a home, since they are looking into an ecotourism business in the mountains. She was in frequent contact with her husband and her adult son who resided in the UK, using technology – Skype or black berry messenger so that the distance did not become a disconnect for them.

For Amanda, the major concerns centred on the education and achievement of her sons and her husband who was completing a Law degree**.** She had continued to support her children in the public school system but she was monitoring the curriculum closely and she found that she would be able to source alternative options if the need arises such as extra classes and different examinations. Her husband continued to pursue his law degree and according to Amanda, he will soon be writing the Bar back in Jamaica. She realised that may mean that the family would be separated for a while:

…if it is serious, serious – then I will return home. Because I am not in for us being separated for too long. Because that spells “trouble”. It does…..we have to be practical. (Amanda – a year later, p. 6)

Olivia had gotten married during the year, but her husband continue to reside in Jamaica, though she expected him to relocate fully to Grand Cayman later in the year. What was most helpful for her was that she had learnt to drive over the year and now had her own car. This was a major positive in her life:

I feel I now have a sense of independence. I can go where I want to go. I was grateful because I had people see to help me out but there were times I used to feel as if I was a bother. But I am more comfortable. (Olivia – a year later, p. 1)

She was also now able to drop and pick up her son as he pursued tertiary education. She had been very concerned about him, and how moving him at such a critical time – beginning of the final year of his secondary schooling, would affect him. But she did not believe that it had affected him adversely and she was very pleased at the extra support she had received for him from other teachers. She even believed that he may have done better in his exams in Cayman than he would have done in Jamaica. In Cayman he had smaller class sizes and the push and encouragement from his mainly Caribbean teachers.

Daniel had increased his family with the birth of his first child, his son. The family had moved to a new apartment.Justin’s wife had been employed in another school during the course of the year. So both he and his wife worked in the public school system but his children were being educated in the private school system. Justin continued to enjoy the work life balance, even though he now had more responsibilities as subject leader. He admitted to making a conscious effort to maintain that. One major change is that both of his sons had transferred from the public school system to the private school system. He admitted being frustrated to have to make that change but he was happy that they were still getting “a strong Caymanian experience” as well as an international blend at the private schools.

Samuel admitted that his son was now attending a top school in Jamaica after passing his common entrance examinations. He was not willing to move his son to either of the two government schools since they both still seemed so unsettled after the transition. He remarked that his niece attended one of the high schools. (Until this point, he had not revealed that he had family living in the Cayman Islands – which on probing I discovered include a sister, her husband and children, as well as another brother).

### Community and Caymanians

Even with her new found independence, Olivia had not participated or done anything in the year that would have allowed her to experience Caymanian culture. She credited her personality for this reluctance to get involved socially. This meant that her experiences and judgement was based solely on the interaction at school. She did not attend church so she did not have that as a support base. She had spent all the major school breaks in Cayman. While she had visited Jamaica at least three times during the year, the trips were outside of the regular peak times so that she could get cheaper flights.

Daniel admitted that little had changed for him in terms of his interaction socially in the community. He was still very involved with his church and his circle of friends remain almost exclusively Jamaican.

Justin found that he was more involved in social activities in the island over the year and his social network continued to grow. He has already admitted that his children were a good source for him to meet members of the community and with his children now attending a private school, he was interacting with both Caymanians and other expatriate parents.

I had already been very involved in activities in the community so that continued a year later. My roommate and I also hosted frequent socials or parties among our group of Trinidadian teachers who had been recruited together. I had family visit during the Easter break in the first year and I travel during the Christmas and the summer vacations. Most importantly for me, was my growth in my relationship with God. I found I had deepen my spiritual walk as the challenges and sometime the loneliness came.

Lucy was happy to be retired and back home. The joy was heard in her voice as she said:

Being at home has been absolutely wonderful. I try not to smile all the time but I do. I take long drives everywhere just because I like being there. Most of that is because I am home with family. I am close to my brothers and sisters and we spend a lot of time together. I am close to my other three children and we’re right there. There is a feeling of being home in my own house that I have lived in (for) 30 years. All of those things. My friends – same thing. So ‘home’ is the functional word there and it could be on the Arctic, it won’t matter. The fact that the weather is not as good (as here) doesn’t bother me at all. So that is why I love being home. (Lucy – a year later, p. 1)

She felt that she had missed her friends and colleagues but she had not missed the stress that had become her life and the life of all the staff at John Gray High School for about a year and a half prior to her leaving, “it was very difficult as you know, during that time.” She found the atmosphere on the school campus on her return noticeably more relaxed, settled and peaceful, though she had only been wandering around for a day. She even found that the teachers she spoke to were more positive:

They will say things like, ‘oh, the same as always, you know – day in, day out.’ But you don’t get ‘oh my God, shoot me now, don’t make me go back in there again!’ And that’s the way it was, you know that Nicole. You know that. (Lucy – a year later, p. 2)

She was able to talk to a couple of kids that she had taught previously and she found them more settled as well and quite happy to see her.

Lucy also indicated that she had left a package of information for her replacement. She had not been fortunate to receive anything when she started but she felt the need to provide the incoming teacher with as much as she could. She also expressed disappointment that the Ministry had not done any exit interview with her, “it was like I was never here….I don’t think they wanted to know what was right and what was wrong really”, (Lucy – a year later, p. 3)

## How long – part 2

Daniel was still intent on leaving in two or three years based in his timeline. His reasons for moving on remain the same:

Like I said, the main issue I have here is the lack of opportunities for professional growth. It is not here. Re: the work, it’s the same thing because there isn’t much room to move up, you know, in the system. It’s very difficult. (Daniel – a year later, p. 2)

He still envisions Canada as his next frontier.

Amanda however, was willing to extend her time in the Cayman Islands as she stated that, “I will stay until they tell me ‘listen, get lost!”. Initially she had said that she would leave when her husband had completed his Law degree. As that time approached, she was now open to the possibility that he may return to Jamaica to write the Bar while she remained in the Cayman Islands. She was still not ready to invest too expansively mainly because of the fickleness of the government contract and if she has to leave she will not be able to maintain a home in Cayman while living in Jamaica.

Justin felt he could stay for another five years, at least until his elder son completed his A’ levels. He was even willing to consider being in the Cayman Islands for the rest of his professional career. He expressed the following:

I am genuinely of the opinion that right now, I have no desire to go looking for anything else. I can’t imagine that anywhere else would really offer us the opportunities that Cayman provides us as a family. Yes, we miss people back home, yes, it is going to be fantastic in a couple weeks to go back to the UK but I don’t feel like there is….either professionally or personally, any like a ‘missing out’ by not being somewhere else. (Justin – a year later, p. 3)

Justin also welcomed the transience of the teaching profession in the Cayman Islands as he saw it as constantly introducing new people with new ideas. Justin still felt that he wanted to be a part of something big, the big changes that were planned, something that will contribute big to the community.

Olivia, felt that she could now see herself settling and one day acquiring Caymanian Status. Her husband had plans to relocate to the Cayman Islands but though he is a retired teacher, she admitted that he may have no further interest in working.

Carol, when reminded of her plan to stay 6 more years, felt that would be reduced. She was thinking about 4 now, as according to her “six seems unsurmountable”. But she did admit that if she was appointed in the new job, she would stay until retirement at 55 (complete the 6 years). Even though, she was fully aware of the financial benefit she and her husband gained from the Cayman Islands, she didn’t want to be in the place where her financial considerations were the deciding factor for how long she stays (though she has expressed exactly this view a year earlier). Instead, she wanted to continue to enjoy the job.

Samuel said that he is willing to stay as long as the job is there. However, he was still not sure a year later if his family would be moving to the Cayman Islands. He was very aware of the temporal nature of the employment contracts and he was concerned about uprooting his family. He admitted that his wife had been looking for a job in the Cayman Islands but she would be leaving a permanent position with the Jamaica government. As of the time of interview, she had not been successful in securing a job in the Cayman Islands and she remained based in Jamaica with his two children. However, Samuel revealed that she and the children visited frequently. According to him:

It’s not easy, and to be honest this is the sacrifice I have to make for my kids, my being there. As a man, there is something…..I don’t really want to do this but in order for them to have a life that I never had. (Samuel – a year later, p. 6)

## Discussion

While each situation and story was unique, it clearly showed in the year later perspective that all participants had adjusted to the change and felt much more comfortable, settled and able to tackle whatever came their way. As people adjusted and got more familiar, their coping mechanisms increased and their stress level decrease. Expectations were now known, and methods of communication were improving. Even the children seemed to have improved in their attitudes a year later as everyone had settled into some routines during the transition period.

Participants had made changes for the good of the family. In some cases they were difficult decisions and frequent reference had to be made to why they had migrated to the Cayman Islands in the first place. Did the changes match up with the reasons for migration and the goals set for the individual or the family?

Another common thread was the ability to manage one’s finances more effectively. Having worked at it for a year, everyone knew what was happening, what the money pits were and had developed strategies to get around them.

## Conclusion

The ability to reflect on the changes that had occurred in our lives a year later, I found to be one of the more positive aspects of this research study. While two teachers were no longer living in the islands, this simply demonstrated the transience of the expatriate experience. Colleagues come and go. The two persons who left were at different points in their teaching careers. Logan was only a few years into the profession and had moved on to, for him ‘greener pastures’, whilst Lucy had retired for the second time and returned home – repatriated. The other teachers all had a more positive impression of their professional and personal lives and they could see how they had been able to adjust over time with greater understanding of the culture and expectations of the Cayman Islands and the education system.

# CHAPTER ELEVEN – CONCLUSION

## Introduction

The research study employed a storied approach to the expatriate experience of living in Grand Cayman while teaching at the government secondary schools on the island. From the complex historical and political perspectives that have shaped Caymanian society and culture as described in chapter two, I delved into the continual need for expatriate labour. This is especially needed in education, since, partially for financial reasons, teaching is not seen as an attractive area of employment by native Caymanians. As long as the necessity exist for the recruitment of teachers, the recruiters have a responsibility to ensure that the most appropriate teachers are recruited and that the teachers are able to adjust to the new posting effectively and efficiently.

A selection of nine teachers including myself were asked to reflect on why we decided to migrate to the Cayman Islands. We also reflected on the recruitment and orientation as the process of movement and setting up continued. How we were able to adjust to the professional aspect of the school environment and our job related experiences were discussed in detail as well as the personal aspects involving our families and the characteristics of navigating our daily lives.

In this final chapter of this thesis, I address how policy discussions at both the school and national level can be impacted by the opinions and ideas expressed by the participants.

I also delve into some of the theoretical issues that have been sparked through the accounts in this thesis – issues such as structure and agency, and issues that affect small island states and what impetus these can provide for further research in the field of expatriate studies.

Lastly, in this my concluding chapter I deal with me!

## Implications for Policy

### Recruitment

Recruitment at the school level, based on the requirements placed in the advertisements, seem to focus on two main issues – the ability to utilize information technology effectively in teaching and learning and the ability of the teacher to manage the classroom environment effectively. For example, one of the participants mentioned having to prepare a PowerPoint presentation for the interview panel on how she would utilize information technology in the classroom but this did not appear to be a request made of all interviewees. For my own experience I was questioned specifically about classroom management approaches, but again, this did not seem to be a consistent focus across the interviews conducted. The persons interviewing the teachers, therefore, are tasked with the responsibility to structure the interview so that the most apt candidates are selected – not just in terms of the subject and pedagogical knowledge base but also in term of the individual’s ability to adapt to the new teaching environment and to a new social community. Are consistent approaches being taken to the interview process that reflect the policies of the Department and Ministry of Education? Are realistic portrayals of the situations in the classrooms being provided or are key elements being glossed over. Teachers, on an individual level, should to be made aware of their rights and responsibilities in the Caymanian context and where there is doubt or confusion, there should to be clear established channels to provide information and support for the teachers.

In general, recruitment agencies and human resource departments of commonwealth countries need to become familiar with and meet the recommendations of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol which has been adopted as a policy document by Commonwealth member states. In the Cayman Islands in particular, the recording and analysis of data at entrance and exit of the profession in the Cayman Islands needs to be viewed as a key policy item at the national level in terms of planning for development and meeting national strategic goals. For example, if one of the goals is to maintain a stable teaching staff then the analysis of exit interviews (which have asked the appropriate questions) can serve to highlight the issues that need to be addressed to retain both expatriate and home country staff. The question can be asked - is there a policy decision to manage the mixture of nationalities to avoid any one nationality predominating or to actively encourage home country nationals into the teaching professions? There is further scope for research to determine implementation of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol in the Cayman Island and further analysis of exit interviews for the teaching profession in the government school system in the Cayman Islands.

### Orientation

The information necessary to aid and ease the transition process of the new staff both personally and professionally should be made available or the sources provided. The use of buddies and mentors have been proven to be effective both in the literature and in the accounts from the teachers interviewed in this thesis. As was mentioned previously, new staff should be treated as NQTs and provided with the kind of assistance that is frequently offered to newly qualified teachers during the process of adjustment such as reduced timetables and fewer responsibilities or duties, as well as, the observation of teaching with formal and informal feedback. New staff should be working in an environment where information can be found but also where questions can be asked without the feeling of recrimination, where views can be expressed and where the lines of communication and the chain of command are clearly established and known to all individuals concerned.

### Support

The adjustment of family life included accommodation, children’s schooling, spouse’s jobs, and financial management to name a few areas repeatedly mentioned during the responses of the participants in this study. Having these areas settled would aid the new staff in their adjustment to the new migratory situation as well as aid in their performance in the classroom since there will be a few less things to dwell on and distract from the professional efficiency and delivery. The influence of the diaspora in the adjustment of the expatriate teachers in this study was not very pronounced. While all participants recognised the presence of other nationals from their country of origin living in Grand Cayman, there were few deliberate attempts reported to seek out or encourage interactions. One Jamaican participant did describe the support of a fellow Jamaican in helping him seek accommodation and purchase a vehicle but for the others they depended more on their buddies (who may or may not have been fellow countrymen), their immediate families who had accompanied them and other newly recruited teachers.

### Home country nationals

The native population has a key role to play in the adjustment of teachers in their professional roles since as the teachers in the study all worked in the government secondary school system, the majority of parents they would be interacting with would be home country nationals. If there is desensitization of the public to the adjustment stage of the newly recruited expatriate teacher or even the tendency to blame the expatriate teacher for all the ills in the education system, that increasing negative reaction can affect the attitude and performance of the teacher in the classroom. Sadly, those negative feelings can be passed on from parent to child resulting in the negative reaction from the child to the teacher and a lack of parental support for the strategies of the teacher in trying to be effective in the classroom. I believe that more research needs to be done specifically on the views of the home country nationals/the native population when looking at the prevalence of expatriate teachers in the government school system. This will be discussed further when I look at the issues arising around structure and agency and around small island developing states later in this chapter.

## Theoretical Issues

### Structure and/or Agency

The duality of these constructs in social sciences (as described by Giddens, Bourdieu and others) reflect the influence that each has on the adjustment of the expatriate teachers in this study. Bakewell (2010), in his work on structure and agency as they relate to migration theory, describes agency as referring to “the capacity for social actors to reflect on their position, devise strategies and take action to achieve their desires” (p. 1694). The decision to relocate was a conscious and deliberate one by each teacher in this study showing his or her ability to exercise agency in the action taken. The social structure in this context includes the employment situation that is found in the Cayman Islands where there is a need for expatriate teachers in the work force. This is further exacerbated by the sheer number of persons on work permits, versus the number of Caymanians who are unemployed. There is, therefore, in this case study, a causal effect in the reactions from both the native population and the expatriate population that occurs and accounts for the responses related. Hence, in many cases there was a commonality of responses and actions to the situations both at the professional and personal level as demonstrated, for example, by the reactions of teachers to issues of student discipline and in the accounts of personal interactions with the native population. Therefore it can be seen that the social structures of which we had become members in our roles as expatriate teachers shaped or influenced our actions as we adjusted to those societal roles. We all made decisions and employed strategies as to how we would approach the professional and personal aspects of our lives as expatriate teachers in the Cayman Islands and in our interaction with the native population. Another aspect of social structure which may also introduce a new twist is the professional and personal life experiences of the participants *before* they became active participants in this new environment. This was not examined in great detail in this study but does provide another aspect for further research.

However, I did not focus on the actions/reactions of the native Caymanian population to the expatriate teachers and I would advocate this as an avenue for further research. I use the term “native population” to represent all persons with the right to be Caymanian, but I am aware that even within that group there may be some dissonance between persons with generational connections to the islands and those who have attained the right to be Caymanian by virtue of Government decree or length of time residing on the islands (this is discussed extensively in Chapter 2).

### Small Island Developing States/British Overseas Territory

The Cayman Islands fits the criteria to be defined as a small island developing state (SIDS) according to its size of about 55,000 people and its vulnerability to climate issues such as hurricanes as has been mentioned previously. The resulting economic issues and development of small states have been well documented and discussed at various UN conferences, especially as it relates to sustainable development of the SIDS. However, as a British Overseas Territory, the Cayman Islands maintain non-UN status and associate status in regional corporations such as CARICOM. Graham Fisher, in the unpublished doctoral thesis, recognized the complexity of the UK Overseas Territories based on their “micro scale and constitutional status” as he studied post-compulsory education in the Cayman Islands and Montserrat. Researchers, such as Crossley (2010), Baldacchino (2011), and Brock and Crossley (2013) all recognize that there is valuable information that can be gained in comparative studies of the issues in education as they pertain to small states, however, they also advocate for greater recognition of the individual situations that occur in the different countries and they encourage more robust involvement of the native populations in the research processes.

Hualupmomi (2010) referred to globalisation as the “increasing global connectivity, integration and interdependence in the economic, social, technological, cultural, political, and ecological spheres” (p. 6). As discussed in chapter three, the increased activity described has led to the erosion of traditional borders. This has made small island states more vulnerable to the impact of global changes. While recognizing that many small states, like the Cayman Islands do in fact have a high gross domestic product, one must also recognize their economic vulnerability. In the Cayman Islands, the once strong dependence on financial services has been impacted by the negative views expressed of offshore financial centres and tax havens by some leaders in the developed world, especially from the US and European states. Climatic changes such as hurricanes or rising sea levels can have devastating effects on the infrastructure, development and the social interactions. This was evidenced by the impact of Hurricane Ivan in 2004 in Grand Cayman. Rapid innovations in technology have reduced the space and cost of doing business internationally with real time access to world markets and e-commerce. Small island states are not immune. Rather, they have a responsibility to remain current and up-to-date on these global developments in order to stay relevant and in many cases, competitive in the market. Failure to do so would significantly impact the social and economic fabric of the society.

As discussed earlier, the research issues surrounding small island developing states, while not unique, do demonstrate their own complexities which, therefore, require their own focus. Using my research study as an example, while there is literature on the immigration *from* small states in the Caribbean (Appleton, Sives, & Morgan, 2006); Miller, Ochs, & Mulvaney, 2008), there is not much written about migration *into* the small states in the Caribbean and the impact this has on the home country population both economically and socially. This is a key area for further research.

## In retrospect

The impetus for this research study was my questioning the similarity and contrasts between my experience as an expatriate teacher and those of my colleagues. My narrative and lived expatriate experience formed part of the analysed data. As I reflect on my findings and the conclusions to this study, I realize that we really were not that different. There were many common dreams and expectations expressed by the participants and myself. However, our individualities did shine through in terms of how we approached the situations and the challenges that presented themselves. We all needed people around us – the need for the support, especially that sounding board for us to articulate our feeling without fear of recrimination or prejudice was very important. For many who came with families there was an underlying sense of responsibility and of ‘we have to make this work’ whereas for me as a single person, I was in it more for the adventure. As a Trinidadian, I did not have the challenges of my Caribbean Jamaican neighbours, who were dealing with an added prejudice just for being Jamaican in the Cayman society. I actually benefited from the societal fascination with Trinidad and the Carnival. On the other hand, I was not Caucasian nor did I have an American or British accent so that perceived ingrained respect for all things non-Caribbean was not a position I was privileged to hold. Yet, the resilience of all the participants was universal - we all found ways to make it work for us, even if the evidence of it working was different. For me the working meant I was able to enjoy the financial freedom to travel as well as explore and stretch myself in terms of the teaching pedagogy and my use of technology. For others, it would have been to take care of situations back home, to reduce the work flow and professional responsibilities or the opposite – to increase the responsibilities and find more avenues for professional development. The working might be demonstrated in personal growth such as in one’s faith or family relationships or the successful achievement of students as demonstrated by the performance at external examinations. Whatever that working out was, we all had it as a measure of our success and of our desire to remain. When it was no longer working, we would leave.

As a researcher, and as a participant in the research, researching ‘from the inside/outside’ caused me to be sensitive to my role in the research process. I had to continue to work with the participants and relate to them in a professional level and even on a personal level. I had to be sensitive to the fact that I was asking them to share private details of their lives in order for me to gain an academic qualification. But I was also satisfied that all my participants recognized the value of the part of their lives that they were sharing and recognized the benefit and catharsis they were gaining from the reflections as well as the benefit that can be gained by further expatriate teachers as these stories are presented. As an insider I had experienced much of the same issues that were being related to me. However, I had been in the system longer and therefore, I had found ways to adjust and adapt that they would now need to develop for themselves.

As an academic, my eyes have been directed, through this research to the variances of migratory studies and human capacity for adjustment. I have become more interested in the impact of migration and transition on native and migrating populations. The power dynamics that operate in our globalized societies today seem to be ever changing, and as a citizen of a small island developing state who currently lives in a smaller island developing state, the dynamics cannot be ignore. Continuing research in this area of professional study would be one interest I would like to pursue.

## Culmination

This research study initially sought to determine if we, as expatriate teachers, were ‘square pegs’ trying to fit into the ‘round holes’ that represented life in the Cayman Islands. Clearly, even if only for a time, all the participants showed that we were able to adapt and adjust to the overseas posting. We were all able to find the knowledge, the support, and the persons necessary for us to successfully exist and thrive in the Caymanian society. We maintained our goals and used them to measure our accomplishments, in some cases, on a daily basis. Maybe the pegs have been rounded, with the sharp edges being tempered through the interactions with students, colleagues, senior management, parents, and the community. Or maybe the holes have been reshaped by the continued influence of expatriates on the islands.

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# APPENDIX 1

## Screen Captures for Online Survey

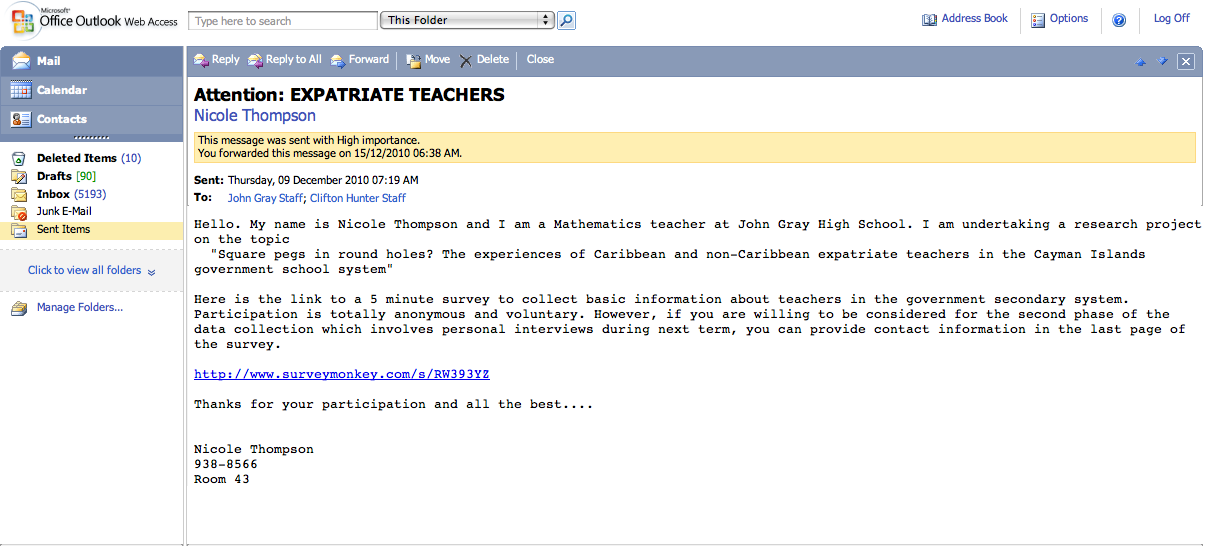
Figure 1: Email to all members of staff 

Figure 2: Online survey cover pageOnline Survey cover page

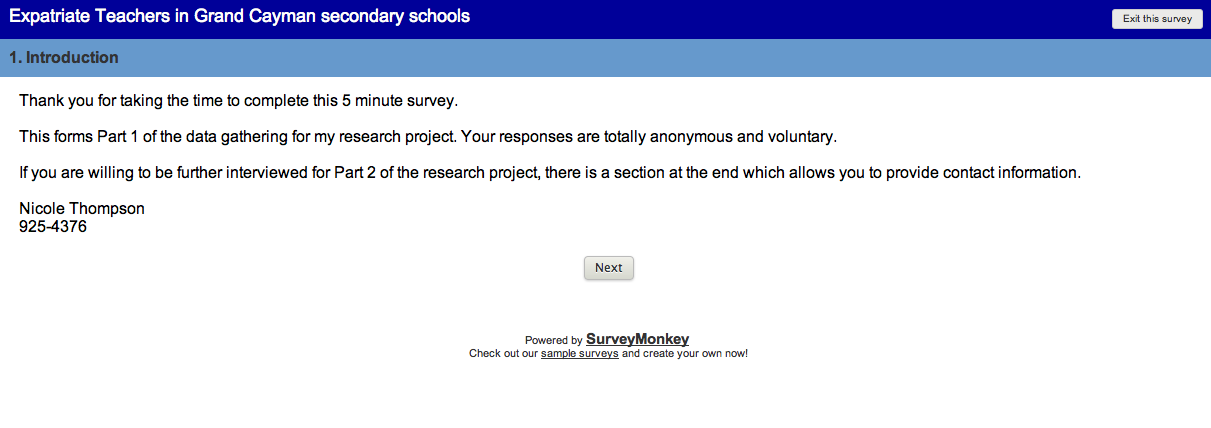
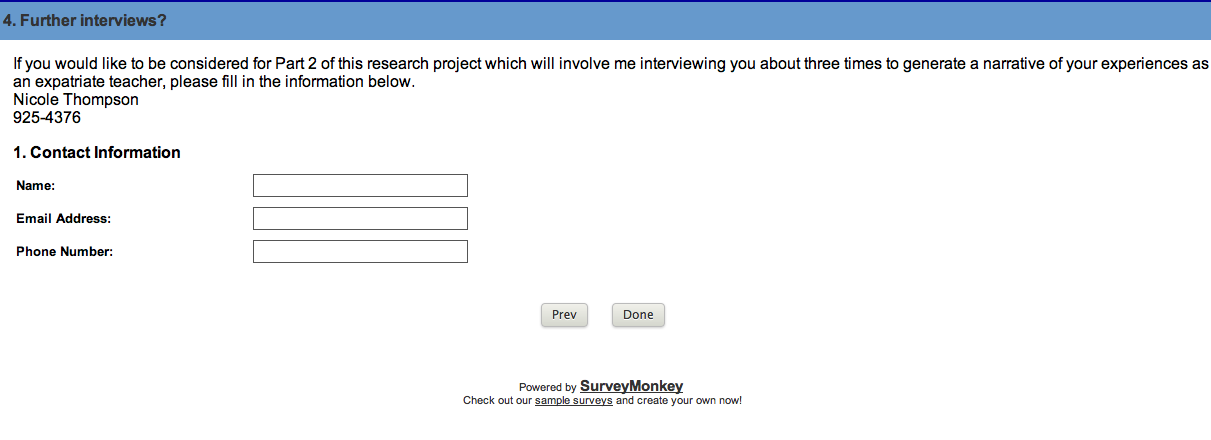


Figure 3: Invitation to participate in interview stage 

# APPENDIX 2

## Online Survey Results

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age range | Country | Car or Non-Car | Years teaching | Years as expat | Years in cayman | Prev country | Subject | Contact |
| 40 - 49 | Jamaica | Caribbean | > 20 | 6 - 10 | 7 - 10 | Jamaica | Humanities | no |
| 20 - 29 | UK | non-Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 1 - 2 | 1 - 2 | UK | Science | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 5 - 6 | 5 - 6 | Jamaica | Spanish | no |
| 40 - 49 | Jamaica | Caribbean | > 20 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | Jamaica | Humanities | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 6 - 10 | 7 - 10 | Jamaica | IT | no |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | UK | English | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | Jamaica | Humanities | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 5 - 6 | 5 - 6 | Jamaica | Business | no |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | UK | Humanities | yes |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | Jamaica | Business | no |
| 30 - 39 | UK | non-Caribbean | 6 - 10 | < 1 | < 1 | UK | Business | no |
| 20 - 29 | Ireland | non-Caribbean | 1 - 5 | 1 - 2 | 1 - 2 | UK | Mathematics | yes |
| 50 - 59 | UK | non-Caribbean | > 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | UK | Lifeskills | no |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | > 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | UK | Mathematics | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 5 - 6 | 3 - 4 | Bahamas | Humanities | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 5 - 6 | 5 - 6 | Jamaica | Science | no |
| 30 - 39 | UK | non-Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 1 - 2 | 1 - 2 | UK |  | no |
| 40 - 49 | Barbados | Caribbean | > 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | Barbados | Business | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | UK | Science | no |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 5 - 6 | < 1 | UK | Drama | yes |
| 50 - 59 | Barbados | Caribbean | > 20 | 10 - 20 | 7 - 10 | Barbados | Mathematics | no |
| 50 - 59 | Trinidad and Tobago | Caribbean | > 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | Trinidad and Tobago | Mathematics | yes |
| 30 - 39 | Trinidad and Tobago | Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 5 - 6 | 5 - 6 | Trinidad and Tobago | Science | yes |
| 50 - 59 | Jamaica | Caribbean | > 20 | > 20 | > 10 | Jamaica | Art | yes |
| 60 - 69 | Canada | non-Caribbean | > 20 | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | Bahamas | SEN | yes |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | Jamaica | Science | Yes (A) |
| 50 - 59 | Jamaica | Caribbean | > 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | Jamaica | Mathematics | yes |
| 50 - 59 | Canada | non-Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | Bahamas | Business | yes |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 6 - 10 | 7 - 10 | Jamaica | English | n |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 16 - 20 | < 1 | < 1 | UK | Drama | yes |
| 50 - 59 | UK | non-Caribbean | > 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | UK | SEN | no |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 5 - 6 | 5 - 6 | UK | SEN | yes |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | Jamaica | Technology | no |
| 30 - 39 | UK | non-Caribbean | 1 - 5 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | UK | Mathematics | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | Jamaica | English | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | Jamaica | IT | yes |
| 40 - 49 | Canada | non-Caribbean | > 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | Canada | ESOL | yes |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | UK | Science | no |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 5 - 6 | 5 - 6 | Jamaica | Mathematics | no |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 5 - 6 | 5 - 6 | UK | Science | yes |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | UK | Mathematics | yes |
| 50 - 59 | Jamaica | Caribbean |  | < 1 | < 1 | Jamaica | Principal | Yes (B) |
| 30 - 39 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 10 - 20 | 5 - 6 | Turks and Caicos | Science | yes |
| 20 - 29 | USA | non-Caribbean | 1 - 5 | 1 - 2 | 1 - 2 |  |  | no |
| 40 - 49 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 1 - 5 | 6 - 10 | 7 - 10 | Jamaica | English | no |
| 40 - 49 | Trinidad and Tobago | Caribbean | 16 - 20 | 10 - 20 | > 10 | Trinidad and Tobago | IT | yes |
| 30 - 39 | UK | non-Caribbean | 11 - 15 | < 1 | < 1 | UK | Humanities | no |
| 50 - 59 | UK |  | > 20 | 5 - 6 | 5 - 6 | Jamaica | English | no |
| 20 - 29 | Honduras |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 40 - 49 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 6 - 10 | 5 - 6 | Jamaica | Business | no |
| 20 - 29 | Jamaica | Caribbean | 1 - 5 | 5 - 6 | 3 - 4 | Bahamas | Mathematics | no |
| 30 - 39 | USA | non-Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | USA | Humanities | yes |
| 30 - 39 | UK | non-Caribbean | 6 - 10 | 3 - 4 | 3 - 4 | UK | IT | no |
| 40 - 49 | UK | non-Caribbean | 11 - 15 | 5 - 6 | 3 - 4 | Jamaica | Humanities | no |

Note: (A) – unable to contact with information provided

(B) – principal so outside the scope of this study

# APPENDIX 3

## Possible interview questions

Part 1:

* *Review information already given in survey about overseas postings and years in teaching service.*
* Describe the school environment you taught in before coming to the Cayman Islands. How satisfied were you in the job?
* Describe your personal satisfaction with life before your CI posting.
* Why did you choose the Cayman Islands? What were the motivating factors? – crime, economy, $value, size, what you heard?
* Describe the recruitment process.
* Describe the orientation/induction process for the teaching position in Grand Cayman.
* Did you find the induction process adequate for your adjustment to the island? Explain.
* Do you find that you have the necessary support to help you to adjust? Explain.

Part 2:

* What do you find to be most challenging since you moved here? Professionally and personally
* What do you find to be most satisfying since you moved here, both professionally and personally?
* What are the most noticeable differences between teaching in Cayman Islands from any other jurisdiction that you have taught in?
* What are the most noticeable difference between living in the Cayman Islands from any other jurisdiction that you have lived in?

Part 3:

* How have the reasons for choosing Cayman been validated? Have they lived up to your expectations?
* How have your experience working in Grand Cayman shaped your professional and personal life?
* How long do you intend to stay in the Cayman Islands?

**A year later** possible interview questions:

* Having reread your previous interview, would you like to add or change anything?
* How do you feel about the professional experience a year later?
* How do you feel about the personal experience a year later?
* How long do you think you will stay in the Cayman Islands?

1. Business Dictionary [www.businessdictionary.com/definition/expatriate.html](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/expatriate.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. From Economics and Statistics Office, www.eso.ky [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Any person who has been legally and ordinarily resident in the Cayman Islands for a period of at least eight years…..may apply to the Chief Immigration Officer/Caymanian Status & Permanent Residency Board for permission for himself, his spouse and his dependants, if any, to reside permanently in the Cayman Islands” www.immigration.gov.ky/portal/page/portal/immhome/livinghere/permanentresidence. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Source [www.eso.ky](http://www.eso.ky). Note: statistics reported correspond with the time period of this case study. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Impact of Hurricane Ivan in the Cayman Islands (2005) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Data from Cayman New Resident, http://www.caymannewresident.com/education-schools-cayman-islands [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. From Impact of Hurricane Ivan in the Cayman Islands [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Short term work permits cover a six months period. Long term work permits are issued for up to 5 years with a maximum term limit of 7 years. While this is the Immigration Law 2003, the application seems quite haphazard when applied to civil servants. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. This is a fixed conversion rate. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The Caribbean has two seasons – the rainy season and the dry season. However, I used the terms ‘winter’ and ‘summer’ to coincide with the temperate climates and seasons. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Grand Cayman does have a public transport minibus system, but it is not extensive and the location of the schools are not included on any of the bus routes. One will have to take a private taxi which is quite expensive. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Includes learning and behavior support staff. Not a typical setting unless the students have specific documented special education needs. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Equivalent to Form 4, aged 14/15. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Equivalent to form 1, ages 10/11 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. There was a new school partially constructed on the compound which has reduced the free and available space for students. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. This was an immigration policy that stated once a person had resided on the island for 7 years continuously, and was not deemed a ‘key employee’ they would have to leave the island for at least 12 months. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. I remember having to collect 25c from each student, and supplement with my own funds to pay for photocopies while a teaching in Trinidad. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The average cost of the shorter flight to Jamaica was about $500 USD round trip per person, while the flight to Miami varied from about $300 – 500 USD and the flight to New York City costs about $400 USD. These are the prices on the national carrier Cayman Airways which is the only airline with direct flights to Jamaica. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Cayman Jazz Festival was an annual event showcasing internationally renowned jazz musicians and performers. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Taste of Cayman is a food exposition featuring the restaurants on the island. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Dominican Republic has an area of 18,704 sq. miles and a population of 9,445,281 (pop. Den. 501.5/sq. mile) with its highest peak over 10,000 feet above sea level; while the Cayman Islands, including Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, has an area of 102 sq. miles and a population of 56,732 (pop. Den. 546/sq. mile) and a mostly flat terrain. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)