

The University of Sheffield



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**Perceptions of the Education Officer's Role
in the Education System in Barbados**

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Abstract

School inspection as a tool for monitoring public education has a long history in the Caribbean having been practised from the time of colonial rule. Although school inspection has been widely researched, the focus has largely been on the relationship between inspection and school improvement as well as on accountability. However, less attention has been devoted to highlighting the role of the key personnel who conduct the monitoring on behalf of Ministries of Education.

In this thesis, I explored perceptions of the education officer's role in supervision and inspection of education in Barbados. I argue that lack of clarity of the education officer's role, changes in policy over the last fifty years which resulted in changes in the structure of the education system, and the influence of the plantation society and economy have impacted perceptions of the education officer's role. These occurrences may have rendered the officer's role and the supervision and inspection process less effective.

Qualitative methods, consisting of semi-structured interviews and document analysis, were used to collect data for the study. Twelve (12) persons from three levels of Barbados' education system (primary and secondary schools, and the Ministry of Education) were selected based on their involvement in the monitoring process to comprise the study's non-probability purposive sample. Through the use of a grounded theory approach, the participants' responses were examined and analysed for emerging theories as well as recurring themes.

Based on my interpretation of the findings of the study, I concluded that perceptions of the education officer's role were both positive and negative across the three groups of participants. Additionally, slight differences were found in the perceptions of teachers at the primary and secondary levels and between teachers, principals and education officers. Furthermore, I found that there is a lack of clarity of the education officer's role.

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List of Abbreviations

HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
T&T	Trinidad and Tobago
UK	United Kingdom
SSE	School Self- Evaluation

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 My Interest

I am a proud product of the education system of Barbados. My primary education began at St. Bartholomew's Primary School in 1968. I received my secondary education at Girls' Foundation School, a Second Grade school which prepared me for Oxford and Cambridge, and London Certificate of Education examinations from 1973 to 1980. On graduation from secondary school, I determined that I wanted to pursue a teaching career. In my pursuit of becoming a teacher, I attended Erdiston Teachers' Training College before moving on to the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, where I pursued undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications. I have therefore been fortunate to participate in and benefit from the education system at all levels available in my country.

My experience as a former teacher at the primary level of the education system in Barbados and that of being an education officer in the Ministry of Education for the past ten years, has afforded me the opportunity to experience external supervision from two perspectives. As a teacher in a primary school, I recall being on the receiving end of harsh words of criticism by a small number of visiting education officers, who demonstrated their power and authority. I also remember the air of tension which existed when teachers learnt that an education officer was visiting the school. I was, however, thankful that these kinds of officers were in the minority and that this authoritative approach to supervision was balanced by that of other officers who told me when they disagreed with my administrative and pedagogical approaches but did so in a more supportive and humane way. These negative and positive experiences helped to shape my perception of external supervision.

When I became an education officer and my roles were reversed, I was faced with deciding what form my practice would take. Having received no formal training, counselling or initiation for the role I was expected to fulfil, I set about crafting my own practice. I must confess that over the years I have had occasions when, because of the nature of the situation, I was required to adopt an authoritative stance in the execution of my duties. However, this approach was always balanced by the use of a supportive and developmental approach since I am of the view that one of my roles is to ensure that the teachers whom I supervise benefit from their interaction with me. I wanted to influence the teachers positively in the hope that the students would be the ultimate beneficiaries.

My decision to conduct research into perceptions of the education officer's role came about as a result of my experiences while visiting schools and while interacting with principals and teachers. Generally, my experiences were good. However, there were times when my experiences were stressful and undesirable as I perceived that I was intruding into unwelcome territory. Thus, when the opportunity arose for me to pursue a Doctorate in Educational Studies, I had no difficulty making a decision about the topic I wanted to investigate since I thought it was imperative for me to find out how teachers and principals felt about the role of education officers.

1.2 The Significance of the Research

My research investigates teachers', principals' and education officers' perceptions of the education officer's role within the context of the education system in Barbados. The research will be of interest to various groups because at present, no study exists on the perceptions of education officers, principals and teachers about external inspection, supervision and monitoring of the Barbados education system and the education officer's role in the process. The impetus for conducting research in this area comes from my experiences working as an education officer in Barbados. In this role I visit schools to

monitor the implementation of policies which address curriculum and assessment practices.

I look forward to these visits during which I get many opportunities to interact with teachers and principals, observe practices, and have discussions with them regarding matters of pedagogy and student performance. I also have opportunities to make recommendations when necessary. Additionally, very often there are tensions in the relationships between principals and education officers and between teachers and education officers. These tensions, which are manifested in subtle as well as overt ways, are demonstrated through the use of aggressive tones, disregard for recommendations made, avoidance, and in some instances, outright refusal to allow education officers to enter classrooms.

It is important for Education Officers to try to find out whether structural tensions do exist between the personnel at the Ministry of Education and the management and teachers in the primary and secondary schools. Additionally, the way in which staff in the schools view education officers and their role in the system, may impact negatively on the education officer's job and effectiveness, on teacher satisfaction and student performance, as well as on the overall effectiveness of the Ministry of Education. Thirdly, structural tensions as against frictional tensions can lead educators and members of the general public to question the relevance of the education officer's role.

Furthermore, I explored some of the literature on the subject of external school supervision and inspection and discovered that there is a dearth of research in this area in the Caribbean (Case, Case & Catling, 2000; Lefstein, 2013; Ehren and Visscher, 2006; London, 2004; Macnab, 2001). It is my view that my research, being exploratory, will contribute to knowledge in the field of educational supervision and management. I am also confident that the findings of my study will be of interest to the Ministry of Education and may be used to inform future policies on external monitoring of education in Barbados.

Education systems seem to be in a constant flux as governments implement policy changes which are considered to be beneficial to the education sector. Monitoring personnel, by virtue of their role, are invariably affected by these changes which also impact the principals and teachers in the schools. I think, therefore, that it is important to know how the education officer's role is viewed by inspectors, supervisors and education officers.

1.3 About this Chapter

In Chapter One I introduce you to my research by explaining why I am interested in investigating the topic, the significance of the research, and how the research was conducted. Additionally, I discuss the historical context of the study, the role of educational reform and the organizational structure of the education system in Barbados. Chapter One also includes my justification for conducting the research, the research questions, an overview of the methodology I employed, the limitations of the study, as well as an outline of the structure of the thesis.

1.4 Historical Context

This section presents a brief history of Barbados, traces the development of education and highlights the connections between the island and Britain. Barbados, which is a small-island vulnerable developing state, is located in the eastern Caribbean. The island was settled by the English from 1627, during a period of expansion and colonialism which saw several other Caribbean and mainland American outposts established. Through all the wars of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries between Britain, Spain, Holland and France over the colonies in the area, Barbados never changed hands as was the case with the other islands. Instead, the island remained a British colony until November 30, 1966 when it gained Independence. The British influence has permeated the political, social and economic fabric of the island and even though Barbados is no longer a colony, it is sometimes still referred to as 'Little

England'. Today, Barbados enjoys cordial relationships with the British and maintains the Monarch of Britain as its Head of State.

During the early years of settlement, families who could afford it sent their children to England for their education, sometimes to the level of university. The planters' high respect for education was evident in the choices they made. In many instances their children attended Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh universities which were established at the time, and furthered their studies at the Inns of Court. On their return to the island, the children of planter families generally functioned as barristers and lawyers. For the lesser endowed, however, education was provided by the clergy and a class of licensed teachers emerged. Gradually, through philanthropy, a number of schools were provided mainly for poor male white children. The general education of Blacks was neglected for many years. In the 17th century the Quakers attempted to introduce slaves to religious education but this was defeated by the planters who were mainly Anglicans. It was only in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century that non-denominational churches like the Methodists and the Moravians attempted to provide some education for the Blacks. This was accepted by the planters who did not see this education as a threat to the economic system of slavery.

It was not until Emancipation became imminent, and especially after the appointment of the first British Anglican Bishop of Barbados and the Windward Islands in 1825, that a serious attempt was mounted to establish Chapel Schools in Barbados. This was buttressed by the Negro Education Grant of 1833 which provided funds for 'the expressed purpose of the education of the emancipated people' (Jemmott & Carter, 1993, p. 41). While slavery was officially abolished in 1834, a period of apprenticeship existed between 1834 and 1838 to prepare the former slaves for entrance into a free society.

The presence of the British settlers in Barbados left several legacies which can be seen in the social, political and economic fabric of the island. With reference to the legacy of education, the British presence resulted in many of their management structures and cultural practices being entrenched during the

period of colonization. Although these structures and practices may not be a feature of the modern British educational system, many of them, including a hierarchical bureaucratic management structure, are still apparent in Barbados today.

Over the years, successive governments, both during the post-colonial period and after independence, placed education high on the country's development agenda. Education was and is still viewed as critical for the development of the island's human resources, especially in light of the fact that the island is devoid of natural resources. Because the education of Barbadians is so important to development, national leaders always recognised the need to improve the educational system, as a platform for the economic, social and political development of the country. Education has been separated from technical and vocational training, the latter being less emphasised than the former.

1.5 Establishment of an Inspectorate

This research is rooted in the context of a historical, evolutionary approach to educational supervision, inspection and monitoring, so that the philosophy and strategic intent which guided the establishment of an inspectorate by the Ministry of Education in Barbados could be explored. Additionally, I examined the kinds of legislative frameworks that were created to legitimize the operations of the inspectorate, as well as changes which occurred and the reasons advanced for the changes. Thirdly, a careful analysis is made of documents to gather information on the roles and responsibilities of education officers to determine what, if any, changes in the education officer's role have occurred over time.

Following emancipation in the 1830s the British Caribbean islands structured their education systems after those of the metropolis and in turn adopted many British practices for monitoring their education systems and institutions (De Grauwe, 2009). In the case of Barbados, the rapid expansion of educational opportunities and infrastructure as well as increasing expenditure on education

led to the passing of the first Education Act in 1850 and the establishment of a Board of Education. One hundred years later, in 1950, the Ministry of Education was established (Jemmott & Carter, 1993). Among the posts which were created during the early developmental years were a Director of Education, a Chief Inspector and a cadre of junior inspectors (Ministry of Education, 2010).

In Barbados, the first Education Act of 1850 established an Education Committee with a part-time School Inspector (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 1995, p.10). An examination of documents which traced the history of the development of education in Barbados revealed successive Education Acts (1858, 1962, 1975, 1983) which indicate a change in the post of inspector from part-time to full-time officer; to Director of Education and later to Chief Education Officer when the Department of Education was integrated with the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 1995). Education Reports from as early as the 1850s provide evidence of the duties of school inspectors which included monitoring the instructional and managerial practices of school staff, reporting on the performance of all teachers as well as monitoring and reporting on the spending of funds and on the condition of the school plants (Ministry of Education, 2010).

It is not surprising that a monitoring system was put in place, since, like any good manager, the imperial government was concerned with achieving value for money and sought to ensure that funds allocated to education were being spent wisely and effectively to improve educational opportunities and success for all. Thus, over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as Caribbean countries developed economically and socially, increased attention was focused on expanding educational opportunities as well as on improving the quality of education provided to citizens. Initially, the primary schools' teaching personnel were class monitors, followed by Pupil Teachers, then graduates of secondary schools, until the era of trained teachers and University graduates. As teachers changed and became better qualified, so did their supervisors.

It was within a context of monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education that a series of investigations were carried out under the direction of the imperial government. In Barbados, these investigations, included those conducted by the Mitchinson Commission of 1876, and the Marriott Mayhew Commission of 1932, which provided the impetus for the establishment of educational policy, the publishing of an Education Act, the creation of an Education Board and the appointment of a Director of Education (Jemmott & Carter, 1993, p. 47-48).

As the structure of the education system evolved, the delineation of the administrative and technical sections of the Ministry of Education became more distinct. The administrative structure was headed by the Permanent Secretary who had responsibility for administrative and financial matters. The technical division was headed by the Chief Education Officer who was given responsibility for informing the government on professional matters. Education Officers, who fell under the direct responsibility of the Chief Education Officer, were given responsibility for recommending persons to be hired at the primary level of the system, designing the national curricula and monitoring the implementation of the ministry's policies in the schools. In fact, the department of the Ministry of Education which was assigned responsibility for managerial aspects of the schools was named the Schools' Supervision and Inspection Section (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 1995, p. 16).

Thus, during the 1990s, the function of the department which was given responsibility for monitoring administrative and managerial practices in schools was explicit in the department's name. Furthermore, the department which has responsibility for monitoring managerial and administrative practices in Nursery and Primary Schools is now named the Nursery and Primary Schools Section. With respect to secondary schools, monitoring is done by the education officers in the Secondary Schools Section. As can be seen, the contemporary names of these departments of the Ministry of Education do not state the monitoring function explicitly.

Over the years the roles and responsibilities of the education officers evolved and in contrast to those mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the duties of current education officers feature both control and support components. This is exemplified in a Circular published by the Ministry of the Civil Service (Chief Personnel Officer, 2012) which outlines the following roles and responsibilities of an education officer:

- Monitors the implementation of educational policies and initiatives in management structures, curriculum and provision of students' services.
- Plans and organises workshops and programmes to enhance the work of Principals and Teachers.
- Functions as Tutors and Coaches for Principals and Teachers.
- Reports on the performance of Principals and Teachers.
- Advises on the recommendation of acting appointments for Principals and Teachers, and
- Represents the Ministry on Boards of Management (p. 2).

As can be seen, education officers are currently not only required to monitor key aspects of the education system, they are also required to perform the role of trainers, tutors and coaches. These functions clearly epitomise the supportive role of the officers.

1.6 Reform and Policy - British and Barbadian Perspectives

I believe that the role of the education officer must also be understood within the context of reform and the implementation of policies which articulate a framework for both the legality of the role and the day to day responsibilities of those appointed to fulfil the role. I have decided to include some perspectives on reform of the education system in the United Kingdom (UK); firstly because of the similarities between that system and the education system in Barbados and secondly because the UK and Barbados share a long history of political, social and economic connections.

In the UK the expansion of government funded public education resulted in the appointment of the first Inspector of Schools in 1839, just thirteen (13) years before the same was introduced in Barbados. According to Case et al. (2000) the role of the inspector was ‘to inspect to ensure that the money the government was beginning to invest in education was being used effectively’ (p. 608). This development seemed to have initiated a pattern of change which can also be traced in the development and focus of monitoring systems in the education arena in the United Kingdom. Case, Case and Catling (2000, p. 608) also report that the perceptions of the inspectors’ role seem to have changed during the 1840s and 1850s. While initially the inspectors were viewed as ‘mere functionaries’, later in the 1850s and 1860s they were regarded as ‘autonomous professionals giving their expert advice’.

Change also occurred at the legislative level. Several initiatives were implemented during the late nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth century such as the 1862 Revised Code, the repeal of the Revised Code in 1895, and the establishment of the non-governmental department of the Office for Standards in Education in 1992 (OFSTED). These initiatives and other legislation which followed created a framework for monitoring, management and development of the education system in the United Kingdom.

Evidence suggests (Case, et al., 2000) that the expectations for OFSTED and its role differed between the national authorities, and the school personnel. It is also important to note that prior to OFSTED there was the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) which operated differently, and whose advisors’ job was to develop and improve teachers and the education system. The advent of OFSTED in the early 1990s with its inspectoral focus placed the work of the Local Education Authorities in jeopardy (Evans & Penney, 1994).

At the level of the government, inspection was viewed as a tool for ensuring greater accountability for the monetary investment in education. However, the perception among the schools seems to have differed over whether inspection should be about accountability or about enabling the professional development of the teachers. These differences in opinion may have contributed to levels of

uncertainty and to the development of negative perceptions of inspection during the 1980s and 1990s in the United Kingdom. Reports of fear, anxiety, stress, poor self-image and apathy among teachers as a result of their experiences with inspection (Case, et al., 2000, Ouston, Brian & Earley, 1997) suggest that the inspection process may have been viewed by teachers as being more detrimental than helpful to them and to the teaching/learning process.

By comparison, the education landscape in Barbados also experienced its fair share of reforms over the years. Reforms can be traced from early in the twentieth century up to the current period of this study. As Barbados initiated preparation for the coming of the twenty-first century, reforms continued in the education sector with the aim of preparing the country for the changes which were expected to occur, especially in the field of technology.

With a shift in focus from ‘providing access to education’ to the ‘provision of quality education’, the Government of Barbados started the process of implementing what were described by the Minister of Education at the time as ‘sweeping reforms’ which covered areas such as the curriculum, teacher training and capacity building in the Ministry of Education. The 1995 White Paper on Education Reform includes among its major objectives ‘strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture to plan, manage and evaluate the education system more effectively’ (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 1995, p. 3). It is also worthy of note that these reforms were intended to include ‘other consequential measures that will see a change in the role of the Education Officer and a further devolution of management responsibility to the schools’ (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture 1995, p. 15). It therefore appears that there was an intention to craft a different path for the education officer’s role.

1.7 The Structure of the Ministry of Education – Location and Role of Education Officer

In this section I provide an understanding of the location of the education officer and analyse the role of the education officer within the context of the organisational structure of the Ministry of Education and the wider Public Service System in which education is located. Despite the changes which were influenced by the various investigations and the findings of the 1876 and 1932 Commissions, the education system in Barbados remained hierarchical in structure and comprised both an administrative and a professional branch. The organisational structure of the Professional Branch features four categories of officers: Chief Education Officer, Deputy Chief Education Officer, Senior Education Officer and Education Officer. The organisational structure of the Ministry of Education includes the posts of Principal and Deputy Principal -Secondary School, which are ranked higher than the post of Senior Education Officer and Principal-Primary School, which is ranked at the same level as that of Senior Education Officer, and at the lower levels of the system are the teachers, some of whom hold posts such as Head of Department, Year Head and Senior Teacher in the secondary schools. In the structure of the Civil Service, the post of education officer is classified below that of principal at a primary school.

The education officer's role can be analysed within the structure of the professional branch of the Ministry of Education which is headed by the Chief Education Officer. An examination of the statement of duties outlined in the 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations, CAP. 41, which form part of the Laws of Barbados, can lead to the conclusion that the education officer is an 'agent' of the Chief Education Officer who is an agent of the Ministry of Education. As such, when education officers visit the schools to fulfil the duties assigned to them, they act on the behalf of the Chief Education Officer. This principal-agent relationship described by Shapiro (2005) is exemplified in several sections of the education regulations where the roles and responsibilities of the education officer are subsumed under those of the Chief Education Officer and those of the Minister of Education.

It is of interest to me that the 1995 White Paper on Education Reform devoted two pages to the government's intention to initiate strengthening of the department of government charged with the responsibility for managing education in Barbados (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 1995). As was mentioned previously, it was the Ministry of Education's intention to change the role of the education officer. However, the structure and details of this change were not articulated and thus the officers seem to have continued to function in the same capacity as their predecessors.

While examining Education Reports for the period 1916-1971 (Ministry of Education, 2010), I discovered the use of terms such as 'supervision' and 'inspection' to describe the activities which fall under the responsibility of the education officer. The duties outlined suggest that the education officer's role involves exercising 'control' of funds, personnel and managerial and administrative processes as well as 'providing support' and 'coaching' designed to promote the development of teachers. Similar stipulations recorded in the 1975 Education Act state that the Chief Education Officer or his or her delegate 'shall inspect any public educational institution or private school to give assistance and guidance to teachers, to advise head teachers or principals and to report on each institution to the controlling authority and to the Minister' (Government of Barbados, 1975, p. 58). The 1983 Education Act and Regulations (Government of Barbados, 1983) which was published less than ten years later, informs that any education officer may visit a school to 'inspect the premises, give advice, assist and be consulted on several matters including the use of the national curriculum, improving the efficiency of teachers and how pupils and teachers are assessed' (p. 26-27).

It is noteworthy that the word 'control' is not used in the more recent document but that 'inspection' is expected to be among the duties of the education officer. However, inspection is used with specific reference to the school premises and not the school personnel. The duties mentioned above not only provide examples of the multi-faceted nature of the education officer's role, but can be interpreted as including more developmental practices which included supervision, support, coaching and even control. In this context I use

the term 'control' to refer to the process of ensuring that education programmes are followed and goals are achieved. Additionally, I perceive exercising control as a way of ensuring accountability which can also contribute to the effectiveness of the education system.

Reference was made earlier to the intention of the Ministry of Education, as stated in the 1995 White Paper on Education Reform, to change the role of the education officer. It seems to me that from the early 1980s, as indicated by the 1983 Education Act, that the Ministry of Education had begun to focus on transforming the role of the education officer from a 'control authoritative' role to one which emphasised the 'development' of teachers. However, it is my opinion that by 1995 when reforms were being implemented in the education system, an opportunity to clearly articulate this intention was missed. The Ministry of Education also failed to put the necessary framework in place for the transition to take effect.

1.8 Research Questions

My general research question then is: What are the perceptions of teachers, principals and education officers about the role of the education officer in Barbados? In order to answer this question appropriately, six related questions were designed at the outset of the research. However, as the research unfolded and the data were collected and analysed, the original questions were re-examined and broken down into more specific components to aid comparison (Agee, 2009). The following questions were subsequently chosen to help me explore and understand the education officer's role:

1. How is the education officer's role perceived by teachers and principals?
2. How is the education officer's role perceived by education officers?
3. What differences, if any, are there between the perceptions of education officers and those of teachers?
4. What differences, if any, are there between how teachers at different levels of the education system perceive education officers?
5. How do education officers view their position in the education structure?

6. How do principals and teachers view the position of the education officer in the education structure?

1.9 Research Methodology – An Overview

I am a qualitative researcher who holds the view that valuing and presenting the voices and opinions of the people in society is pertinent to the process of conducting social research. Thus, in keeping with my constructivist ontological and interpretivist epistemological perspective I decided to use a qualitative approach for my investigation. The research was, therefore, guided by an interpretivist/constructivist theoretical perspective which according to Howe (2001) views 'knowledge, particularly in social research, as actively constructed- as culturally and historically grounded, as laden with moral and political values, and as serving certain interests and purposes' (p. 202).

Semi-structured interviews and a grounded theory approach were used to make sense of the data collected. Grounded theory has been described as a research method which involves the use of flexible analytic procedures that allow researchers to focus their data and to build theories through the process of making comparisons, coding and using memos (Charmaz, 2011; Greckhamer & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005). Once the themes were identified, a process of thematic analysis was employed to help me understand what emerged from the data and how these emergent themes compared with themes identified in the literature.

I envisaged that the use of the methodology and method selected, which complement each other, would allow for a critical examination of the evolution of educational supervision and monitoring as a managerial system. Additionally, it would provide an understanding of how the education officers, who are pertinent to the functioning and effectiveness of this system, are valued and perceived by other education personnel. Furthermore, the interview method selected aided in the collection of details about the perceptions of teachers, principals and education officers. These details were

examined and used to determine whether there are differences among the teachers and principals across the levels of the education system. To this end, teachers and principals from the primary and secondary levels as well as senior and junior education officers were included in the sample. Additional details about my research design and methodology have been provided in chapter five.

1.10 Limitations

Due to the size of the sample used, it is difficult to make generalisations to the wider population in the education system. Additionally, care was taken about making judgements on whether there are differences between perceptions in different sectors of the education system. My aim, however, is to understand the perceptions of some individuals who are involved in the system.

Secondly, the lack of research on this topic in Barbados and the wider Caribbean necessitated that I look outside of the region to find literature which is relevant. As a result, there is a heavy reliance on information from the United Kingdom, Europe, Africa and North America to provide a framework for the thesis and the data analysis.

1.11 Structure of the Thesis

My thesis comprises seven chapters. Chapter One, the introductory chapter, acts as an entrée and prepares for the main course by setting the background for my research. It also includes a statement of the problem, a history of education in Barbados, the development of an inspectorate in the island, the organisational structure of the Ministry of Education, justification for the study, limitations of the study and an overview of my research methodology and design. The second chapter examines external monitoring of education in Barbados within the context of policies and reforms and discusses the role of the education officer in the twentieth century and in contemporary times. This chapter also helps to illuminate the legal framework which guides external

monitoring of education in Barbados. Chapter Three sets out the theoretical framework on which my research is built. In this chapter, Foucault's concept of power and surveillance in education, Weber's concept of bureaucracy, Lavia's concept of plantation pedagogy, as well as Ball's and Perryman's concept of performativity in education are explored. Chapter Four examines the literature on school inspection and supervision as well as the perceptions of this form of monitoring to provide a synthesis of methodological approaches, analytical approaches, and the findings of research in my field of study. This chapter also includes a discussion of three models of inspection, factors that affect school inspection and perceptions of school inspection. Chapter Five explains the choice of methodology, methods and research design, presents the methods used to ensure quality and discusses how ethical issues are treated. In Chapter Six, the research data is presented and analysed in conjunction with the findings in relation to the research questions. The final chapter, Chapter Seven, summarises and discusses the major findings, outlines my conclusions and provides suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

Policies, Reforms and External Monitoring of Education in Barbados

2.1 Introduction

In Barbados, governance in the public sector is regulated by the enactment of laws and regulations which help to ensure that systems operate efficiently and effectively to achieve the goals of departments of government and the overall national goals. Periodically, governments through the various ministries, implement reforms in different sectors. Reforms generally occur when it has been decided that improvements are necessary. Reforms, especially in the public sector, may also be triggered by circumstances which occur outside of a country and which forces a country to make changes in order to remain competitive and to meet specified criteria stipulated by international agencies. The implementation of reforms can also be interpreted to mean that structures and practices which were in place previously are deemed not to be as effective as they were in the past.

This chapter expands the discussion about the historical and policy perspectives provided in the introductory chapter. In furtherance of this, I outline the procedure for the monitoring of education in Barbados in the post-emancipation period as well as in the post-independence period. Additionally, I establish the legal parameters of the education officer's role and discuss the evolution of the role to determine the level of importance which was given to the post of education officer. The discussion in this chapter also highlights some of the changes which occurred over the years.

To help me accomplish the tasks mentioned above, I examined several documents which include Education Reports for the periods 1898, 1916-1940, 1944-1963, and 1969-1971; the Education Act and Regulations CAP. 41, 1850, 1981, 1983; and The Barbados Advocate Newspaper 1937.

Immediately after the emancipation of slavery in 1834, provision was made in Barbados for the education of the newly freed population. The task of administering education initially became the responsibility of the various religious denominations which existed in the island at the time. The work of the Anglican Church is especially notable during this period as under the leadership of the first Anglican Bishop of Barbados, Reverend William Hart Coleridge, the number of church schools increased from eight in 1825 to one hundred and fifty-five by 1834, the year that emancipation was granted. The era of predominantly church schools ended in 1850 with the passing of the first Education Act which made provision for a formal system of public education (Jemmott & Carter, 1993, pp. 40-42). According to the 1850 Education Act the political directorate of the day 'deemed it expedient to promote and provide for a more extensive and general education of the people' (Government of Barbados, 1846, p. 458). Simultaneously, a structure for external monitoring of education as a means of providing and maintaining the quality of teaching and learning was also established. The 1850 Act also directed the Education Committee to appoint 'some fit and proper person to be Inspector of Schools such appointment to be assented to by the Bishop of the Diocese' (p. 459). Monitoring of public education by a system of inspection and supervision has been in practice in Barbados since the 1850s.

During the early years, the public education system in Barbados was administered by an Education Committee. In addition to the political appointees, this committee consisted of an inspector of schools, and two assistant inspectors, one senior and one junior; all of whom were British expatriates (Education Board, 1898). The head teachers, also British expatriates, were assisted by Barbadian teachers, many of whom were recruited under the Pupil-Teacher system.

2.2 Monitoring and Perceptions of the Early Inspector's Role

Education Reports dating from as early as 1889 to the early 1970s were scrutinised to trace the development of monitoring in the education system in Barbados, to ascertain what monitoring entailed, to highlight the role of inspectors, as they were called then, and to discover what significant changes occurred over the period for which reports are available. The Education Reports suggest that the practice of monitoring education in Barbados has a long history. Additionally, the provision of written reports to the Education Committee and then the Education Board, which functioned as the central authority for education, is a further indication that persons held the responsibility for informing about the outcome of their monitoring of the schools.

As the number of elementary students and schools increased during the late 1800s and the early 1900s, so too did the number of inspectors. Subsequently, the Education Act of 1878 established a new post of Sub-Inspector whose main duty was 'the inspection and examination of the Infant Schools' (Carter, 2005, p. 3). By 1890 when a new Education Act was passed, the school inspectorate in Barbados had increased from two to three officers- an Inspector of Schools, an Assistant Inspector (formerly the Sub-Inspector) and an Inspector's Assistant. During the nineteenth century the duties of school inspectors remained relatively unchanged from what they were previously with continued focus on ensuring that elementary schools adhered to the curriculum, conducting inspection of school buildings and instruction, enquiring about the attendance of students and administering examinations to students.

During the nineteenth century, monitoring by inspection was not only extensive, but also served to hold teachers accountable to the Education Committee. Inspection took the form of day-to-day supervision and annual inspections and entailed visiting the schools, examining documents and the premises, monitoring health and sanitation, monitoring the curriculum, and evaluating the teaching and the administrative practices of head-teachers and

teachers. Additionally, two other important duties were carried out by the Inspector of Schools; monitoring and recording students' attendance and administering end of year examinations to students in the elementary schools which received financial aid from the government. The latter two duties were critical since the information collected by the inspectors formed the basis for calculating teachers' salaries and for determining the amount of money to be allocated to each school. The Inspector of Schools was also mandated to 'make special reports to the Education Committee on any matter connected with the schools' (Education Act, 1850, p. 458).

According to the 1916 Education Report the nomenclature of inspector was assigned to the persons given responsibility for the maintenance of buildings as well as for monitoring pedagogical and administrative practices in the schools. Evidence suggests that the teachers' reaction to the inspection process and to the inspectors was often less than welcoming. Negative views about the inspectors were often expressed in different fora. Evidence of this was found in an inspector and assistant inspector's report to the Education Board in 1916:

Wherever possible we aim at giving a complete year between one year's inspection and the next. Now that the payment of teachers is much less dependent on the results of the examination day we are sure that there is less cramming and that the Inspector's visit on that day is more acceptable than it used to be. It is not looked forward to with fear and trembling ...
(p. 4).

Further evidence was found in one of the island's newspapers. An interested Taxpayer (1937, p.18) in a letter written to the editor of The Barbados Advocate Newspaper also provides evidence of negative perceptions of the inspector's role. This letter-writer, while sharing views on the subject of the hiring of a Barbadian for the post of inspector, stated that the person to be hired should not be 'a detective coming into their schools and handling men and women as children'. The same letter-writer described the school inspectors as 'chiefly fault-finders' and persons who often adopted 'the slave-master attitude.' It appears that the early inspectors' execution of control and surveillance was resented and that it was anticipated that having a local

educator in this position would bring a different approach to the monitoring process and ultimately a change in the negative perceptions held by teachers. The comments outlined above also provide evidence to support my view that the application of 'bureaucratic' practices and 'plantation pedagogy' within the context of monitoring, influenced the perceptions and relationships of those persons being monitored.

2.3 Monitoring and Perceptions of the Inspector's Role in the Twentieth Century

In contrast to the practices of the nineteenth century, the school inspection regime which was operational during the twentieth century, entailed schools being visited at least once each term by an Inspector. During these termly visits, inspectors examined school buildings and grounds, observed instruction, examined attendance (teachers and students) and financial records, and reported on all aspects of the school's life.

The 1940 Education Report (p. 6) indicates that as a result of information collected during a school inspection that year and results of the annual examination, the Education Board awarded Certificates of Merit for excellence of school work to twenty-two Head-Teachers. Whether these awards were based on merit or on favour cannot be determined since no evidence of the criteria used for selection was found in the reports. With reference to the secondary schools which were governed by Boards of Management, the inspectors visited the schools and reported on enrolment, student performance in external examinations, and granting of scholarship awards (Education Board, 1940, p. 8). It seems that inspectors were not as involved in the day to day operations of the secondary schools.

The Education Reports and Education Acts examined support my conclusion that during the early period of the establishment of a public education system in Barbados, the inspectors were deeply involved in the operations of the schools. Their presence and involvement, especially in the elementary schools

which catered to the needs of children up to the age of eight, may be indicative of the perceived need for close monitoring and support for the education system which at the time employed a significant number of untrained and under qualified persons as Pupil Teachers and Honorary Pupil-Teachers (Education Board, 1916). Under the Pupil-Teacher system, which was based on the 1846 British Pupil-Teacher System (Rapple, 1992), head-teachers would select the brightest students in the class and prepare them to assist in class teaching. Pupil-teachers were examined over a four-year period at the end of which they would receive a certificate qualifying them to be assistant teachers on successful completion of the examination (Carter, 2005).

It appears that from the outset of the organisation of an education system in Barbados, a central authority was established to monitor education. The Education Act of 1850 established a School Inspectorate. The Act of 1890 gave the Department of Education both direct and indirect control of the various levels of the education system. Through the School Inspectorate more direct control was exercised over the elementary schools with the assistance of the Board of Managers. With respect to the Aided Secondary schools, the Department of Education and the Director of Education not only exercised indirect control over expenditure with the assistance of the Governing Bodies but had the power to appoint Heads of secondary schools, had responsibility for the curricula and had the authority to conduct inspections in the schools (Education Board, 1950).

The decade of the 1940s was a period of significant change in the education system in Barbados. As a direct result of the recommendations of the West India Royal Commission in 1945, also known as the Moyne Commission, legislative changes were implemented (Secretary of State, 1945). These changes resulted in the Education Committee which was appointed under the 1850 Education Act, being renamed the Education Board. Additionally, the post of Director of Education was created under the Education (Amendment) Act 1943-3. Accordingly, the Education Board became a consultative and advisory body with responsibility for reporting to the Director of Education

(Education Board, 1940; 1957). Other changes included the expansion of the Department of Education by the establishment of additional posts for the inspectorate. While the earlier posts of inspector were assigned to the overall management of the schools, the new posts of inspectors were subject specific. As a result of this expansion of the education inspectorate the following posts were added: Inspector of Domestic Subjects, Inspector of Handicrafts; and Inspector of Infant Methods (Education Board, 1949-50). These educational reforms occurred at a time when the prevailing social and economic conditions in Barbados warranted an increase in access to and availability of quality education.

As the decades of the 1960s and 1970s evolved, the organisational structure of the ministerial agency responsible for monitoring the education system experienced several changes. The introduction of Ministerial Government in 1954, initiated among other things, the appointment of a Minister of Education, and the creation of a Ministry of Education which comprised both administrative and professional staff. Among the established professional posts created during this period were those of Chief Education Officer, Deputy Chief Education Officer, and Senior Education Officer. The nomenclature of inspector which was used previously for all professional persons was retained for a few specialist posts such as Inspector of Nutrition, Inspector of Domestic Subjects and Inspector of Infant Methods (Ministry of Education, 1960 - 1963).

As the education system in Barbados expanded with the construction of more primary and secondary schools, the Ministry of Education was also expanded to meet the new demands of monitoring and supervision. Additional posts of education officer were created and the day-to-day supervision of the primary schools continued. Full inspections were conducted periodically by education officers. Legislation continued to be enacted to keep up with the dynamic nature of the education system. As a branch of the wider public service in Barbados, the operations of the Ministry of Education are determined by a variety of legislative regulations. These regulations which are published in the

form of Acts and Orders, establish the legal framework within which the personnel at the Ministry of Education and in the schools function.

Table 2.1: Timeline of Significant Policy, Social and Political Events

YEAR	EVENT
1824	Appointment of Bishop William Coleridge to Barbados and the Windward Islands, in anticipation of the end of slavery. He assumed his post in 1825, and up to 1842, when his tour of duty ended, built many chapel schools to complement existing charity and private schools.
1833	The Passage of the Emancipation Act led to formal emancipation in 1834, but an apprenticeship period was provided from 1834 to 1838.
1835	Britain provided a Negro Education Grant. The last disbursement was made in 1845.
1846	By this time there were 59 schools for the poor with 3, 000 to 4, 000 children educated under the National System with reading, writing and arithmetic, and needlework for girls.
1846	The British established the Pupil-Teacher system which was adopted in Barbados.
1850	The Barbados Legislature passed the first Education Act. An Education Committee was established. The Committee was voted £750 per annum. An Inspector of Schools was appointed, assented to by the Bishop. Also appointed were two assistant inspectors: a Senior and a Junior.
1878	On the basis of the Mitchinson Report of 1876, a new Education Act provided for the appointment of a Sub-Inspector for the inspection and examination of Infant Schools.

Table 2.1: Timeline of Significant Events Cont'd

1890	A new Education Act provided for three Inspectors: An Inspector of Schools; an Assistant Inspector; and an Inspector's Assistant.
1934 - 1939	Labour disturbances in the British Caribbean led to the establishment of the Moyne Commission which submitted a report in 1945 detailing the need for educational, constitutional and other changes in the Colonies.
1937	Labour Disturbances occurred in Barbados.
1938	Establishment of the island's first political party; The Barbados Progressive League
1940	Formation of the Barbados Labour Party out of the Barbados Progressive League
1954	With the introduction of a Ministerial system of Government, a Ministry of Education was established with a Director of Education, a Chief Inspector and a Junior Inspector.
1950s and 1960s	Many new secondary schools were established.
1962	Free secondary education was extended to newer secondary, as well as older grammar schools.
1962	The Department of Education and the post of Director of Education were integrated with the Ministry of Education. The post of Director of Education was designated Chief Education Officer. Other posts, such as Deputy Chief Education Officer and Senior Education Officer, were created. Inspectors were retained for Nutrition, Domestic Subjects, and Infant Methods.

2.4 Monitoring and the Role of the Education Officer in Recent Times

The management and monitoring practices implemented in the period 1940s to 1960s provided a framework for the contemporary monitoring practices of the Ministry of Education which exercises direct and indirect control over the public primary and secondary schools in Barbados. Legislative changes continued in the 1980s with the proclamation of the Education Acts of 1981 and 1982 paving the way for the continued expansion of the education system and the organisational structure of the Ministry of Education

The organisational structure of the Ministry of Education continued to be expanded with the creation of additional posts which increased the number of education officers at both senior and junior levels. Currently, the professional staff which are led by the Chief Education Officer, as the post is now called, have the power to inspect schools, give advice and assistance, and consult with principals and teachers on a range of matters (Government of Barbados, 1983, pp. 26-27). The legislation confers the power and authority for supervising the education system on the Chief Education Officer who can then delegate authority to the senior and junior officers to supervise the system on his or her behalf.

At the primary level, the Ministry of Education is assisted by School Committees which function in an advisory capacity to the Minister on matters such as the maintenance and use of school buildings and the welfare and discipline of students. In the case of the secondary schools, Boards of Management function in an advisory capacity to the Minister and have responsibility mainly for the expenditure of grants, maintenance of the school, student discipline and the appointment of non-teaching staff. Thus, the Ministry of Education remains in control of critical aspects of the education system such as the allocation of funds, the employment and training of teaching staff and the curricula.

Expansion in the education system continued during the 1980s. This was largely due to an increase in the student population and partly as a result of raising of the school leaving age. This expansion necessitated an increase in the number of schools and teachers. As a result, the number of administrative school districts increased from two, which were organised in the early years of the system, to five. An education officer was assigned responsibility for the supervision of each district. Another important development during this period was the introduction of specialist curriculum officers who had responsibility for supervising the teaching of the core subjects: English/ Language Arts, Mathematics/Arithmetic, Social Studies and Science (Carter, 2005).

Expansion in the education sector influenced the implementation of additional reforms which impacted the system and the monitoring role of the education officer. According to the 1995 White Paper on Educational Reform, the Ministry of Education would, among other things, embark on a programme of institutional strengthening designed to address a number of organisational and management weaknesses which were identified.

The plans for institutional strengthening included the completion of the Ministry of Education's Headquarters building, the installation of a department of Management Information Systems and the establishment of a Policy, Planning and Research Unit. It appears that the 1995 proposals for educational reform focused primarily on strengthening the physical resources at the exclusion of the human resources which were also required to ensure the effective functioning of the education system. This is evident by the cursory inclusion of the role of the education officer in the reform process with statements such as 'other consequential measures will see a change in the role of the Education Officer and a further devolution of management responsibility to the schools' (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 1995, p. 15). Thus the proposed reforms stopped short of articulating a clear path for the future role of the education officer in the education system in Barbados, which the evidence suggests, was evolving and expanding. I am

of the view that this short-sightedness has contributed to the development of ambiguities in the legislation as well as to the development of negative perceptions of the education officer's role.

2.5 Recruitment and Preparation of Inspectors/Education Officers

I include this section to highlight the pathways which persons took towards becoming a member of the inspectorate in the education system in Barbados. Additionally, I hope to demonstrate how recruitment practices have evolved over the years and how these changes may have influenced changes in the inspector's and later the education officer's role in the monitoring process.

In the early stages of the establishment of a system of public education in Barbados, all supervisory positions were filled by members of the white population on the island and from Britain (Carter, 2005). The Education Report (1916, p. 4) described a late Moravian priest as a school manager who dedicated forty-seven years to elementary education, first as a schoolmaster, then as an inspector of schools, and finally as a supervising minister. Thus, in the early days entry into the inspectorate could have been via the priesthood. For Barbadian teachers who were interested in joining the staff of the inspectorate, however, the route was different. These persons could become pupil-teachers and assistant teachers and then advance to becoming Year One or Year Two Teachers on successful completion of an annual examination. The establishment of the Rawle Institute in 1912 and later the opening of Erdiston Teachers' Training College in 1948 provided much needed formal training and certification for teachers who could then qualify for appointment as head-teachers of elementary schools. This is evidenced by the following extract taken from the 1916 Education Report:

Up to the present, 22 male teachers and 6 females have passed through the Institute, making a total of 28. Of these, five have already received appointments as head teachers and 23 are working as assistant teachers (p. 8).

Thus, it was through the pathway of becoming a pupil teacher, then assistant teacher, Year One or Year Two teacher then on to becoming a trained teacher,

then a head teacher, that qualified, experienced and trained head teachers could be elevated to the post of Inspector of Schools. Thus, during this era, a person had to become a head teacher in order to become an inspector.

By the late 1930s the composition of the Board of Education and the School Inspectorate began to change with the appointment of Barbadian male educators who had progressed through the elementary school system to the post of head-teacher. The practice of elevating male teachers rather than females to higher posts in education may have had its genesis in several factors. Firstly, Barbados, like many other countries, was built on a patriarchal society where the focus was on educating boys who later became men that dominated every sphere of life. The implementation of the pupil-teacher system followed the trends of other practices in a patriarchal society. Under this system, mainly young male and few female students who showed potential were selected by head teachers and trained to assist with teaching duties.

With these appointments, first as Junior Assistant Inspectors and then as District Inspectors, the practice of hiring trained, qualified and experienced Barbadian professionals to monitor education in Barbados began. As the local education system developed in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, the island's Inspectorate also expanded as additional posts were created. This expansion provided additional opportunities for inspectors to be appointed from among primary and secondary school head-teachers.

Generally, and for the greater part of Barbados' education history, inspectors and later education officers were appointed from among elementary or primary school head-teachers or principals. Thus, the Education Department and later the Ministry of Education became a career path for teachers, particularly those at the primary level.

I discern that sometime during the 1990s the system of recruiting education officers changed. Whereas in the past being trained, qualified and having management experience as a head-teacher were requirements for appointment as an inspector of schools, it seems that in modern times a different approach

was used. Education Officers, like myself, who were hired from the late 1990s onwards were not required to have administrative and management experience up to the level of primary school principal. As was the case in 2007 when I was a teacher and was then recruited for the post of education officer, it was not mandatory for prospective candidates to have experience as a principal.

Having examined a few documents that were issued to advertise the vacant posts of education officer and senior education officer respectively, I have noticed the use of the word ‘or’ in the statements which outline the requirements for the posts. For example, the Chief Personnel Officer (2012) stated in a circular which advertised the vacant post of education officer that applicants were required to have, in addition to the relevant qualifications, ‘not less than three years’ experience in teaching or in educational administration’ (p. 2). A similar advertisement was used for the vacant post of senior education officer. According to the Chief Personnel Officer (2015) applicants were required to have, in addition to the relevant qualifications, ‘not less than six years’ experience in teaching or in educational administration’ (p. 1). The insertion of the word ‘or’ suggests that experience in educational administration was not mandatory for either post.

2.6 Barbados’ Model of School Inspection

In Barbados, the provision of guidelines for the inspection process does not appear to be as explicitly stated as has been done in countries such as the United Kingdom and Trinidad and Tobago (details of school inspection in these countries have been outlined in Chapter Four). Although there are some similarities to the monitoring mandates of the three countries, there are also some differences to be noted.

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the 1895 Education Act of Barbados revealed that during the early years of the delivery of public education an inspectorate was established. During the twentieth century the major

objectives of education reform as outlined in the White Paper on Education Reform (1995) included the following:

Strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture to plan, manage and evaluate the education system more effectively (p. 3).

Over the years the name of the department in the Ministry of Education that is responsible for monitoring education also changed from the ‘Schools’ Supervision and Management Section’ to the ‘Nursery and Primary Schools Section’. In the first title, the role of the section is explicitly stated. In contrast, the second title, which is in use currently, is more general and does not indicate explicitly the role of the section.

Thus, unlike the UK and T&T experience, there is no external organisation, or internal unit or section of the Ministry of Education in Barbados which bears the title ‘School Inspection or School Supervision Division’. As outlined in the Ministry of Education’s Programme Budget Document-Nursery and Primary Schools Section 2017-2020, monitoring of the administrative and managerial practices in public nursery and primary schools is conducted by education officers in the Nursery and Primary Schools Section of the Ministry of Education (2017). In contrast, the UK has established an independent external inspectorial system. Similarly, in T&T there is a division of the Ministry of Education which has responsibility for supervising the schools. I have found no evidence to suggest that similar structures exist in Barbados. Furthermore, the terms ‘inspection’ and ‘supervision’ are no longer used to name the job function and role of education officers in Barbados. It may, therefore, be unclear to many stakeholders and observers what the island’s monitoring mandate is and what role the education officers are supposed to play in the monitoring process.

As is the case with school inspection in T&T which is guided by the framework established in the country’s Education Act, the 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations of Barbados provide the legal framework for inspection and outline the inspectors’ role as follows:

To give guidance and assistance to teachers at the institution or school as might promote the good conduct and efficiency of the institution; advise the principal on matters relating to the institution's welfare and development and give the Minister or the Board of Management a report on the institution or school (p. 25).

The 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations (p. 26 & 27) further states that an officer may visit an educational institution to inspect, give advice, assist and be consulted on matters related to the national curricula; textbooks and teaching materials; improving the efficiency of teachers; pupils' records and assessment; the principal's assessment of teachers; and matters of discipline and the welfare of pupils. Furthermore, education officers may, on completion of their visit to the schools, make a record of the visit and a statement of any action taken in the school's log book. In addition to the regular visits to schools which were described previously, the Ministry of Education, when it deems necessary (policies or mandates being disregarded, internal school conflict or consistently very poor student performance), may conduct a full-inspection of an education institution. It is interesting to note that in addition to education officers, the Chief Education Officer may recruit other persons who are competent and qualified in the field of education, to assist with the full-inspection of a school (1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations, p. 28). This provision mirrors external inspection which, in some countries like the UK, is administered by persons who are not involved in the day-to-day operations of the schools.

2.7 Summary

In this chapter I presented and interpreted some of the policies which govern the operations of a monitoring system in the education sector in Barbados. By examining aspects of various Acts and Regulations I traced the education policies which guided the monitoring and recruitment practices of the Ministry of Education. As a result of a number of legislative and policy changes over the years, the system of monitoring education was transformed. This transformation was not only seen in the growth of the number of schools and teachers, but was also exemplified by the expansion of a monitoring system

for education. In addition to making provisions for the expansion of the education system, however, some of the policies may have also created some ambiguities in the education system.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework which forms the foundation on which my research is built and which serves to provide a context for the analysis of the data derived from the interviews and from documents. I have drawn from Maxwell's (2013, p. 49) metaphoric use of the terms 'coat hooks' and 'spotlights' to explain how existing theory can be used to illuminate concepts in the data and to show the relationship between existing research and the themes that have emerged from my research data.

My study of perceptions of the education officer's role is located within the context of inspection, supervision and monitoring of education in Barbados. The study has been grounded in three theories: Bureaucracy, Power and Knowledge and Plantation Pedagogy; which, in my view, aid understanding of the dynamics of systems and institutions. The theories analysed in this chapter were chosen after I examined the themes which emerged from the research data. I determined that these theories were best suited and correlated to the themes found. Hence, I applied Grounded Theory to aid in the selection of relevant theories. These theories also help us conceptualise the interplay of human relationships within education systems as well as the experiences which shape the knowledge, perceptions and actions of the professionals in these systems. More specifically, with the help of the theory of plantation pedagogy, which was mentioned above, I provided a historical context to aid understanding of the evolution of external monitoring of education in Barbados.

Education systems are made up of diverse groups and particular organisational structures which can be hierarchical in nature. As such, these systems can provide fertile ground for the emergence of power relations. Especially as

personnel often interact with each other as they execute their duties during the monitoring process.

3.2 Bureaucracy and Education

Max Weber's twentieth century concept of bureaucracy in public organisations highlights and explains how the operations and management of institutions can be influenced by the kind of organizational structure that is implemented. I used this theory to aid understanding of how the contemporary education system in Barbados is organized, how it functions and the impact of its functionality on the system itself. I relied on the interpretations of other writers to assist me with understanding and applying Weber's work to my thesis. This was due mainly to the difficulty I encountered in sourcing original English translations of Max Weber's writings.

Weber described bureaucracies as being characterized by a systematic division of labour which is administered by rules and regulations, the presence of an unambiguous hierarchical system of authority and power, an administration which is based on written documents and files, and management which presupposes thorough and expert training (Weber cited in Morrison, 2006, p. 382).

The education system in Barbados is characterized by the dimensions of bureaucracy that have been mentioned above. For the purpose of my research, however, I decided to focus on one of the key dimensions identified by Weber. This dimension highlights the presence of an unambiguous hierarchical system of authority, power and control which bureaucracy promotes. By selecting this focus I hope to contribute to an understanding of how the education system in Barbados operates. Secondly, the dimension chosen also supports understanding of the relationships that exist in the organisational structure of the education system. Thirdly, acknowledging the presence of a hierarchical system will help me to examine how power and authority are distributed and by extension, how control has been institutionalised. Fourthly, the theory of

bureaucracy articulates well with the theory of plantation pedagogy which I am also using to provide a framework for my research.

Since I use the terms power, control and authority frequently in my thesis I have provided a definition of the three terms which I consider to be interrelated. The Collins English Dictionary (2007, p. 1274) defines the word 'power' as the ability or capacity to do or act; as having force or influence, a position of control, dominion, or authority, legal authority to act, especially in a specified capacity, for another person. Another understanding of the word 'power' is provided by Scruton (2007, p. 366) who explains that the possession of power gives the bearer the ability to achieve whatever effect is desired. He further purports that power, when viewed as a matter of degree, can potentially be conferred, delegated, shared and limited. Finally, 'power' may be exercised through influence or control. Scruton (2007) distinguishes between power with authority, power with the common belief in its authority, and 'naked power' which relates to groups or individuals seizing power, usually for political gain. As can be seen from the definitions, the terms are similar in meaning and are interrelated.

Further insight into an understanding of power has been gleaned from Gray (2013, p. 251) who identifies four types of power: direct power, referred power, influencing power and limited power. These kinds of power may be exemplified in various ways in an education system. For example, the Government Ministry responsible for education in Barbados has the authority to make decisions for the effective functioning of the education system. As a consequence, the Ministry of Education uses direct power to ensure that decisions, which are usually formulated as national policies, are implemented by Ministry personnel.

Although education officers in Barbados cannot exercise direct power, they nevertheless have been given authority to exercise referred power and influencing power in the course of their duties. In this context, education officers utilise referred power during their day to day work with the principals and teachers to ensure that education policies are implemented. Similarly, education officers are well-positioned to influence the development of

education policy (influencing power) through the submission of reports about the outcome of their interactions with principals and teachers.

While the potential for the education officers to exercise influencing power does exist, I am of the view that they also have limited power. This is evidenced by the fact that education officers are practically invisible in the Ministry of Education's policy documents (1983 Education Act and Regulations) which outline the framework for monitoring of education in Barbados and the education officer's role.

Within the context of Barbados, the 1983 Education Act and Regulations legitimized the power of all personnel and delegated the authority needed for the education system to be monitored. Thus, a system of rules and regulations exist which delegates rational-legal authority (Weber cited in Mansfield, 1973, p. 477) to the personnel in the system, especially those persons who occupy the positions at the apex of the hierarchical pyramid. Rules and regulations are usually designed to facilitate effective administration of institutions and systems. In addition to having rules and regulations, however, a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities assigned to each category of worker can also contribute to the effectiveness of institutions and systems.

The operationalisation of a system of rules and regulations suggests the presence of order, conformity and control. While there may have been a need to apply these structures rigidly during the fledgling stages of the development of the education system, I question whether the same level of rigidity, conformity, and control is necessary in a modern education system which has facilitated the development of a variety of knowledge and skills in its citizens. I, however, acknowledge that there are schools of thought which posit an opposite view. Some researchers and governments support the use of strict control and accountability mechanisms in education as exemplified by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) in the United Kingdom.

I conclude this section on Max Weber's contribution to an understanding of organisational structure, life and culture by highlighting some of the traditional and contemporary critiques of his theory of bureaucracy. Despite

general acceptance of organisation theory by Weber and others, since the inception of the theory, there have been some dissenting voices. Among the early critics who have highlighted some negative and unclarified aspects of bureaucracy as an organisational phenomenon are Gouldner, 1955; Blau, 1963; and Parsons, 1964.

Gouldner (1955) focused his criticism of the theory of bureaucracy on Weber's explanation of the development of bureaucracy which he attributed to the presence of large-scale enterprises. According to Gouldner, Weber regarded organisational size as the controlling factor in the development of bureaucracy (p. 499). To support his disagreement with Weber's view, Gouldner (1955, p. 499) posits that there are many large-scale human endeavours such as the Egyptian Pyramids, which were completed without the presence of a bureaucratic structure. Gouldner was also critical of Weber's conclusion that the size of an organisation contributes to the growth of bureaucratic characteristics.

In contrast to Gouldner (1955), Blau (1963) focused attention on Weber's theory of authority in bureaucracies. He emphasized three main issues, which in his view, were not clarified by Weber: the voluntary element of authority and the paradox between voluntarism and authoritarian control; the origins of authority and the structural conditions that facilitate authority systems (p. 311). In Blau's (1963) view, apart from the willingness of subordinates to obey their superiors, there might be other factors that influence compliance, such as persuasion. Although he is seemingly in support of Weber's typology of authority; namely traditional authority, charismatic authority and legal authority; Blau (1963, p. 309), however, disagrees with Weber's analysis of the different types of authority he identified.

The concept of the bureaucratic organisation also received the attention of Parsons (1964) who generally agreed that Weber's concept of ideal organisation can serve as a good basis for a discussion and understanding of bureaucratic structures. Parsons (1964, p. 348), however, identified two challenges of bureaucracies: resources in the form of manpower and facilities; and political support. Firstly, Parsons suggests that the process of overcoming

the challenges mentioned above and maintaining efficiency and loyalty requires recruitment of competent personnel who are well remunerated and who are provided with materials and facilities for their function. The absence of these features may result in dissatisfaction among employees and the malfunction of the organization. Secondly, he is of the view that minimizing political interference promotes independent functioning and the achievement of the organisation's goals.

Despite the perceived shortcomings and disadvantages of bureaucracy and recognising that it is not the only approach that can be applied to the structure of organisations, institutions and systems, there is some merit in Parsons' (1964) view that:

Where the capacity to carryout large-scale organised operations is important and productive enterprise requiring large capital investment and much manpower, the unit that commands effective bureaucratic organisation is inherently superior to the one that does not (p. 349).

Since the 1950s and 1960s, some researchers such as Du Gay, 1994; Bartels, 2009; Alder, 2012; Hodson, Martin, Lopez and Roscigno, 2012; and Olsen, 2006; have examined the relevance of Weber's theory of bureaucracy in modern organisations and have posited varying views about the features, functions and effects of this organisational theory. Similar to earlier studies, some of these contemporary researchers continued to be critical of bureaucracy's rigid formal structure, the high level of control which emanates from such a structure, and the suppression of individual creativity.

In contrast to the criticisms, however, some contemporary research into organisational structure has highlighted what may be considered some positive changes that have occurred over the late twentieth century. These changes included what Adler (2012, p. 245) and Hodson et al. (2012, p. 261) refer to as 'enabling bureaucracy', a new form of bureaucracy that promotes increased employee participation and interaction. Alder is, however, of the view that when enabling processes combine with coercive processes in an organisation, they can create ambivalence among employees. He concludes that ambivalence is as a direct result of the dual role of bureaucracy.

Late twentieth century alternatives to Weber's theory of bureaucracy such as Scientific Management, Human Resource Management and Total Quality Management, also emphasised the promotion of more collaborative and self-regulated processes and practices in organisations. The growth of modern enterprise and the promotion of entrepreneurship have also contributed to the denigration of bureaucracy's formal rules, regulations and procedures (Du Gay, 1994).

The question which remains unanswered is whether efficiency, accountability and effectiveness can be achieved in a modern public sector without the organisational structure which bureaucracy provides or whether there is scope for bureaucracy to function in both an enabling and a coercive capacity in the workplace. The bureaucratic structures which exist in Barbados's education system have been inherited from the British who have traditionally utilised these structures in their education system.

3.3 Knowledge, Surveillance and Power

I locate inspection and supervision within Foucault's (1982) concept 'power-knowledge'. This concept provides a context to aid understanding of how contemporary educational institutions function and how everyday practices within and without these institutions can affect their functioning and the relationships that develop among the people who operate in these institutions.

In education systems, interaction between individuals and among groups is unavoidable since interaction is critical for achieving the goals of the monitoring process. Foucault's concept of an educational institution with its dynamic processes can be extended to the wider education system where similar processes take place, albeit on a larger scale. According to Foucault (1982, p. 787), the dynamic processes to be found in an education system include the meticulous regulations which govern internal life; the different activities which are organized; and the diverse persons who meet each other, each with his or her own function and character.

Within the context of the education system in Barbados, the regulations which govern how decisions are made and the kinds of activities which should occur in the system are encapsulated in the 1983 Education Act and Regulations. Regulations are synonymous with bureaucratic systems. In these kinds of systems, positions are organised in a hierarchical structure with assigned roles and responsibilities. To carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively, persons employed in the system must interact across levels as well as with persons who may occupy higher or lower positions in the organizational structure.

I agree with Foucault's (1982, p.787) view that education systems provide fertile ground for the emergence of power processes such as the pyramidal hierarchy and surveillance. In the hierarchical education systems, surveillance by education officers, which mainly takes the form of visits to schools, observations of teaching and learning, data collection and reporting, is an integral component of the supervision and inspection process. Surveillance allows education officers to gain knowledge about the way schools are operated and are managed. The information gathered may be used to inform decisions made in the interest of the teachers, students and the wider education system. Conversely, the data collected may be used to impose sanctions aimed at changing behaviour and effecting improvements.

During inspection or supervision, inspectors and education officers make judgments about teachers' and principals' performance. This can be viewed as a form of discipline, a way of holding teachers and principals accountable for their actions. The enforcement of discipline through the actions of surveillance may lead to the institutionalisation of what Ball, (2003) and Perryman, (2009) refer to as 'performativity'. Although a contested term, when applied to the education sector, performativity aptly helps to explain occurrences in a system which is driven by the performance of all involved. Ball (2003) defines performativity as

a technology, a culture, a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons, and displays as a means of incentive, control, attrition and change- based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic) p. 216.

Perryman (2009) describes performativity as the way in which teachers, because they are constantly being observed and held accountable perform in order to be successful. In an effort to look good and to get a good judgment or report, personnel in the schools may feel the need to perform for the inspectors or education officers thus possibly masking the realities of the school environment and their pedagogical and administrative practices.

Power exists throughout the society. In fact, wherever there is human interaction and relationships, power is being exercised. Foucault's conclusion that the way schools are organised and the kind of activities which occur contribute to surveillance, control and the exercise of power, can be extrapolated to education systems where similar structures and activities exist. Within the context of monitoring, teachers and principals experience surveillance in different ways: they are visited and their work observed by education officers, supervisors and inspectors on behalf of the Ministry of Education; and they are regulated by legislation which stipulates that the national curriculum is to be followed and that certain data is to be submitted to the Ministry of Education by specified times.

The perception of the inspector or education officer as an expert in his or her field and as someone who possesses 'the knowledge' can also be viewed from a Foucauldian perspective of 'knowledge and power'. The expert is seen as someone who is qualified and well-trained; someone who comes from a position of knowledge and who uses this knowledge to wield power over those persons who may be perceived to be less knowledgeable. The assignment of the title of expert to one category of personnel must however not be viewed as failure to recognise that experts also exist among other categories of workers. On the contrary, within the bureaucratic structure the hierarchy of expertise includes persons at the lower end who are also competent professionals and thus are capable of making a meaningful contribution to the development of the education system.

3.4 Plantation Pedagogy and Education

I adopted the concept of plantation pedagogy to help me discuss the impact of the plantation society and economy on the public education structure and on individuals in the British West Indies and more specifically in Barbados. To do this I relied mainly on the work of Bristol (2010), Lavia (2012) and Antoine-Thomas (2012). Although these three writers have adopted slightly different views regarding the concept of plantation pedagogy, they have all highlighted how the organisational structure of the plantation was designed to reinforce and maintain power in the hands of a few persons.

The structure of the plantation system coupled with the social and economic practices of the plantation owners had far-reaching consequences for the enslaved people and later for their descendants. In order to show the linkages between the former plantation system and the current education system, the theory of plantation pedagogy has been used to help me explicate and understand the existing organisational structure and the relationship patterns which are present in the Barbados education system. The theory will also be used to illuminate how plantation structures and culture have contributed to forming our experiences and by extension our perceptions.

According to Antoine-Thomas (2012, p. 3) plantation pedagogy refers to educational practices that are structured along the organisational lines of the plantation economy theory articulated by Best and Levitt (2011). The theory of the plantation economy provides a historical framework which explains how external forces in the form of the metropolises, controlled production and thus the growth of Caribbean economies and societies. As such, the bureaucratic structures which were used to drive the economy also permeated the social structures and institutions. They also influenced the relationship between those who were responsible for setting-up and maintaining the economic and social structures and those who were being controlled by the structures.

For the purpose of my research I applied the concept of plantation pedagogy to the practices of the entire education system in Barbados especially as it relates

to the perpetuation of bureaucratic efficiency and cultural norms in the education system. These practices will be viewed through the examination of processes such as the division of roles, control, conformity and discipline.

In the West Indian islands, plantation-like structures and practices were adopted and applied to education systems. These structures and practices 'served the activities of the metropolitan centres while reinforcing colonial values and hierarchies of power' (Lavia, 2012, p. 12). The plantation system was generally characterized by white owners or in their absence, white managers, who were responsible for running the plantation and ensuring profitability. These persons comprised the top level of the hierarchy and the power to make decisions about the operations of the plantation resided solely with them. To assist with operations on the plantations, overseers and slave-drivers were appointed to supervise and discipline the enslaved workers. The model of management that was top-down, hierarchical and which promoted the division of roles became a template for the organisational structure of the newly established education system in Barbados. The kind of organisational structure described above still exists within the education system today, albeit with minor changes introduced over the years.

In contemporary Barbados, bureaucratic efficiency is exemplified in the way roles in the education system are delineated; that is, by the value assigned to the tasks and the salary structure. At the level of the Ministry of Education, the top positions are occupied by the Minister of Education who formulates the policies of the government, and the Permanent Secretary who manages the Ministry of Education and is responsible for financial and administrative policies. These top positions in the hierarchy are supported by the professional post of Chief Education Officer who is supported by the Deputy Chief Education Officer and a cadre of senior and junior officers. Education officers, led by the Chief Education Officer, are responsible for ensuring that administrative and instructional policies are implemented in the schools.

When viewed within the context of the role of the education officer in the system, the plantation pedagogy theory aids understanding of how the officer's role can be reduced to insignificance because of the mundane tasks

assigned, and the seeming lack of authority ascribed to the role. The concept of control is also important within the context of plantation pedagogy. On the plantation, the masters controlled the slaves in a variety of ways which included the practice of 'divide and rule', laws, and punishment. When viewed from the perspective of education, similarities can be found in the way education officers are controlled by their superiors and by the 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations which dictate their duties. Similarly, education officers, in the course of executing their duties, exercise control over school personnel. Through a combination of control, expressions of power and authority, and the reinforcement of sanctions, teachers, principals and education officers are held accountable by those persons at the top of the hierarchy in the education system.

The plantation experience has also impacted on the development of our cultural practices, beliefs and our relationships. Many of our island's festivals and celebrations feature activities and dishes which are reminiscent of plantation life. Some of our dishes such as 'cou-cou' and 'pudding and souse' have retained the use of traditional ingredients and methods of preparation. Additionally, our local music often reflects influences of the drum and other instruments used during the colonial era. Thirdly, local stories are replete with tales of the plantation and African folklore.

The presence of remnants of the master-slave mentality impacts the interpersonal relationships between individuals and among groups of persons who work at different levels of organisations. This situation can be compounded by the very impersonal nature of bureaucratic organisational structures which often perpetuate divisions between personnel at the apex of the hierarchy and those at the bottom. Additionally, the presence of a post-colonial mentality which associates power and authority with age and experience only, can retard the development of positive interpersonal relationships among personnel in the education system. Conversely, the presence of trust and a positive professional climate in the education system can promote collegiality, collaboration and the achievement of educational goals.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I highlighted three similar and inter-related theoretical perspectives which provide a context for the discussion and explanation of the factors that influenced the development of monitoring practices in the education system in Barbados. The work of Lavia (2012), Antoine-Thomas (2012) and Laurette Bristol (2010) on the concept of plantation pedagogy as a managerial system set the historical background for an understanding of the influences of our colonial past on current managerial practices, beliefs and relationships in education. The exploration of the concept of Max Weber's bureaucracy as a managerial system explains how hierarchical structures in organisations can regulate the behaviour of personnel to the point of suffocating individualism. While bureaucracy offers some measure of structure and efficiency, it can also contribute to rigidity, impersonality and the promotion of the use of power and authority in education systems. Foucault's concept of knowledge and power in education highlights the links between knowledge and power. Moreover, it leads to an understanding of how the acquisition of knowledge contributes to the emergence of persons perceived as experts and how between individuals and groups power can be used to confer authority on others and to influence the behaviour of persons.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Review of School Inspection, Perceptions of the Inspector's Role and Related Literature

4.1 Introduction

School inspection has been practiced in several countries across the world. It is reported to have had its genesis in France in the late 18th century (De Grauwe, 2008) and in the United Kingdom in the early 1800s (Baxter, 2013) where it was affiliated with church schools before being exported to the British colonies (London, 2004), like Barbados. In the following sections, I provide an overview of perspectives about the purposes of school inspection, highlight some researchers' definitions of the terms used to name the process of external monitoring of education and discuss the main characteristics of inspection as a monitoring tool. Secondly, I present as the focus of my study, school inspection from two perspectives: the United Kingdom and Trinidad and Tobago, to provide a basis for making comparisons, especially with Barbados. Thirdly, I discuss the findings of the literature related to the major themes linked to my research data. Finally, I present the literature related to the research questions stated in chapter one as I review the perceptions and experiences of teachers, principals and education officers.

4.2 Views and Models of School Inspection, Supervision and Evaluation

In this section I present some views about the inspection and supervision process and discuss the concept of evaluation within the context of education. Additionally, two examples of school inspection are presented and discussed to provide a basis for making comparisons with the inspection process in Barbados.

The presence in the literature of varied types of supervision necessitates a discussion about the meaning of some of the terms which I used in the

research. Although the terms ‘monitoring’, ‘supervision’ and ‘inspection’ are contested terms, I found some common themes in the various perspectives published in the literature relating to how they are used in the field of education. Generally, the views which I examined featured terms such as targeted scrutiny of schools’ apparatus carried out to provide independent verification of schools’ organisational processes (Janssens & van Amelsvoort, 2008); ensuring that educational standards or targets are met (Matthews & Smith, 1995); a special type of evaluation conducted within the formal school setting (London, 2004); and data collection and reporting, school improvement, quality assurance, monitoring, control and support (De Grauwe, 2009).

The term inspection as applied to the monitoring of education systems has been used since the nineteenth century. In countries such as England and the Netherlands which have been described by Whitby (2010), and Shaw et al. (2003) as having the most developed external evaluation systems, inspection is driven mainly by the purpose of accountability but may also include a focus on school improvement.

According to Wilcox (2000):

Inspection is the process of assessing the quality and or performance of institutions, services, programmes or projects by those who are not directly involved in them and who are usually specially appointed to fulfil these responsibilities. Inspection involves visits made by inspectors, individually or in teams to observe the institutions, etc. concerned while they are actually functioning. The most common outcome is a written report of the inspector’s findings (p.15 & 16).

Janssens and van Amelsvoort’s (2008, p. 16) view of inspection is similar to that of Wilcox (2000). They described inspection as the process of periodic, targeted scrutiny carried out to provide independent verification and to report on whether the quality of schools is meeting national and local performance standards, legislative and professional requirements and the needs of students and parents. Other views about inspection state that the term carries the connotation of ‘control’ (De Grauwe, 2008, p. 15) and involves ‘reporting judgements’ (Richards, 2001, p. 656). Perryman (2006, p. 152) seems to agree

with Wilcox and Gray (1994) who see inspection as evaluation, as auditing, as a disciplinary power, and social action.

As has been shown in the explanations provided above, some writers equate external school evaluation with school inspection. Nevo (2001) also provides some insight into the process of external evaluation which bears some similarity to the descriptions stated above for inspection. According to Nevo (2001):

An external evaluation of the school can be performed by the school district, the state department of education, or a ministry of education using professional evaluators or regional inspectors, or a district/state/national evaluation department. An external evaluation of the school could also be conducted by an independent evaluation consultant or evaluation firm, commissioned by the school itself or its governing board (p.15).

Over the period of the twentieth century as some countries engaged in educational reform, a trend towards giving schools greater autonomy in their own management, assessment and improvement emerged. Different titles for this trend were found in the literature: school self-evaluation (Janssens & van Amelsvoort, 2008), school-site evaluation (De Grauwe, 2007), and internal evaluation (Nevo, 2001).

School Self-Evaluation (SSE) is defined by Janssens and Amelsvoort (2008) as:

a systematic process, which includes cyclic activities such as goal-setting, planning, evaluation and defines new improvement measures. SSE means assessing quality as well as judging and valuing learning, teaching and performance (p. 16).

Nevo (2001) identified several features of SSE or internal evaluation which include the schools' ability:

to define their own educational aims; to be in charge of the educational process; to evaluate their actions; and to improve decision making processes. Internal evaluation is also an expression of school empowerment and transfer of authority from center to periphery, from central government to the local community (p. 96 & 97).

The descriptions of school inspection, supervision and evaluation presented above paint a picture of the diverse and multi-faceted nature of monitoring

systems in education. They also highlight some ambiguities that exist in the process; such as control and development and empowerment; and judgment and support (Lindgren, Hult, Segerholm & Ronnberg, 2012). Can these roles be pursued effectively at the same time by the same personnel? This question has been explored in subsequent sections of this chapter.

A variety of external monitoring mandates exist in education worldwide. Examples of these can be found in countries such as the United States of America, England and New Zealand where inspection focuses mainly on holding schools accountable (Baxter, 2013; Ball, 1997; Thrupp, 1998); in Germany where the aim of school inspection is to support the development of schools (Bitan, Haep & Steins, 2015); and in South Africa and Kenya where the respective inspectorates perform the dual role of monitoring the management function of schools as well as providing advisory services (Wanzare, 2002). Morrison (2009, p. 753) informs that in some Small States and Territories inspection systems may also vary and can range from infrequent visits to schools by inspectors to ensure compliance with legal requirements; to internal supervision by senior school staff; to external inspection.

In the remainder of this section, I take a closer look at school inspection mandates and perceptions of the inspection process from the perspective of two territories: the United Kingdom and Trinidad and Tobago. These examples were chosen because of their connections with and similarities to Barbados where my study takes place. As was stated previously, the connection between Barbados and the United Kingdom dates back to colonial times. The establishment of the education system in Barbados was influenced substantially by the British education system. Trinidad and Tobago is a Caribbean island which shares a similar colonial history to Barbados. My focus on the inspection models and experiences of school personnel in these two territories provides a basis for comparison with inspection in Barbados, details of which are also provided in chapter two.

4.2.1 United Kingdom - OFSTED

The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), a non-ministerial organisation which was established in 1992, has responsibility for external monitoring of schools in the United Kingdom (UK). The organisation has been viewed as an instrument for controlling the inspection of schools and analysing inspection data (Lee & Fitz, 1997; Matthews & Smith, 1995; Shaw et al., 2003). Since its inception, OFSTED's mandate and its inspectors' role have evolved from that of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), the organization which OFSTED replaced. Lee and Fitz (1997, p. 47) identify what they term as radical changes that were implemented at the new organisation that involved the creation of inspection teams that focus on monitoring, research, school support and development, quality and teacher education. Lee and Fritz's (1997) research, conducted five years after OFSTED's initiation also revealed that in comparison to the former HMI inspectors, OFSTED inspectors were given advisory roles.

A more recent description of OFSTED inspectors' roles can be found in the 2016 Handbook (OFSTED 2016, p. 6-7). The Handbook provides a framework of responsibilities for inspectors which include making announced and unannounced visits to schools, collecting and analysing students' academic and attendance data, examining complaints made by parents and soliciting the views of parents. It is noteworthy that parental involvement is encouraged and that inspection can be initiated by the schools on request. These two features of the framework can be described as participatory as they allow stakeholders to have a voice in the inspection process.

Since the inception of OFSTED, varied views and perceptions have been advanced about its inspection process and the inspector's role. Some studies conducted in the 1990s among principals, teachers and inspectors across the United Kingdom, reported both negative and positive views about the inspection process (Dean, 1995; Gray & Gardner, 1999; Wilcox & Gray, 1994). The aspects of the inspection process that were described by the participants in these studies as being acceptable, included inspectors holding pre-inspection meetings with teachers to build relationships, providing timely, constructive feedback after inspection and the support provided by the

education board. Conversely, some participants reported feeling stressed throughout the inspection process, mentioned the perceived lack of objectivity of the inspection process and highlighted the length of time needed to prepare for inspection. In contrast to the mixed views which emanated from some studies conducted during the 1990s, Case et al.'s (2000, p. 612) research into the impact of OFSTED, however, provides a scathing criticism of the inspection process and the inspectors by primary school teachers; many of whom reported being fearful, anxious, stressed, angry and apathetic as a result of being inspected.

Similar findings of mixed perceptions of OFSTED inspections are revealed in research conducted by Chapman (2002) who found that there were positive and negative views about inspection among principals and teachers from 'low-performing schools'. Similarly, Courtney (2013, p. 168) who examined head teachers' experiences with inspection as set out by the OFSTED 2012 Framework found that head teachers who felt that the judgement was subjective and that they were excluded from the inspection process, rated their inspection experience as less positive than in previous years.

School inspection in the United Kingdom under OFSTED has undergone several changes in its processes and application over the years, largely as a result of education reforms introduced by consecutive governments who promoted different education agendas. Case et al. (2000, p. 606) notes that in the area of state-funded education, issues of 'quality and standards' formed the core of discussions and influenced changes in school organisation, the adoption of performance indicators such as standardised tests, the publication of OFSTED inspection reports and mandatory benchmarking of individual students. Furthermore, the introduction of managerial practices to the education system in the UK had implications for the professional status of head teachers and teachers and their working relationship (Case et al., 2000; Ball, 1993). Case et al. (2000) contend that the establishment of OFSTED as an external regulatory body also served to ensure that managerialism became entrenched as a method of accountability, control and surveillance in education.

I surmise that views about OFSTED inspectors' role and the ways they fulfilled their roles were diverse. In some instances, persons in some schools were very critical about the inspection process while others, such as principals, were reported in Gray and Gardner's (1999) study, as stating that some aspects such as focusing the staff's attention on internal issues, providing encouragement for staff to work cooperatively for the good of the school, providing affirmation of good practice and boosting staff morale, were beneficial. These features are similar to those of internal supervision or SSE.

4.2.2 Trinidad and Tobago: Division of School Supervision

In the absence of an abundance of research on school inspection in the Caribbean, I consulted documents published by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Ministry of Education to gain insight into the establishment of an agency for monitoring education in that country and its mandate.

Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) was ceded to Britain in 1802. As a result the country's education system became British. School inspection in T&T, a small developing nation like Barbados, dates from the 1850s when a decentralised system for maintaining standards and accountability in schools was established (Division of School Supervision, 2006). According to the Division of School Supervision (2006, p. 1), the mandate of the inspection system was to ensure that policies which govern the implementation of effective instructional practices and wholesome learning environments were implemented. While recognising that the use of the term 'wholesome' is subjective and speaks to an individual's values and beliefs about the purpose of education, I believe that this aspect of the mandate of the inspectorate in Trinidad and Tobago served not only to promote the organisation of appropriate learning environments to meet the diverse needs of the students but also to promote the values of those who ruled and held power.

Similar to education monitoring systems in some other countries, school inspection in T&T evolved over the years. The monitoring mandate changed in the 1950's from a more authoritarian perspective to a developmental one

(Division of School Supervision 2006, p. 1). Additionally, the term ‘Inspector of Schools’ was replaced by ‘Education Officer’. In the 1960s the name of the post was changed again to ‘School Supervisor’. In the 1970s, reforms in the education section in T&T resulted in the creation of the Division of School Supervision which was given responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of schools.

Although the inspectoral organisations in the UK and T&T differ, the current roles and functions of school supervisors in T&T have some similarity to those outlined by OFSTED in the UK. This is not surprising since British rule was entrenched in Trinidad and Tobago from 1889 until the country became independent in 1962 (London, 2004). In this country, the responsibility for monitoring the education system is assigned to the Ministry of Education’s Division of School Supervision. The school supervisors’ roles and functions include ensuring quality standards by supervising, inspecting and evaluating the operations of schools; providing coaching, training and apprenticeship for teachers and school administrators; supervising the observance of the provisions of the Education Act and the Regulations pertaining to the conduct of schools; and visiting schools on a regular basis to monitor the implementation of the curriculum (Division of School Supervision, 2006, p. 3-4). Based on the characteristics of the duties outlined above, it can be surmised that school supervision in Trinidad and Tobago focusses on both accountability in the system and the development of schools.

In the absence of studies which can provide recent evidence of perceptions of school inspection and the inspectors’ role in T&T, I consulted London’s (2004) study which provides some insight into the views of teachers and principals about the annual inspection conducted during the late colonial period in T&T. According to London (2004, p. 490) most teachers viewed inspection as an invasion into their professional lives and as undemocratic since they were excluded from making a contribution to the process. This evidence suggests that perceptions of the inspection process were negative.

4.3 Factors that Affect School Inspection and the Inspector's Role

Several factors may affect school inspection and the role of the inspector in small countries. Morrison (2009, p. 753) identified some of these factors as financial and human resources, political will and cultural and organisational matters. In the following sections, I discuss the presence and effects of factors such as bureaucracy and surveillance; power and authority; relationships and communication; and resources; on inspection and the education officer's role in Barbados.

4.3.1 Bureaucracy and Surveillance

Traditionally, bureaucracy has been a feature of many public education systems (Hall & Sivesind, 2015) and it has persisted as a managerial system, especially in some former colonies like Barbados (Antoine-Thomas, 2012) where remnants of the colonial experience still influence practices in education (Bristol, 2010). Bureaucracy has been described by Max Weber as a means to achieve efficiency and accountability in organisations through its hierarchical structure. Bureaucracy has also been criticised for its capacity to concentrate power and authority in the hands of a few senior personnel and for its promotion of rigid adherence to rules and regulations which function as methods of control (Murphy, 2009; Jain, 2004).

Surveillance of schools through the use of school visits, data collection through observations and discussions, testing and reporting on the outcome of visits is synonymous with the inspection process (Perryman, 2006) and are also associated in some countries with the mandate of holding teachers accountable for achieving educational goals. The use of surveillance has been viewed as a means of exercising control over teachers (Perryman, 2009). The link between external accountability and coercive performance in schools has also been highlighted by Taylor Webb (2005) in his case study of an elementary school in the United States.

Surveillance can also be viewed from a Foucauldian perspective as a disciplinary, punitive and control mechanism (Perryman, 2009; Taylor Webb, 2005; London, 2004). In the UK, for instance, where traditionally the practice of inspection has been associated with surveillance and checking-up on schools through regular visits, the outcome of inspections can lead to sanctions against the school (Perryman, 2009). These sanctions may include assignment of poor grades such as satisfactory/needs improvement or inadequate (Jones & Tymms, 2014) and publishing such grades, as well as placing schools 'In Special Measures' (Howarth, 2017) for comprehensive monitoring. Perryman (2009, p. 613) notes that in extreme cases where no improvement in school performance is seen, the school would be closed.

As was mentioned in chapter 2, in Barbados supervision coupled with periodic full-inspection is used to monitor education. Supervision of schools typically involves visits, the examination of documents such as log books, attendance records, inventories and instruction records as well as observance of pedagogical and administrative practices (1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations). In Turkey where the Ministry of National Education utilises supervision as its monitoring tool and where supervisors are 'expected to guide, orientate and perform their role of improving teachers' educational behaviour in order to raise the level of education' (Yavuz, 2010, p. 372); primary school principals' who evaluated the effectiveness of the supervisors reported that supervisors checked procedures such as office work, personnel affairs, office supplies and payments. Focusing on what can be considered mundane tasks rather than on substantial activities such as quality instruction and learning (Yavuz, 2010) and the use of the 'tick box approach' or checklists to monitor and evaluate education can result in the formation of negative feelings or perceptions of the inspection process and the inspector's role (Baxter & Clarke, 2013, p. 703).

4.3.2 Legitimacy, Authority, Power and Influence

The implementation of policies for monitoring the function and performance of educational institutions through the medium of inspection can be

conceptualised as a practice of power relations between Ministries of Education and their agents, the inspectors, and personnel in the schools (Ball, 1993; Levinson, Sutton, & Winstead, 2009; Bristol, 2010). These power relations are often visible during the monitoring process as inspectors visit schools. During these visits issues of power, authority and influence can arise and can be determinant factors in whether inspectors achieve their goals.

The effective operation of bureaucratic education systems is dependent on the application of rules and laws. Lee et al. (2008), in their case study of schools in China where the combination of administrative supervision and educational inspection is practised, concluded that school supervision and inspection require legitimacy and authority. Additionally, in bureaucratic education systems where accountability and performativity (Perryman, 2009) are promoted, legitimacy and authority are created through the enactment of laws, acts and rules and regulations, 'a rational-legal framework', (Casey, 2004, p.62) which governs performance of all persons in the hierarchical organisational structure.

As a result of the dynamics of bureaucratic educational organisations, issues of power, authority and influence can arise and can be determinant factors in whether monitoring systems achieve their goals. This is apparent because bureaucratic authority introduces assumptions of inferiority, inability and domination among the subordinates in the organisation (Yavuz, 2010; Casey, 2004). These assumptions may have a negative impact on the inspectors' ability to use either personal or position power to influence school personnel (Yavuz, 2010) and ultimately on the perceptions of school personnel. Further evidence of the presence of assumptions of superiority, power and authority among inspectors was found in an earlier study conducted by Gaziel, (1979) who found that in Israel where monitoring concerns both control and development of school personnel, superintendents believed that they had to be in control of the schools in order that education policies may be carried out.

The introduction of new education policies has been found to affect inspection and the inspectors' role, especially when these policies introduced changes that were perceived to affect the inspectors' position in the education system

and their power and influence in the schools. Gaziel (1979, p. 60) found that the ambiguities which existed in Israel's education system were created by the position of the inspector in the education system.

Similar concerns to those mentioned above were found to exist in New South Wales where inspectors performed the dual role of assessor and advisor. Logan (1974, p. 109) found that inspectors were against changes in their roles, preferring to retain responsibility for all related inspectoral and supervisory tasks. Three decades later, similar evidence was presented by Nir & Eyal (2003) who found that Israeli inspectors were fearful of efforts to change their role because they felt threatened as a result of a reduction in their power and loss of status. This response to the policy changes is not surprising since status and position equals power and influence; erosion of one aspect is, therefore, likely to affect the other. Position and status can also be associated with financial benefits. Changes in employment position may also have implications for future earnings and can be viewed as another potential threat to the role of the education officer.

4.3.3 Relationships and Communication

Human interaction during the process of inspection or supervision is unavoidable and is linked to both the regulative and development functions of the personnel (Baxter & Hult, 2013). Several recent studies have reported mixed views about the connection between inspection or supervision and the building of relationships by inspectors and school personnel (Ehren, Perryman & Shackleton, 2015; Bamikole, 2014; Ehren and Visscher, 2006). Generally, principals and teachers prefer to have cordial, collaborative relationships which facilitate discussions with education officers before, during and after school visits. Similarly, Dean's (1995) research conducted in the United Kingdom reveals that in the absence of formal feedback from OFSTED inspectors, principals and teachers felt disadvantaged and welcomed opportunities for discussion of the findings of inspections.

With specific reference to education monitoring in The Netherlands where external inspection is combined with schools' self-evaluation, Ehren et al.

(2015) found that principals and teachers welcomed both verbal and written feedback from officers, especially when the feedback was timely, balanced with a mixture of praise or commendation and criticism, provided opportunities for follow-up work with inspectors and was given in a setting of mutual trust. Issues of distrust and insufficient communication between education officers and teachers were revealed by Toremén and Dos (2009) in their study conducted with Turkish primary school teachers.

While feedback about the inspection process is generally desired and appreciated by principals and teachers across various jurisdictions (Ehren & Visscher, 2006; Wanzare, 2002 ; Gray & Gardner, 1999; Dean, 1995), the approach used to communicate such feedback after an inspection can erode relationships between monitoring personnel and the staff in schools. Wilcox and Gray (1994, p. 252) while analysing the views of head teachers of three primary schools in the UK reported that principals described their experience during the oral feedback stage of the inspection, ‘as feeling like being in the dock’, ‘brutal’ and ‘the worst that could be remembered’. It has also been found that principals and teachers may reject the feedback offered especially when inspectors use what Bitan et al. (2015, p. 420) refer to as the ‘shaming and blaming’ that occurs sometimes during interactions with inspectors and school personnel. It can, therefore, be surmised that fostering professional relationships through frequent and purposeful communication can lead to the development of mutual trust and understanding between education officers and school personnel. This is more likely to result in favourable consideration of the education officer’s suggestions and recommendations as well as to the achievement of educational goals.

The kind of approach taken to supervision and inspection can invariably contribute to or diminish the quality of relationships and communication which occur between officers and school personnel. Approaches which create fear, apprehension, intimidation and which promote the ‘I am the inspector attitude’ (Dean 1995, p. 48) are more likely to hamper the development of good interpersonal relationships and may also contribute to fostering negative perceptions of the education officer’s role. Thus, within education systems,

the importance of the inter-personal dimension of supervision and inspection must be highlighted. Additionally, emphasis must be placed on the maintenance of respect for individuals whose professional self-esteem can be easily damaged during the inspection process by the approach of an unprofessional education officer.

The growth of good interpersonal relations may also be retarded by the influence of cultural norms, especially in small countries like Barbados, where my research is contextualized, where proximity facilitates familiarity and where remnants of plantation culture still influence behaviour. Morrison (2009, p. 757) notes that within the context of inspection in small countries issues may arise regarding ‘young inspectors judging or supervising older mature teachers and principals’. In these circumstances, tensions and even animosity can arise when supervisors and persons being supervised interact.

4.3.4 Resources

Effective external monitoring systems are heavily dependent on the availability of human, financial and material resources. Since the human resource is crucial, ensuring that personnel are well qualified and adequately prepared for their roles, which in some countries, include both regulatory and developmental functions, is equally as important. Given the complexity of both roles and the diverse knowledge and skills required, the development of inspectorial and supervisory personnel is crucial to the monitoring process (Bamikole, 2014; Mwinyipembe & Orodho, 2014; Baxter & Hult, 2013; Yavuz, 2010).

Some research suggests that the quality of the persons recruited for the role of inspector can affect the quality of the monitoring process. Badau (2014) and Gray and Gardner (1999) provide evidence of education officers’ and principals’ suggestions that the recruitment of persons for the post of inspector should include those who in addition to having a background in education, should also possess knowledge in finance, management and law. Within the context of Nigeria, Wanzare (2002, p. 7) reported that inspector recruitment, selection and deployment had a negative impact on the quality of inspection

provided in the schools. The application of all of these requirements to the post may help to prepare education officers for the diverse situations which they may encounter in the field and equip them with the knowledge and skills to provide relevant advice to their constituents in the schools.

Effective inspection of schools also requires time. Insufficient time spent in the schools to conduct the myriad aspects of monitoring can have several implications for the assurance of quality practices in the schools. According to Wilcox and Gray (1994) these implications include lack of quality interaction with principals and teachers and the credibility of the data collection methods and reports. De Grauwe's (2007) analysis of school supervision in several African territories highlights the negative impact of the scarcity of resources which resulted in fewer visits to schools over time; thereby affecting the quality of monitoring in schools.

Financial resources are required for all of the aforementioned activities to be carried-out effectively. These resources are also required for the provision of adequate staffing for inspectorates so that the officers' administrative workload (De Grauwe, 2007; Wanzare, 2002) can be reduced, thereby allowing for the allocation of sufficient time for them to carry out inspections and to provide guidance and feedback to the schools' personnel. The Caribbean saying 'time is money' can be applied in this context to highlight the issue of the substantial financial investment which is required to implement and maintain an efficiently functioning inspectoral and supervisory system in education. Monitoring is time-intensive and labour-intensive. To facilitate a greater investment of time for inspection and supervision, therefore, may require one or more of the following actions: narrowing the scope of the inspector's role and the workload, and an increase in the number of officers to conduct the supervision or a restructuring of the mandate for education. Each change or action would, however, have implications for financial resources. In many small developing countries, however, the lack of financial resources to adequately meet the requirements of all aspects of the education system is a real dilemma. Additionally, as has been shown by Morrison (2009), small countries with limited financial resources may have

challenges recruiting more personnel to support the separation of the assessor and advisor roles of education officers.

4.4 Perceptions

Perceptions are formed as a result of a person's knowledge and experiences. It can thus be surmised that if an individual's knowledge of a topic or process is faulty or limited; and if the experiences that relate to that circumstance are negative, then there is a strong possibility that a person's perception of the topic, event or process may also be flawed or negative. It is my thesis that education professionals' (principals, teachers, education officers) knowledge about the education officer's role; coupled with the experiences which they acquire during the process of external inspection and supervision, can contribute to their perceptions about the education officer's role. Acquiring knowledge about how the education officers in Barbados are perceived contributes to the discussion on clarification of roles, efficiency of the roles and the image of the education officer. The following sections attempt to demonstrate and support this thesis.

Some researchers in this discipline have in some instances focused on both administrative and pedagogical practices of officers while others have focused on one aspect. Since my investigation focuses on all aspects of the education officer's role, I chose to include a mixture of studies to provide a general view of the perceptions of the officers as they engaged in monitoring both administrative and pedagogical practices in schools.

While the field of monitoring and evaluation of education has received a substantial amount of attention in the research community, one area that has been neglected is that of the study of the views, attitudes and perceptions of the role of the personnel responsible for education monitoring and evaluation. The role of these personnel, who have been accorded various titles and roles in different countries, is critical to the effective implementation of monitoring systems in education and thus is worthy of my attention. In the remainder of my literature review, I discuss findings of research which focused on

examining the perceptions of the role of superintendents as outlined in the research questions.

4.4.1 Teachers' Perceptions

Principals and teachers are at the forefront of external supervision and inspection which occurs in schools. As managers, instructional leaders and facilitators of learning, principals and teachers are placed in a position of responsibility for implementing education policies and, thus, are in direct contact with education officers who monitor the education process.

Some of the available literature (Adewale et al., 2014; Badau, 2014; Savas & Dos, 2013; Toremén & Dos, 2009; Ijaiya, 1997; Brimblecombe, Ormston and Shaw, 1995; Wilcox & Gray, 1994), include studies about teachers' perceptions, views and attitudes towards being monitored or evaluated by external entities. The findings of the research mentioned above indicate that perceptions, attitudes and views were diverse. Teachers' perceptions about the various processes of external monitoring of education and the roles played by inspectors, supervisors or education officers were variously reported to be negative, positive or mixed within and across studies.

It has been found that the behaviour exhibited by school inspectors and supervisors contribute to how teachers view these personnel. Some studies revealed that inspectors were observed as having displayed a range of behaviours which can be categorized as both negative and positive. For example, Wilcox and Gray (1994) and Brimblecombe et al. (1995) reported the use of both favourable and unfavourable terms by British teachers to describe inspectors' behaviour during the inspection process. These included terms such as 'polite, considerate, unobtrusive and model guests' (Wilcox & Gray, 1994, p. 253), and 'reassuring, helpful, supportive,' (Brimblecombe et al., 1995, p. 57). Conversely, some teachers were critical of the time allocated to the inspection process as well as the inspectors' approach to their work. Comments range from 'very secretive, concentrating on their own business, not able to communicate with them... and not put you at ease' (Wilcox and Gray, 1994, p. 254), to 'cold, rude, openly critical and hostile'

(Brimblecombe et al., 1995, p. 57). These latter comments exemplify the negative views some teachers expressed about the inspectors who visited their schools.

The results of research conducted since the 1990s are consistent with those that were conducted during the earlier period. It, therefore, appears that teachers' perceptions about inspection or supervision and the role of inspectors have undergone very little change over the years as has been indicated by the findings of more recent research conducted by Savas and Dos (2013), Ajuoga, Indoshi and Agak (2010), Toremén and Dos (2009). These studies reported both negative and positive perceptions of the officer's role. In the case of Toremén and Dos' (2009, p. 2008) study conducted in Turkey where monitoring is done by supervision, the results revealed that the participants used '76 negative metaphors, 8 metaphors that indicated that the inspectors are not needed and just 12 positive metaphors' to describe and evaluate their perceptions of the inspectors. This study indicates an overwhelming negative perception of the inspectors. Four years later, Savas and Dos (2013) also reported that strong negative views were linked to the supervisor's role. In this study, the duties/roles of Turkish inspectors were found to have a number of shortcomings. Participants' expectations of the inspectors' role included the presence of 'betterment efforts, assessment quality and communication skills' (p. 21). These results also provide us with some insight into how the supervisors were perceived by the teachers and they substantiate similar findings of negative perceptions identified in my study, as well as other studies.

While there seems to be fewer studies conducted among secondary school teachers, similar findings to those reported for primary school teachers have been reported in countries such as the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Australia and Tanzania (Badau, 2014; Haule, 2012; Dean, 1995; England, 1973). Secondary school teachers, like their primary school colleagues, play a critical role in the delivery of education and also assist with the managerial functions in schools as heads of department and heads of year groups. Some researchers (Adewale et al., 2014; Badau, 2014; Chapman, 2002; Ijaiya, 1997; Brimblecombe et al.,

1995) have reported the presence of generally negative perceptions of inspectors and the inspection process. These negative perceptions have been largely related to preparation workload, high stress levels, infrequent visits, lack of officers' interpersonal skills, insufficient time spent observing lessons and lack of pedagogical support.

While it can be argued that teaching is generally a stressful occupation, some studies have reported the presence of increased levels of stress experienced by teachers during inspection. English secondary school teachers who participated in Brimblecombe et al. (1995) qualitative study conducted in the UK reported experiencing stress levels that far exceeded what was normally experienced during the execution of their daily duties. According to Brimblecombe et al. (1995, p. 54), the highest level of stress was experienced before the actual inspection took place. While this occurrence can be attributed to the increased workload as a result of preparation for the inspector's visit, Brimblecombe et al. (1995, p. 54) also suggest that another contributing factor may have been the teachers' lack of knowledge about the structure and intent of inspection which may have contributed to their anxiety and thus to the formation of negative perceptions about inspectors and the inspection process. A link between inspection and high stress levels has also been reported by Case et al. (2000) in their study of primary school teachers in the UK.

Haule's (2012, p. 46) report that Tanzanian secondary school teachers perceived inspectors as 'faults hunters' who engaged in routine practices that were not meaningful to the schools, provides additional evidence of secondary school teachers' negative perceptions of the inspectors' role.

4.4.2 Principals' Perceptions

Principals of primary and secondary schools function as managers and leaders and are therefore at the forefront of educational monitoring in schools.

Principals, as a result of their position in the education hierarchy, are expected to work closely with education officers to implement the policies and programmes designed by Ministries of Education. As such, they also have an

important role to play in ensuring that financial and human resources are managed efficiently, that the curriculum is administered effectively, that teachers are held accountable for the performance of their students and that required data is provided to the Ministry of Education in a timely manner.

The views of other school managers as related in the literature (Bitan et al., 2015; Badau, 2014; Haule, 2012; Yavuz, 2010; Gray & Gardner, 1999) though mixed, also reflect generally more positive perceptions of the inspection process and the inspector's role. This may be attributed to the fact that the position of principal and inspector can be located within the higher levels of the organisational structure of the education system and as such persons in these positions may share common perspectives on the inspection process. Additionally, principals, as leaders of the schools may be privileged to more opportunities for interaction and collaboration with education officers than teachers. As the persons responsible for the performance of the schools, principals may themselves experience pressure, especially if the school is judged to be failing or under-performing. In this context principals may also feel the need to apply internal pressure on teachers in an effort to ensure that the schools are 'ready for inspection' or to ensure that schools' performance improve, especially after receiving a negative inspection report (Chapman, 2002). In the United Kingdom where the responsibility for school inspection falls to OFSTED, it is not uncommon for principals to be terminated, reassigned or for them to resign. It was reported that the Principal of King's Lynn Academy in the United Kingdom was removed from that role after the school was deemed to be inadequate by OFSTED (Bishop, 2017). In extreme cases, schools which do not show signs of improvement after receiving a failing grade are closed down (Perryman, 2006, p.149).

Among those supervisory behaviours which have been found to contribute to the principals' negative perceptions of the inspector's role are a focus on checking documents rather than on the substance of teaching and learning (Haule, 2012), the process being 'reductionist or superficial' (Gray & Gardner, 1999), and lack of professionalism and insufficient time spent in schools to

conduct observations. Of particular concern to principals who participated in Dean's (1995) study conducted in the UK, was the feedback or lack thereof from supervisors. When viewed from a leadership perspective, the information reported or shared by inspectors and supervisors can be essential to the decision-making process at the level of the school and at the level of the Ministry of Education. Principals, therefore, expected the supervisors to take the preparation of reports seriously, to present objective findings and to include meaningful suggestions so that the necessary changes could be implemented to the benefit of the school (Dean, 1995).

Despite the shortcomings identified by principals of primary and secondary schools, the majority of them felt that inspections were necessary and valid (Dean 1995; Gray & Gardner, 1999). This finding contrasts with those which indicate that teachers held strong negative views about inspectors and the inspection process. According to Haule (2012, p. 44) who conducted research in Tanzania where inspection occurs, the principals' views can possibly be linked to the fact that principals are members of the administrative hierarchy of the Ministry of Education and as such can be regarded as 'internal custodians' who ensure that educational standards are met and maintained. Thus, since principals also function in the role of inspector and supervisor, albeit, on an internal level, it is reasonable to assume that they would make positive judgements about the process which they help to administer. This perspective is supported by Bitan et al. (2015) and Gray and Gardner (1999).

In some instances, including in Barbados, principals welcomed inspection and supervision because it provided external support and validation for initiatives which teachers may have been resisting (Gray & Gardner, 1999). Others suggest that receiving judgements from external sources may help teachers to overcome 'organisational blindness' (Bitan et al., 2015) by being more reflexive and objective about their practices. This evidence indicates that there are differences between the perceptions of principals and teachers about some aspects of external supervision.

4.4.3 Perceptions of Superintendents, Inspectors, Supervisors or Education Officers

In countries where monitoring of education is the direct responsibility of Ministries of Education, monitoring personnel occupy a key and distinctive place in the educational system. As such, they could be regarded as mediators between school personnel and staff at central administration or the Ministry of Education. Consistent with their role as mediators, these personnel also have responsibility for ensuring that principals and teachers adhere to the administrative and pedagogical policies of the Ministry of Education which has overall responsibility for the education system.

Many monitoring personnel function within bureaucratic systems and as such they are guided by principles which promote adherence to rules and regulations, accountability, and following directives given by their superiors. As a result, inspectors, supervisors and education officers are likely to perceive their role as authoritative and controlling in keeping with the principles of the bureaucratic systems.

Although there is a dearth of research which examines the views of monitoring personnel about their own role, there are a few European, African and Asian studies which provide some insight about this subject. These studies will form the basis for my discussion in the following sections.

For supervisors and inspectors, knowledge of the Ministry of Education's supervisory mandate is critical since this provides the legal framework for the work done in the schools. Evidence from my investigation supports Gaziel's (1979) study which suggests that inspectors consider lack of clarity or ambiguity of the mandate to be one of the factors that can impact on their role. Similarly, Jaffer (2010), who conducted research in Pakistan, found that education policies lacked specific guidelines or criteria for supervision and inspection. Furthermore, Norwegian school inspectors felt that they lacked sufficient legitimacy to adequately fulfil their roles (Hall, 2016). Since the granting of legitimacy and authority in bureaucratic institutions is derived from the establishment of acts and regulations, ensuring that the appropriate

legislation is enacted to secure the position of inspector, supervisor and education officer in the hierarchy is crucial.

In an environment of change where the implementation of new policies and reforms occur frequently, education officers may experience feeling threatened and undervalued when policies which question the need for monitoring in education are introduced. When new policies also affect their status, position and role, the threat may seem even greater. In some countries where the trend is towards greater school-based management (Nevo, 2001) and school self-evaluation (Janssens et al., 2008), superintendents reported that they felt that their role was threatened and undervalued. The resultant demotivation of officers may negatively affect perceptions of their role and may impact on the execution of their duties, as well as their interpersonal relationships with school personnel (Nir & Eyal, 2003).

The multifaceted role of inspector, supervisor and education officer requires that they be adequately prepared to execute their duties successfully. Hall (2016), Ajuoga et al. (2010), and Kanan (2005) indicated that there were shortcomings in the areas of training, qualifications and job descriptions of inspectors. Initial and in-service training for supervisory personnel seems to be non-existent in many countries, including Barbados. Evidence collected in Palestine (Kanan, 2005, p.163) suggests that many supervisory personnel were not prepared prior to being hired for their roles and for many, their in-service training occurred through 'trial and error' as they conducted visits to the schools. In Kenya, where some pre-service training does take place it was reported that the training did not cover supervision knowledge and skills (Ajuoga et al., 2010, p. 114). These phenomena can have implications for the execution of roles as well as for the quality of administrative and pedagogical support which officers provide for the school personnel. Furthermore, lack of knowledge and training can also affect the self-confidence of the officers who are required to interact with teachers and principals, many of whom are well-qualified. Since these issues can also have implications for the quality of the

monitoring process, careful recruitment and preparation of supervision personnel must feature prominently on the educational monitoring agenda.

Several aspects of the officers'/supervisors' role seem to be shrouded in ambiguity and mystery. In some jurisdictions like Barbados (1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations), Kenya (Wanzare, 2002) and Israel (Nir & Eyal, 2003), where external monitoring falls under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, supervisors perceive that they are employees of the Ministry of Education and, therefore, function on behalf of the organization. Hall (2016, p. 13) and other writers have concluded that school inspectors function as 'institutional agents and entrepreneurs' as they promote the policies of their employer and contribute to the shaping of the education system. This description of supervisors aligns with the roles and responsibilities outlined in the legislative frameworks produced by various Ministries of Education across the world which have retained direct responsibility for external monitoring of education. Two examples from the Caribbean are found in the 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations of Barbados and the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago 1979 Education Act.

4.5 The Future of Inspection and Supervision

The face of school supervision and inspection has been undergoing tremendous changes over the years. There is strong agreement in the literature for monitoring of education and for the need for personnel to function as monitors, regardless of their title. As has been shown by the evidence presented earlier in this chapter, persons who have been intimately involved in and affected by the process (teachers, principals, education officers), have advocated for continued improvement in the way education systems are monitored and evaluated.

Among the changes being suggested by school personnel is the movement away from compliance models of monitoring that focus largely on exercising control and holding persons accountable to a central authority, to

developmental models of monitoring which promote collaboration, empowerment and self-monitoring. It is also recognised that centralised bureaucratic systems promote control and surveillance mechanisms that are not conducive to the developmental model of school supervision. Some writers (Haule, 2012) promote calls for the separation of the roles and the establishment of independent inspectors who do not fall directly under the influence of the Ministry of Education. This suggestion is similar to the monitoring model used by OFSTED in the UK. This model has, however, received its share of criticism over the years. For small countries like Barbados, however, separation of the control/accountability and school improvement roles may prove to be a challenge given the particular socio-economic circumstances of these countries.

The provision of adequate human and financial resources in education systems has been identified as being important for the future of school supervision and inspection. Concerns expressed by school personnel and by inspection teams about the short periods of time inspectors spend in classrooms, the infrequent visits and limited follow-up sessions, indicate that there is a need for more supervisory personnel which has financial implications. Furthermore, a reduction in the supervisors' workload is worthy of consideration so that there is greater efficiency in achieving the goals of monitoring education.

4.6 Conclusion

The research literature examined in this chapter presented findings from several countries on the subject of inspection and the teachers', principals' and education officers' perceptions of the role of inspectors while also providing a comparison with the inspectoral mandate and process in Barbados. The main issues of supervision and inspection identified, centred on education systems and their mandates, bureaucracy, human relations, resources, power, authority, legitimacy and roles.

The consensus in the literature is that perceptions about the role of inspectors were both negative and positive. Generally, however, perceptions were determined to be more negative, especially among teachers. Principals generally supported the need for external supervision and inspection but with some changes which would provide greater support for the schools. Thus there seems to be some differences in the perceptions of teachers and principals about inspection and the role of the inspectors.

CHAPTER FIVE

Research Design and Methodology

5.1 Introduction

My study was designed to investigate how education in Barbados is monitored and, specifically, to assess perceptions of the education officer's role within this process. The qualitative methods, procedures and processes which I selected to answer the research questions are outlined in this chapter.

I first provide an overview of the qualitative interpretative/constructionist research paradigm and explain the reason why this methodology was chosen. This is followed by explanations of how the participants were selected, and the value of using semi-structured interviews and document analysis in qualitative research. Additionally, an explanation of the data analysis process, as well as the ethical procedures which guided my study have been provided.

5.2 Qualitative Interpretivist/Constructivist Research

Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p. 3) are of the view that qualitative research is a field in its own right with many research perspectives and methods that consist of a set of interpretive practices that help us to understand the world. In an effort to achieve this goal, qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings and interpret the meaning that people bring to various phenomena.

My research was guided by an interpretivist/constructivist theoretical perspective which according to Howe (2001) views 'knowledge, particularly in social research, as actively constructed - as culturally and historically grounded, as laden with moral and political values, and as serving certain interests and purposes' (p. 202). I believe that this approach best suits the problem under investigation since perceptions are constructed out of the experiences that occur as we interact with persons, processes and objects that are encountered in our everyday lives. Additionally, the qualitative

interpretivist/constructivist approach provided me with a framework to explore the historical, cultural and political nuances of the education officer's role in monitoring education in Barbados. According to Andrade (2009):

an interpretive approach provides a deep insight into the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it. Interpretive research assumes that reality is socially constructed and the researcher becomes the vehicle by which this reality is revealed (p. 43).

Another perspective on interpretivist research is provided by Garrick (1999) who informs that:

a central tenet of this domain is the belief that individuals are not merely passive vehicles in social, political and historical affairs, but have certain inner capabilities which can allow for individual judgements, perceptions and decision-making or autonomy. Possessions of such capabilities, it is assumed, can contribute to, influence or even change events (p. 149).

I, therefore, believe that the interpretivist/constructionist approach was applicable to my research design and was the best method to help me gain insights from the views of persons about the education officer's role.

I support Andrade's view of the role of the researcher in social research. I also believe that I have a responsibility as a researcher to interpret the views of my participants as accurately as possible and present them to my readers, while hopefully increasing their knowledge about the role of the education officer in Barbados. Thus, the researcher's role while conducting qualitative research must not be underestimated. Braun and Clarke (2006) support this view and give prominence to the important 'active role played by the researcher as he or she identifies patterns or themes, selects those which are of interest and reports them to the readers (p. 7).

5.3 Research Setting and Sample

My research was conducted on the Barbados education system which has three main levels: primary, secondary and tertiary; but the research focusses on the primary and secondary levels. Public institutions at all levels are funded by

the Government of Barbados while oversight of the system is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education has a cadre of junior and senior professional officers who are led by a Chief Education Officer.

At the primary level of the system there are sixty-nine public schools which are distributed across the eleven parishes in the island. The primary schools cater to students between the ages of 5 and 11 years. Public schools are supplemented by a cadre of privately operated schools, some of which are supported financially by the Ministry of Education. Public and private primary schools implement the national primary school curriculum. The secondary level consists of twenty-two public schools which offer both academic and technical and vocational programmes to students between the ages of 11 and 18 years. A number of privately operated secondary schools, some of which are supported financially by the Ministry of Education complement the offerings of the public schools. All secondary schools implement the national secondary school curriculum and prepare students for national and regional examinations.

For the purpose of my research, a sample, which comprised education officers, and principals and teachers from both primary and secondary schools, was utilized to help me address the overall question about perceptions of the education officer's role. To this end a non-probability purposive sample was used. Teddlie and Yu (2007) define purposive sampling as the process of selecting individuals, groups of individuals or institutions based on specific purposes in relation to answering a study's research question. Maxwell (2013) holds a similar view but uses the term 'purposeful selection' which he defines as 'a strategy for deliberately selecting settings, persons and activities to provide information that is particularly relevant to your questions and that can't be gotten as well from other choices' (p. 97). My choice of participants was, therefore, guided by the need for me to collect information which was pertinent to answering my research questions and I determined that the best place to get this information was from those persons who are intimately involved in the monitoring process.

The number of persons selected was also considered carefully. Since it was my intention to use a grounded theory approach (an explanation of this theory is provided later in this chapter) to the data analysis I took into consideration recommendations made by Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007). These researchers suggest using 15-20 participants when incorporating the grounded theory approach in research. But considering that I would also be conducting interviews which are time-intensive and which can yield hours of recorded data to be transcribed, I decided that twelve participants would be adequate for the purpose of the study. Consequently, twelve (12) persons were selected from the overall population of education officers, principals and teachers. Table 5.1 shows the composition of the sample which comprised education officers, principals and teachers.

Table 5.1: Distribution of Research Participants

Education Officers		Principals		Teachers	
Senior		Primary		Primary	
Education		School	2	School	
Officers	2	Principals		Teachers	2
Junior		Secondary		Secondary	
Education		School	2	School	
Officers	2	Principals		Teachers	2

The participants were chosen from these three groups for the following reasons:

- **Education Officers**, both senior and junior, are employed by the Ministry of Education as agents of the Chief Education Officer. According to the 1983 Education Act and Regulations, they have responsibility for visiting the primary and secondary schools to collect various kinds of data and for reporting their findings to the Chief Education Officer. I believe, therefore, that education officers are important to the monitoring process and are well-placed to share perceptions of their role.

- **Principals** are employed by the Ministry of Education to manage administrative and pedagogical processes in the schools. Additionally, they have responsibility for ensuring that education policies are implemented in a timely, efficient and effective manner and that relevant data is made available to the Ministry of Education. Like the education officers, principals are important to the monitoring process. I also believe that they have a story to tell about their experiences of the monitoring process.
- **Teachers** comprise the third crucial group that plays a role in the monitoring process and as such I believe they too have stories to share about their experiences of the process and their perceptions about the education officer's role. Teachers participate in and contribute to the administrative and pedagogical processes in the school. They help to generate data which are pertinent to the decision-making process in the education system.

The three groups identified above represent key informants for my study. By targeting both junior and senior education officers as well as principals and teachers from the primary and secondary levels of the education system, I was able to generate information that helped me to address the research questions and to determine whether perceptions about the education officer's role differ among individuals or across the local education system. Another reason for including this group of persons is that they are intimately involved in supervision and monitoring in the education system either as supervisors or monitors as well as persons who are being monitored and, therefore, they were able to draw on their experiences, which provided the basis for sharing and discussion during the interview process.

Determining the number of participants for the research was also guided by practicality. Given the constraints of the completion deadline for the research as well as the reality that interviews can generate volumes of information which have to be transcribed and analysed, I was mindful that my research sample needed to be manageable. Additionally, I was not aiming for

generalization of the findings but rather to illuminate experiences and explain how persons view the role of the education officer. I believed, therefore, that a sample of twelve key persons would provide manageable quantities of data for analysis which would allow me to identify recurring themes and to know when ‘theoretical saturation’ or the point at which no new recognized codes have been reached during the data analysis process (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006).

The process of identifying possible participants for the study was not difficult since my day to day duties placed me in direct contact with other education officers as well as principals and teachers. I approached prospective participants informally and introduced them to the research by explaining the rationale for conducting the research as well as why I was soliciting their involvement. The persons I approached immediately consented to being participants. It is possible that persons’ willingness to participate in the research may be attributed to my position as an education officer. As such, prospective participants may have been afraid to say no to me. I, therefore, acknowledge that the interplay of power relations which exist between the participants and I may have implications for the quality of the data which the interviewees gave. As a consequence, my position as education officer may have influenced the information shared by the participants, especially those who are junior to me. Additionally, it is my view that having established many cordial professional relationships with principals, teachers and fellow education officers over the course of my career, made it easier for me to get persons to consent to participating in the research.

I, therefore, acknowledge that my familiarity with the participants as well as my position as education officer may have influenced the participant’s views and by extension the quality of data collected.

5.4 Methods of Investigation

My research incorporated the use of two main methods of data collection: interviews and document analysis. Since I decided to utilize a qualitative

interpretivist/constructionist approach for the study, I thought that the best methods which matched this methodology were interviews and document analysis. The nature of my research question was also a critical factor in my choice of methods. In order to gain insights into perceptions of the education officer's role it was important for me to use a method which would facilitate the collection of the views of persons who are intimately involved in the monitoring process. Additionally, both the interview and document data provided me with information which I could interpret and analyse. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) suggest that it is the paradigm and research question which should determine which data collection and analysis methods would be most appropriate for a study.

It was also my belief that I needed to examine the context within which education officers operate. I also felt that it was important to examine the legal framework which governs the education officer's role. To this end, I conducted an analysis of key policy documents which included the 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations, The Public Service Act 2007, and Education Reports of the Government of Barbados for the periods 1889-1940; 1944-1963; and 1969-1971.

Education Acts and Regulations fall under the Laws of Barbados and provide the framework for the operation of the education system. These documents outline the roles and responsibilities of officers of the Ministry of Education and those in the public schools. They also provide guidelines for the management and operation of schools. The Public Service Act was included for study because the Ministry of Education's staff, both administrative and technical, are members of the wider Public Service. As such, they are governed by the rules and regulations of the Public Service Act which also falls under the Laws of Barbados. This Act was also consulted to ascertain additional details about the role of the education officer because I discovered that the 1983 Education Act was deficient in this respect. The Education Reports allowed me to do several things: to trace the history of the practice of inspection and supervision; to determine the roles and responsibilities of

education officers at specific time periods; and to make comparisons while examining the changes in education policy which occurred over the years.

The use of both interviews and document analysis as data collection methods also served another important purpose in my research. The combination of methods helped to contribute to the credibility of the findings of the study by providing a method of triangulation and secondly, allowed me to gain information about aspects of the education officer's role from different perspectives (Maxwell, 2013). The use of multiple sources of data worked together with the methods I used to contribute towards the process of triangulation. To this end data were collected from education officers, principals, teachers and policy documents. I discuss triangulation and respondent validation in my research in greater detail further on in this chapter.

5.4.1 Interviews

Individual interviews formed the basis for the generation of data for my research. This method was selected in preference over other methods because of the nature of my research question. I was interested in finding out about the experiences of persons who were directly involved in the monitoring of education in Barbados. I wanted to learn from the views of persons who gained experiences as a result of their interaction with education officers and the monitoring processes. I wanted as well to explore the perceptions of education officers about their roles.

The use of interviews as a data collection method in qualitative research is well supported in the literature (Maxwell 2013; Chenail, 2011; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Seidman, 2006; Merriam, 2002). Seidman (2006) in his support for interviewing as a data collection method states that:

The primary way a researcher can investigate an educational organization, institution, or process is through the experience of the individual people, the 'others' who make up the organization or carry out the process (p. 10).

Qu and Dumay (2011, p. 245) hold a complimentary view of the semi-structured interview which states that the interview is capable of disclosing important and often hidden facets of human and organisational behaviour and allows interviewees to provide responses in their own terms and in a way that they think and use language.

I chose to use a semi-structured approach to the interviews for two main reasons. This approach allowed me to have some input in the interviewing process by guiding the conversations with my participants while simultaneously providing adequate opportunity for them to express their views and share their experiences about the topic. Thus, I was able to combine structure with the flexibility to ask follow-up questions and to probe participants in order to clarify issues raised during the conversations.

While being cognizant that conducting interviews was the best method for my research project I was also very aware of the nature of the interview process, the role that I would have to play, and the labour intensive nature of the process. I conducted interviews with education officers, principals and teachers over a period of six weeks at locations and times that were convenient for the participants. With the exception of one interview which was done at the participant's home, all others were conducted at the participants' places of work. Each interview, which lasted approximately one hour, was recorded using a digital Note Recorder device.

As was mentioned previously, gaining access to my participants was not problematic since I interact with education officers, principals and teachers on a regular basis during the execution of my duties. At the outset, I assured each participant that I was ethically bound to ensure their anonymity as far as was practicable within a small island such as Barbados. I also assured each participant that the highest level of confidentiality would be maintained throughout the investigation. The participants were each given an information sheet which outlined the goals of the research as well as a consent form. On the return of the completed consent form, a date was scheduled for the interview to be conducted.

I designed a semi-structured interview guide to direct the focus of my conversations with the participants. Ideas for the construction of the guide were gleaned from the literature on the subject as well as from knowledge which I gained from my experience as an education officer. The guide was prepared to collect information that would give general details about the subject of monitoring in the education system as well as specific information about perceptions of the education officer's role. Since the education officers' daily responsibilities help to shape their role, I thought it was important to ensure that the subject was explored in depth. The interview guide was designed, therefore, to move the participants' thinking from general aspects of supervision and monitoring in the education system to specific aspects of supervision/inspection in Barbados and the education officer's role. The topics explored in the interviews included: the purpose of monitoring in education; external monitoring in Barbados; the education officer's role; the effects of monitoring on individuals; and the future of external monitoring in the education system.

Following the interviews, the recordings were reviewed soon afterwards and the process of writing notes about my first impressions of the participants' views began. The process of transcribing the twelve interviews verbatim, took about four months. An identification code made up of letters and numbers was assigned to each transcript. This was done in keeping with my commitment to maintain the anonymity of the participants. This tedious transcription process involved the use of the Microsoft Office word processing programme to highlight interesting sections of the conversations as well as to record notes about my interpretations of the participants' views.

5.4.2 Document Analysis

Gathering and analysing information from documents that are relevant to the research being conducted is an accepted practice in qualitative research.

Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as:

A systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents which requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge (p. 27).

Documents can be used to support the findings of primary methods such as interviews and observation. For the purpose of my research, I conducted an analysis of some educational policy documents which I considered important to an understanding of my research. These documents included the 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations, 1889 – 1971 Education Reports and the 2007 Public Service Act.

Similar to the inductive approach used to analyse the interview data, I approached the content in the policy documents with a view to identifying themes which could be categorized and used to contribute to the formulation of a theory about monitoring of education in Barbados and perceptions of the education officer's role. The documents were analysed and the data gathered were used to corroborate or disprove the views shared by the participants during the interviews.

5.5 Data Analysis Techniques

5.5.1 Grounded Theory

Given the key role that data analysis plays in determining the quality of a study, attention must be paid to the kinds of techniques employed for analysing qualitative research. Green et al. (2007), notes that the process of examining the information collected and transforming it into a coherent account of what was found is critical for the qualitative researcher. Time must be taken, therefore, to ensure that the methods of analysis used align with the problem and with the methodology and methods chosen for the research and that the analysis helps the researcher to understand the research problem.

Having decided to take a qualitative approach and to use the data collection methods of interviews and document analysis for my research, I chose to conduct the analysis of the interview data from a grounded theory perspective. I also decided to incorporate thematic analysis techniques because I believe that before I can attribute a theory to the data I first have to look for and analyse recurring themes.

The grounded theory approach has undergone several changes over the years with varying emphases being applied. Several variants of the grounded theory method of data analysis have evolved since the method was created by Glaser and Strauss in the 1960s. This approach promotes the identification of theories that are present in the data collected.

For the purpose of my research, I chose to adopt the constructivist approach to grounded theory which was popularized by Kathy Charmaz (2011) who describes grounded theory as a method of enquiry 'in which data collection and analysis reciprocally inform and shape each other through an emergent iterative process' (p. 360). Thus, data collection and analysis are simultaneous actions and involve the researcher moving backwards and forwards between the two processes. Following Charmaz's, (2011) suggestions, I first read, compared and coded data collected from the different sets of participants. Next, I compared the codes and grouped those that were similar into categories. I continued the analysis to identify themes. This process helped me to reduce the data to the most salient ideas – those grounded in the data - and provided critical information for further analysis, interpretation and the drawing of conclusions. As was stated in Chapter 3, grounded theory was applied to help me identify the themes present in the research data as well as to aid the selection of the three theories which I determined provided the most suitable theoretical framework of the research.

My choice of a grounded theory approach to the analysis of the data collected was guided by my belief in and agreement with the view that much can be learnt by closely examining a particular topic and the views expressed by persons who by their experiences constructed meaning about the topic.

My engagement with the interview data consisted of re-reading, highlighting of important and related themes as well as comparing the responses of different participants. I created a table to capture the themes or codes and the evidence from the participants' talk. This format, which Joffe (2012) calls a coding frame, allowed me to identify and categorise patterns as well as to compare statements from among and across participants. This constant comparative analysis (Anfara & Brown, 2001) helped me to determine what

similarities and differences emerged from the data. Table 5.2 below delineates examples of codes, themes and categories deduced from the data.

Table 5.2: Example of Codes, Themes and Categories

Research Question	How is the education officer's role perceived by education officers?	RAW DATA	CODES	THEMES	CATEGORIES	
		EDO1				
		We should be the first responders, policing the system, lending expertise and providing training. The data we collect from schools should be used to inform policy	Quality control through visits, sharing expertise, training, collecting data	Quality assurance Control Monitoring Development	Control Development Surveillance	
		EDO2				
		We are the link between the Ministry and the schools. The Ministry needs to know what is being done in the schools and how things are being done	Monitoring To collect data	Monitoring	Control	
		SEO1				
		Education officers need to know how the schools are being managed, how students are being taught. Where there is a deficiency, it is the duty of the officer to report to the senior officer. The education officer is to ensure that teachers follow the curriculum, that the principal has the school organised. Without someone to manage and supervise that, the schools would probably drift in different directions	Need for checks to ensure quality in the system The system must be monitored	Ensuring quality Monitoring Process Management and supervision	Control	
		SEO2				
The education officer's role would spread from checking to ensure schools are directed about what ought to be taught and how, ensuring that management practices are sound, that they are in keeping with what the Ministry expects. The scope has no parameters really in terms of the officers' day to day duties. If you can't do the things you are supposed to do there is nothing that say that anybody would ensure that you can	Monitoring role Lack of power	Monitoring and control	Control Surveillance			

5.5.2 Thematic Analysis

I also employed thematic analysis to guide my interpretation of the participants' perceptions of the education officer's role. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method for identifying and analysing patterns in data. Another explanation of thematic analysis comes from Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) who posit that thematic analysis is 'a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon and involves the identification of themes through careful reading and re-reading of the data' (p. 3).

According to Attride-Stirling (2001), thematic analysis parallels the guiding principles of many other analytic techniques, including grounded theory. Combining both approaches helped me to benefit from existing theoretically related themes while examining the data, not only to corroborate themes identified previously by other researchers, but more importantly, to determine if any new themes about external monitoring of education and perceptions of the education officer's role may exist in my research data (Joffe, 2012). However, no new themes or information was discovered while using the thematic and grounded theory approaches.

An inductive approach was used mainly to aid data analysis for my study. This entailed analysing the responses to the open-ended questions, sentence by sentence, to identify similar themes or patterns. However, by combining an inductive thematic approach (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) with a grounded theory approach, I gained guidelines which helped me to develop a theory about perceptions of the role of the education officer. I also got some insights from the available literature on the subject being studied and utilized my personal experiences to help me make sense of the data.

5.6 Ensuring Quality

The discussion of issues surrounding ensuring and demonstrating quality in research has occupied the minds of researchers from both the quantitative and the qualitative camps for many years. Quantitative research focusses on

maintaining quality and rigor through the use of processes which are believed to help to determine internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity. Some qualitative researchers are, however, of the view that the terms and processes assigned to the positivist paradigm do not adequately fit the nature of research in the qualitative paradigm. Lincoln and Guba (1985) cited by Anfara & Brown (2001) restated the criteria used to determine rigor in qualitative research as trustworthiness criteria which, when employed, ensures that unexplained bias does not creep into the work and that sufficient checks are carried out to ensure that the case matches the constructions of individuals and groups in the context. Patton (1999) while commenting about the diversity of approaches in qualitative research informs that 'issues of quality and credibility intersect with audience and intended research purposes' (p. 1189). It is, therefore, the researchers' responsibility to ensure that their work reflects consideration for their audience as well the intended goal of the research. Demonstrating rigor or quality in research is, therefore, important. In the view of Morse, Barret and Mayan (2002) 'without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction and loses its utility' (p. 14).

In qualitative research, a demonstration of rigor seems to be of even greater importance, since in the past many critics, especially proponents of quantitative and experimental approaches, have argued against quality in qualitative research on the basis that it is not scientific and lacks objectivity and legitimacy (Maxwell, 1992). Creswell and Miller (2000) define validity 'as how accurately the account represents participants' realities of the social phenomena and is credible to them' (p. 124). I agree with Morse et al. (2002) who are of the view that instead of only focusing on being able to explain plausible and credible research outcomes, emphasis should also be placed on the strategies used during each phase of the research which can act as self-correcting mechanisms to ensure quality of the project.

Throughout the research process I tried to establish trustworthiness to ensure that my investigation can withstand scrutiny from researchers in the field I have chosen to study as well as members of the general public. To achieve this, I used the following techniques: triangulation of data collection methods,

sources and data analysis techniques (Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 1999), respondent validation or member checks (Maxwell, 2013); and reflexivity. These are discussed in further detail below.

Triangulation. Firstly, triangulation in methods was achieved by using two qualitative data collection methods. These were semi-structured in-depth interviews and document analysis. Secondly, using a purposive sample, I collected data from three sets of participants whose views were determined to be critical to addressing the research question. Thirdly, I employed a grounded-theory approach as well as thematic analysis to help me identify and categorise emerging themes prior to conducting a comparative analysis across the data collected from the three sets of participants and the documents.

Respondent Validation. In addition to the three types of triangulation used in the study, I also employed the process of respondent validation (Maxwell, 2013) or member checking to help maintain the trustworthiness and credibility of the results. Creswell and Miller (2000) cite Lincoln and Guba (1985) who describe member checks as ‘the most crucial techniques for establishing credibility’ (p. 127). To achieve this, the interview transcripts were sent to the participants and they were asked to review the contents and to inform me of any aspects that were unclear or that did not reflect their views. This action was another way of actively involving the participants in the process of determining whether my interpretations were accurate representations of them.

Reflexivity. The nature of qualitative research requires the researcher to become immersed in the process of collecting and analysing the data. As such qualitative researchers cannot avoid direct contact with those persons who are critical to the success of the research project. It is through contact with the participants that the possibility of the researcher influencing the research process becomes a reality. Since it is virtually impossible to exclude the researcher’s influence, it must be acknowledged and discussed as part of the research process. This acknowledgement and declaration fall within the realm of reflexivity. Reflexivity is commonly viewed as the process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of a researcher’s positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may

affect the research process and outcome (Berger, 2015; Lietz, Langer & Furman, 2006).

Before I began making contact with my participants I had to acknowledge myself as a researcher and had to come to grips with examining the reason why I was pursuing the research in the first place. Having joined the staff of the Ministry of Education as an education officer two years after significant changes were made to the organisational structure of the education system, I fell squarely into the midst of a situation where education officers were protesting against the changes which, in their view, disadvantaged them and advantaged principals. I must admit that I also shared this view and believed that as a member of staff of the Ministry of Education's monitoring agency my position in the hierarchy should leave no doubt about my authority to carry out my duties and the Ministry's mandate. Thus, like other qualitative researchers, I began the research with certain assumptions about the phenomenon being investigated and the people to be interviewed (Merriam et al., 2001).

As a result of having experienced tensions and unprofessional behaviour on the part of some teachers and principals in the course of executing my duties as an education officer, it was important for me to shed some light on the issues surrounding the problem. I also hoped that my research would help to inform the relevant policy and planning in the future. Having decided that my area of study was worth investigating and illuminating, I concluded that with the help of the participants, I could make a meaningful contribution to the research field of external monitoring in education.

I also acknowledged and thought about how my past experiences as a teacher and an education officer may possibly hinder and assist the ways in which I conduct the research. Having worked in the research setting for a long time, I considered myself an insider-researcher in this process. While being an education officer and researcher allowed me easy access to and rapport with knowledgeable participants, I had to be aware of my own biases and had to be careful that in this dual role I did not appear to be sympathetic towards any of the situations which the various sets of participants would reveal.

Additionally, in my position as junior education officer interviewing fellow

education officers, both junior and senior, I monitored the kind of details interviewees provided to the questions asked and I asked follow-up questions when I perceived that the informant stopped short of providing additional details, possibly because they thought I already knew the answer.

I was also cognizant of the power-based relations that exist between myself and some of the participants, especially the teachers to whom I am senior. I, therefore, acknowledge the possibility that my seniority in the education system and the perceived power and authority that is inherent in the position may have had consequences for the quality of the data provided.

Sometimes insider researchers may be challenged to consider their loyalty to the organisation which employs them, their loyalty to the research participants (Sikes & Potts, 2008) as well as determining which role, professional or researcher, should take precedent (Floyd & Arthur, 2012). Fortunately, I did not encounter a situation which caused tension between my role as education officer and researcher. Had this occurred, however, I would have had to decide between my loyalty to my employer and that of upholding the trust and confidence of the participants in my research.

During the interview process, the participants appeared to be comfortable and shared important details relative to the research topic. Every effort was placed on ensuring that questions which were pertinent to the issues surrounding the topic were asked. Care was taken to select the kind of questions that would elicit rich details and provide answers to the research questions.

My research also drew on information contained in documents. Although these documents may be accessible to the general public, I found that being an employee of the system under investigation facilitated easy access to the documents which I felt would provide valuable insights about the historical, legal and political context of the education officer's role.

5.7 Ethical Issues

All researchers are expected to be aware of the possible ethical issues that may arise during the course of conducting research. Qualitative researchers must be especially aware that this research paradigm by its inherent nature and structure 'introduces special moral and ethical problems that are not usually encountered by other researchers during data collection' (Klopper, 2008, p. 71). I agree with Basit (2013) that no research is totally value-free as all research is carried out by humans. Researchers do not come to research as blank slates; rather they come with their preconceived notions about the topic, participants and the setting and they also bring their ontological and epistemological views which influence and shape the kind of research they undertake. Since their values cannot be eliminated, the most that researchers can do is to acknowledge this fact and declare their biases.

As a researcher, I was aware of the need to maintain high ethical standards throughout the research process. One of the ways of doing this was by seeking and gaining ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Sheffield. Additionally, I was aware that the choice of methods such as interviews required me to be cognizant of the kinds of practices which would reduce bias and maintain a high standard of research. As a result, care was taken to design the interview guide in a simple yet effective manner that minimized ambiguity and generated the information that was relevant to the research. The anonymity of the respondents was respected while their consent for participating in the research was obtained by issuing a consent form. The consent form was accompanied by a letter which provided the participants with details about the purpose of the study and the methods to be used for collecting data. Although it is not possible to guarantee anonymity and confidentiality in insider research, efforts were made to conceal the identity of the participants. With particular reference to the use of an audio recorder to document the interviews, participants were informed of my intention to use this method and were assured that the recordings would be destroyed at the completion of the research project.

By deciding to conduct interviews, I was aware of the intimate face-to-face nature of using this method while also being aware of my insider position and the participants' knowledge of that said position. It was hoped that my being an insider researcher would not inhibit the participants and prevent them from honestly answering the questions posed.

Reducing researcher bias in research is paramount. In addition to monitoring my own views and actions as an insider, I asked interviewees to examine the transcripts to verify that they reflected their submissions and that my interpretation of their submissions accurately portrayed their views. This approach was also used to ensure that my analysis remained grounded in the data and provided a true representation of the participants' views (Charmaz, 2011).

In light of the fact that education documents were examined and educational personnel invited to participate in the study, I requested permission from the Ministry of Education to conduct the investigation among staff, to examine relevant documents and to conduct interviews at the schools where the participants are employed as well as at the Ministry of Education's Offices. Gaining permission helped to legitimize the research and created awareness among key stakeholders in education.

An important goal of my research was to produce a document which is trustworthy and which can withstand scrutiny. To achieve this, I applied 'procedural ethics' and 'ethics in practice' (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) to the study. This included paying close attention to the methods, research questions, selecting the sample, analysing and interpreting the data, and finally reporting the findings, to ensure that they met the required standards of the qualitative paradigm and were congruent.

5.8 Summary

This chapter outlined the design of the research as well as the methodology and methods used. As I reflect on the research process, I am satisfied that the procedures used throughout the course of the investigation were appropriate for the research question and that they facilitated the achievement of the goal of the research. Additionally, I am satisfied that the research will make a meaningful contribution to the research community.

CHAPTER SIX

Presentation of the Data and Discussion of the Findings

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present the data collected from the interviews and the findings from my interpretation of the data. Additionally, I provide answers to the six questions used to guide my research. A more in-depth consideration of the findings of the thesis in relation to the theoretical framework will be presented in chapter seven. The main categories of the interview guide and the questions asked during the interviews are also presented.

6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

I designed an interview guide (Appendix 3) which sought to encompass five general areas:

- ❖ Supervision and monitoring in education generally
- ❖ External supervision and monitoring of education in Barbados
- ❖ The Education Officer's Role
- ❖ External supervision and monitoring and its effects on individuals
- ❖ The future of external supervision and monitoring in Barbados

In order to stimulate discussion through-out the interviews, specific questions relating to the general areas outlined above were asked. When necessary, I used follow-up questions to encourage the participants to clarify their views and to provide additional details.

My analysis of the interview data which began during the collection and transcription processes, involved reading the participants' views to identify repetitions and similarities, and differences, grouping similar information together and identifying categories and themes which related to the overall

research question (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The analysis revealed the presence of three dominant and recurring themes which I described as being surveillance, power and authority and bureaucracy. Additionally, I identified several related sub-themes such as quality assurance, control, accountability, responsibility, legality, organisational structure, roles, conflict, relationships, communication, and resources.

To aid the process of analysis and to provide points of reference, the following codes were assigned to the interview transcripts:

Primary School Teacher – PT	Primary School Principal- PP
Secondary School Teacher – ST	Secondary School Principal – SP
Education Officer- EO	Senior Education Officer - SEO

In the following sections, I discuss the relevant themes and sub-themes which I extrapolated from the interview data and outline the processes which led to the identification and extraction of themes. The process of analysis began while the recorded interviews were being transcribed over a period of about three months. This was followed by a process of reading and rereading to ensure that each transcript was an accurate record of the participant's views. These steps were followed by reading and re-reading the interview transcripts to identify similar words and phrases used by the participants as they shared their views about the different aspects of the education officers' role, and the context within which this role functions.

As patterns of information were identified, I recorded notes on the margins of the transcripts. Thus I engaged in both memoing and coding of the data. These processes helped me to determine what themes could be discerned as being grounded in the data. The information from the individual transcripts was examined for their similarities and patterns which were then organised into categories under specific themes:

- Surveillance, power, development and control of persons
- Monitoring: Evaluation; control of systems
- Limitation of Financial and Human Resources
- Interpersonal relationships: Interaction and communication gaps
- Culture, Conflict and the Education Officer's Role

6.3 Data Analysis - The Research Questions

In the following sections, I present the data collected which have been organised as answers to the questions outlined at the outset of my research. To do this, I have drawn from the views of the teachers, principals and education officers which were shared during the semi-structured interviews.

6.3.1 Question 1

How is the education officer's role perceived by teachers and principals?

Responses to the interview questions about the current organisational structure of the Ministry of Education and the role of the education officer revealed that many participants shared the view that the education officer ensured that a link was maintained between the Ministry of Education and the schools. Within this context, the role of the education officer was discussed. The education officer's role received both negative and positive assessment from all of the teachers and principals. This may indicate differences in their experiences with the monitoring process. Additionally, the discussion on the teachers' and principals' expectations of the education officers' role revealed mixed views that exemplified both the control and developmental perspectives. There was also general agreement about the need for the post of education officer in the system.

The following extracts represent the views of three teachers: two from the primary level and one from the secondary level.

I think it is very important. You do need a liaison, someone to bridge between the principal and the minister who makes the policy. His

policies should reach each one of them so you do need that bridge. (PT1, pers. comm., 1 December 2014)

Education officers are the ones carrying the light. They are the ones who get out there to make sure that our education system and national curriculum is in place and working well. They are the bridge between the ministry of education and the schools. I see the connection between the ministry of education and ensuring that the curriculum is being monitored and assessed and the schools are supervised. It is so critical a role for the education officer. (PT2, pers. comm., 20 February 2015)

I think the Ministry of Education itself needs to clarify its role to teachers because very often we are not clear as to the extent of the ministry's role and the extent of the officers' role. That in itself needs to be clarified. And ahmm I think education officers should not only come to evaluate. This carries too much negative connotations. It should be more seen as guidance being offered along the way. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

Well ahmm education officers from the Ministry's end would play a critical role in supervising and monitoring education because they are the link between the ministry and the schools. The perception of the education officer to me now still seems to me to be the person who is coming to see what you are doing wrong. I must admit though that my view has started to change a lot since Mr. ... started visiting the school. He is a person who monitors. He is extremely accessible. I can count on him to bring materials for me. (ST2, pers. comm., 24 November 2014)

While the extracts indicate that teachers generally agree that there is a role for the education officer or someone acting as a 'bridge' or 'advisor' to play, the secondary school teachers' comments reveal a negative perception of the education officer's role. They also allude to the lack of clarity about the role and presumably reflect a weakness in the Ministry of Education's policy of explaining the education officer's role clearly. Furthermore, the comments from the secondary school teachers provide evidence of a preference for the education officer's role to be more developmental and supportive than it was previously.

In comparison, one secondary school principal was critical of the current status of the education officer's role. According to SP1, the education officer, who was once highly visible, played the role of advisor and facilitator, advising the principal.

I saw the role of the officer being diffused a bit because they were caught up with curriculum development and reform in education and I

am not seeing it coming back where there is this strict supervisory adherence now to systems, to schools and to personnel. (SP1, pers. comm., 19 November 2014)

This comment highlights one person's view about the perception of the changing role of the education officer over the years from supervisor or enforcer to that of guide or advisor. Additionally, it implies that the introduction of reforms over the years may have resulted in changes to the education officer's role. Another secondary school principal shared the view that the present organisational structure of the Ministry of Education impacts negatively on the education officer's ability to carry out the role of monitoring at the secondary level, especially as it relates to supervising principals of secondary schools.

You cannot effectively supervise somebody who is beyond you. You can't report to someone who is junior to you. You need a person who is above the principals who would be able to ask questions of the principal in terms of what is happening in the schools, also providing guidance and assistance. (SP2, pers. comm., 20 November 2014)

It appears that the role of the education officer is limited in the primary and secondary schools to that of supervising the teachers only, since they do not have the authority to supervise the principals. As was mentioned in chapter two, the present organisational structure of the Ministry of Education identifies two posts which are senior to the post of principal. These are deputy chief education officer and chief education officer. In the bureaucratic hierarchical education system in Barbados, importance is placed on seniority which is perceived to confer authority and power to those persons who are in the higher positions. It should also be noted that SP2 made reference to the duality of the education officer's role; that is, holding principals accountable for what happens in the schools as well as providing them with guidance and assistance.

This situation outlined above can create difficulties and can affect the execution of the officer's role. The extent to which an education officer can effectively monitor administrative and instructional practices in schools is very dependent on their ability to have a professional relationship with the

principal. In the absence of a professional relationship, the kind of support and cooperation that is needed at the level of the school to ensure that teachers adhere to educational policies may not be present. SP2's comment also suggests the presence of the perception that there is a need for the education officers to be in a position of power and authority in order for them to exercise control over the staff in the schools, especially the principals.

Similar mixed perceptions about the education officer's role were gleaned from the primary school principals. These school leaders not only corroborated the importance of the role but also highlighted the complex, multifaceted nature of the education officer's role, which includes promoting accountability, being a curriculum or subject matter expert, mentoring, advising, supporting and functioning as a counsellor.

Here is what the primary school principals shared.

I have deep respect for my education officer as a knowledgeable person, someone that can assist me, someone that can bring a different perspective to how I am looking at things. I can learn from my education officer and I must say that the entire staff here say, "We haven't seen the education officer, what happen, she forgot us". So it is a sharing process. All schools, all principals, all teachers should see the education officer in that capacity. (PP1, pers. comm., 18 November 2014)

Well I believe that the education officer's role is one of supervising, advising, supporting, regardless of the unit or section represented whether it be supervision and management or the curriculum section. It should really be a supporting role and making sure that the ministry's policies are put in place and are being carried out in the schools. (PP2, pers. comm., 3 December 2014)

The data revealed similar mixed perceptions of the officer's role from teachers and principals at the secondary level. Their views substantiate the calls of other participants for education officers to function in the capacity of professional advisors. Additionally, the principals and teachers of secondary schools highlight the lack of clarity surrounding the education officer's role.

The education officer to me ahmm is the crucial link between the school system and the policy managers. ...they should be able to make decisions regarding adjustment of the curriculum and offer advice and guidance

to teachers. Instead of relying on the top people only the education officer needs to be given more power because the term education officer to me implies some very important management decisions. I am not too aware of the extent of the duties of the education officer. And again that should be clarified. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

I would be glad if they work closer with heads of department. I think there are a number of heads of department who are not in touch with their education officers and I think that link is missing sometimes so I would like them to be more evident in the schools. So I would like to see them more in the schools in an advisory capacity. ... I would give the education officer's role four out of ten base on previous years. I don't think that principals, heads of department and teachers have that connection with them. I still think the majority of them see the officer as the person who comes to see if you have this thing write down today, someone who comes to check up on you, to peep at you, and that kind of thing. So it is changing and I like the new change that I am seeing. (ST2, pers. comm., 24 November 2014)

Similar views were also shared by the secondary school principals:

The visibility of education officers in schools needs to be enhanced. They need to provide that guidance. They need some form of specialised training so that they can empower and advise. Not only that, they are experts in curriculum areas. So there must be a clear bond, a relationship between the education officer and the head of department. The officer can be asked to advise persons, to provide the technical know-how to guide persons and help them get things done. The education officers should not only empower themselves about curriculum matters, but also about matters that can help the individual to develop. (SP1, pers. comm., 19 November 2014)

I think an education officer should be a person who is very knowledgeable, who monitors the delivery of the curriculum on behalf of his or her superior. You are coming in from a position of knowledge and expertise, a person who can speak to the delivery of education.... I don't think we should discount the role of the education officer, the importance of it. There is definitely a role for officers in monitoring, evaluation and the development of the system. You have to be able to offer suggestions towards the development of the system. I think that is important. You are coming in as the officer. So there is already the recognition that you are supposed to be ahead of somebody because you are coming in to monitor. You are coming from a position of knowledge and expertise. A person who can speak to the delivery of education and the craft of teaching. (SP2, pers. comm., 20 November 2014)

Additional views which were shared by **ST1** and **SP2** also highlight the lack of clarity of the education officer's role.

I am not too aware of the extent of the duties of the education officer. And again that should be clarified. This needs to be clarified and can easily be done through the production of a simple booklet which provides details about the duties of all officers, from the chief education officer right down to the officer. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

I am not even sure what the administrative role is as far as the officer is concern or what the expectations are and that is the truth. Again that is another area that there isn't information on. I have searched the Act and I cannot find information on it. ... I know when there are school audits or inspections, the officers are part of the team but I am not sure to what extent or what role they play. (SP2, pers. comm., 20 November 2014)

In response to the question about the purpose of supervision and monitoring in an education system, most of the teachers felt that there must be monitoring to assure the quality of the education product that is being provided, to ensure high levels of accountability among education personnel and to facilitate the implementation of the Ministry of Education's policies and programmes in the schools. The following extracts from the interview transcripts demonstrate this point:

There should be some form of reckoning and accountability for all persons in the system ... for all levels from the teacher to the principals to the education officers. (PT1, pers. comm., 1 December, 2014)

A monitoring system is for me the nucleus of the education system. We need guidelines so the monitoring now helps to make sure that principals and management teams within our schools are following closely to what should be done. (PT2, pers. comm., 20 February 2015)

As the body that monitors education, the Ministry ahmm has to bring some sort of organization and standardization if not we would have a case where we have fifty-two different beliefs at work which might be counter-productive. So I would give supervision and monitoring top priority because in my experience I have seen in the absence of supervision how a system can breakdown. How you can have a very disorganised programme that does not provide enforcement to students' learning. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

The data highlights the perception of monitoring as a means of controlling the personnel in the schools; thus, promoting conformity to the education rules and regulations. As was stated by PT2, this is to ensure that principals and management teams follow what should be done in the schools according to the 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations and the National Curriculum.

Both groups of teachers, primary and secondary, agreed that the education officer is needed to ensure that the link is maintained between the Ministry of Education and the schools. However, a secondary school teacher remarked that some of her colleagues appeared not to be aware that education officers also visit schools as part of their duties. Both secondary school teachers indicated a need for teachers to be informed about the education officer's role. Additionally, they advocated for 'more frequent visits' by officers and 'greater visibility' in an effort to improve relationships and communication and build trust. Lack of contact by the education officer and low visibility can impact negatively on how officers are perceived by teachers. One secondary school teacher related that 'the majority of people still see them as someone who comes to check-up on you' (ST2, pers. comm., 24 November 2014). This negative statement contrasts with the view expressed by one primary school teacher who opined that 'the education officer is not now that monster that comes into the school and makes everybody sit up straight; rather there is a more humane face' (PT1, pers. comm., 1 December 2014). These statements show a difference in the views and perceptions of two individuals. The statements also bring into focus how the education officer was viewed historically and indicate that some participants still perceive them in a negative light.

In a bureaucratic education system, the articulation and delineation of roles are important for ensuring that all personnel in the system are aware of what is required of them, to whom they are accountable for implementing the goals of the organisation and what specific roles and responsibilities they are expected to perform. It is also paramount that all personnel who are employed in the schools, which can be considered satellite offices of the education system, be knowledgeable about their roles as well as those of the personnel in the Ministry of Education.

Thus, the importance of the Ministry of Education in the education system cannot be overstated since this entity can be considered the nucleus of the system. As contributors to the development of policy, the Ministry of Education's personnel, the education officers, play a pivotal role in ensuring

that the country's educational goals are achieved. When asked to discuss the Ministry of Education's role, the interviewees revealed different perspectives. While there was some agreement about the important role of the Ministry of Education, there were some concerns about the ability of the Ministry and by extension, its personnel, to effectively fulfil their roles and monitor the system. The use of the word 'should' by some participants can be interpreted as implying that they perceived there was a difference in the reality of the monitoring situation and what actually 'should' obtain. The following excerpts from interviews provide evidence of the participants' views of the Ministry's role in the system:

The Ministry has responsibility for the system, setting standards, monitoring, evaluating. (SP2, pers. comm., 20 November 2014)

I believe that there should be a unit in the ministry of education in any country that makes reference to the monitoring and the implementation of a national syllabus. (PT2, pers. comm., 20 February 2015)

The Ministry's role is to provide resources for the institutions, to provide guidance in terms of providing leadership and curriculum management and to provide guidance in terms of control because the ministry must be the controlling element of schools, so that when persons step out of line, the ministry must be strong enough to bring them in line or get them out of the system. (SP1, pers. comm., 19 November 2014)

As can be seen from the statements highlighted above, some interviewees perceived that the Ministry of Education exercises a control role. However, this role cannot be examined without a focus on the key personnel who represent this organisation in the schools. As such the education officer's role is linked to that of the Ministry of Education and in essence mirrors the role of the Ministry of Education. Perceptions of the officers' role can contribute significantly to the extent of their effectiveness in the schools. While there was general agreement among the interviewees that the education officer had a role to play, there was some divergence among the participants about what the education officer's role is or should be.

Both primary school principals agreed that monitoring education is critical and that the education officer has an important role to play in the process.

According to one principal,

To have effective monitoring I think that is where the education officer plays a critical role. I think that principals and education officers need to sit down and work together and decide where we are going and then as a body determine how we are going to implement strategies. So I see the education officer as pivotal in ensuring that the district performs well and they would write up their report about what is happening in this district. (PP1, pers. comm., 18 November 2014).

PP2 expressed the following views about the role of the education officer:

Well I believe the education officer's role is one of supervising, advising, and supporting regardless of the unit or section of the Ministry represented, be it the supervision and management or the curriculum section. It should really be a supporting role and making sure that the ministry's policies are put in place and are being carried out in the schools. To my mind that is the general role which includes supporting, sharing, doing your encouraging as well as putting things in place to make sure that your teachers and principals understand what is expected of them and they are told in a way that makes it possible for them to do what is expected. (pers. comm., 3 December 2014)

As can be seen from PP1's comments that are stated above, there is some evidence which indicates that there is a perception of the education officer's role as being more developmental and supportive in nature. Here are two other examples:

I don't think they are seen enough... so I would like to see them more in schools in an advisory capacity. (ST2, pers. comm., 24 November 2014)

...And ahmmm I think the education officers should not only come to evaluate, this carries too much negative connotations. It should be more ahmmm seen as guidance being offered along the way. When an officer visits, I should feel a sense of comfort. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

In the field of education, interaction among persons at all levels is integral to the effective functioning of the system. As it relates specifically to the education officer's role, interaction with teachers and principals and the development of positive interpersonal relationships are also very important. The interview question about the kind of experiences which the interviewees gained while participating in the monitoring process, revealed that there are communication and relationship gaps. Most of the participants indicated that there is a need for greater interaction between education officers and the

personnel in the schools. Here are some views about how to promote effective interaction:

We should be coming together as educators to see what we can do to move the system forward, discuss the various roles of all stakeholders so that people become clear about what it is we are trying to achieve and we can go there as a collective. So the powers that be need to bring us together to determine what it is we are trying to achieve and so that principals and teachers know what our roles are. So if we start there, they would be more receptive to the officers coming in and let them know that the officers are knowledgeable persons who are coming because they have expertise in a particular area, they are consultants. It is not that we do not think you are knowledgeable but you might not have all of the skills so that kind of consultancy function of the officer probably needs to be clarified. (EO1, pers. comm., 26 November 2014)

Ahmm certainly direct contact with teachers is important. Very often education officers are introduced to the school principal or head of department but not to the teacher. For me, personal contact shows that I am important and that you are interested in how I deliver instruction and in my contribution. That is the first suggestion I would make. So I would recommend that they meet teachers to have discussions and to clarify their role. Also I think that the springing of sudden visits tend to throw off teachers. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

Maybe you can have the officers meeting some of the people who are under their charge possibly once a year because you will have new teachers. They can introduce themselves, say what their role is. I think it is so important for education officers to ask 'how can I help you'? When you ask that, it changes so much in your mind. So you can have some more of that happening when they visit schools. (ST2, pers. comm., 24 November 2014)

Additionally, the kind of approach used by some education officers to execute their role received harsh criticism from participants at both levels of the system. The following extracts provide some evidence to substantiate this view:

There needs to be interaction. They need to come out to see what is going on, to stop trends and to start trends. They need to have a good relationship with the principal. (PT1, pers. comm., 1 December 2014)

I have seen sometimes officers who I would wish didn't visit the school and officers whom I welcome any day. Yes we know you are in charge, but you still must come as a human being. Good human relations are so essential and important. ...so I go back to the fact that our system needs good human relations training. Unless you can relate well and make

people feel warm and human then we are not going to grow. (PT2, pers. comm., 20 February 2015)

I would advise that there are more frequent conversations among teachers and the Ministry of Education. If that happens, to me there would be less myths and misunderstandings. Conversations allow for more ease of access and comfort to get the things going. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

When asked to recount some of their experiences while interacting with education officers during the course of their duties, teachers and principals generally related having positive interpersonal relationships with education officers. In contrast to the teachers and principals, however, a few education officers related being on the receiving end of unprofessional behaviour from both teachers and principals, especially from principals at the secondary level of the education system. The following extracts give us a glimpse of some of the interviewees' experiences:

I have had very good experiences. I will be honest with you. I often say the reason why I believe I would have had good experiences is because of personality, yes your personality and that you are willing to respect an individual first and foremost. (PT2, pers. comm., 20 February 2015)

I tend to get along well with everybody... If there is a matter of concern the first approach is to try to find a solution and to settle the matter. I never stipulated like some people that you have to call me before turning up. Sometimes officers come here and they tell my secretary to let me know they are on the compound. I don't go out there and say that they have to speak to me first. So I have never in my experience and this is seven years as principal and I have not had any kind of difficulty working with them. (SP2, pers. comm., 20 November 2014)

My experiences dealing with officers over the years have been good. Maybe I am one of those fortunate teachers. I have had officers view my lessons and liaise with me and I have always received positive feedback. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

Clearly teachers and principals generally report having had good interpersonal relations. The reported few incidents of tensions and conflict among the personnel in the schools and education officers could therefore be attributed to the personality traits of the individuals involved. The approaches used by the education officers involved may also be a contributory factor to the breakdown in communication and relationships. There is also evidence to indicate that the differences in the education officers' perception of their role

influences their approach and, thus, contributes to the kind of responses and reactions they receive from the teachers and principals.

In summary to this section about the teachers' and principals' perceptions, I conclude that these personnel emphasised the role of the education officer as a monitor of the system and as a knowledgeable expert who can give valuable advice. The evidence presented above also suggests that teachers and principals perceive that the education officer's role has undergone some changes which have placed greater emphasis on the developmental role of education officers. Among the participants, the developmental role seemed to be preferred over the control, evaluation role which is usually associated with inspection. The evidence seems to also suggest that participants perceive the education officer's monitoring role as having oversight of the education processes and being in a position to offer advice, guidance and solutions to challenges.

6.3.2 Question 2

How is the education officer's role perceived by education officers?

As a result of the question posed to interviewees about the education officers' role, I determined that education officers generally have mixed perceptions of their role. All of the officers interviewed agreed that the role is important and that the post of education officer is required to monitor the quality of education on behalf of the Ministry of Education. According to **SEO2**,

Again I think in terms of what the officer ought to be doing. I think it is extremely important. The ministry must have a system of quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation. And I am not talking about big stick ruling. I am talking about a system offering support. I think the officers are here because of the quality of the individual and they have something to offer. Yes you also have to be prepared to identify where there are shortcomings, offer suggestions and point persons to where they can get assistance. But the officer must also be able to respond where persons are failing, for whatever reasons. (pers. comm., 11 November 2014)

Some other education officers shared the following views:

Most of my experiences have been good. I find that in the primary schools the teachers have been more receptive and they try things. In the secondary schools because those teachers have content knowledge they figure that they have pedagogical knowledge as well.... Ahmm until recently I did not have issues at the secondary schools but now the principals are asking me about whether I called before I got there so that is now being an issue and it means that I would not be able to execute my duties which are spelt out in my job description and which says that I have power to enter schools and monitor, supervise and check on practices. (EO1, pers. comm., 26 November 2014)

I have not had any real negative experiences. I have had some reported to me as the senior officer. I have had a response expressed to me about one of my officers from a principal who said to me 'tell your officers not to come back to my school I don't want them in here'. But I have never personally experienced a situation where anybody, principal, teacher, anyone ahmm felt that I should not be there. (SEO2, pers. comm., 11 November 2014)

Well because of my non-combative nature, over the years I have had almost zero negative reactions.over the years because of this approach I have had very little or no resistance from teachers and principals. There are some people who take the management role to the extreme at the detriment of the job.As education officers entering classrooms we need to greet persons and everyone must be comfortable. Unfortunately there are some officers who try to stamp their authority by being overly aggressive. (SEO1, pers. comm., 13 November 2014)

Another senior education officer rated the importance of the education officer's role as nine on a scale of one to ten because according to his view, there is need for a system where the education officer ensures that the teachers follow the national curriculum and adhere to the ministry's philosophy.

Without someone to manage and supervise, the ninety-two schools would probably drift in ninety-two different directions. (SEO1, pers. comm., 13 November 2014)

The junior education officers have similar perceptions and also see themselves functioning as policy makers, monitors of the system, and providers of professional expertise and guidance. The junior education officers emphasised, to varying degrees, both their control oriented role and their developmental role. The following extracts demonstrate the strong views of the education officers who perceive their role as one characterised by control and

surveillance, especially EO1, who spoke about the ‘policing power and authority of the education officer being extremely important’:

We definitely are the link between the ministry and the schools. That link is important for the forward and backward movement of information. We are the persons who are put here to monitor and to guide education. We need to be seen more, so we are definitely relevant. (EO2, pers. comm., 10 December 2014)

We would be the first responders. We are the persons out there at the forefront, interacting with the educators, lending our expertise, providing training, trying to help them have effective schools. It is very important because right now our system is on the decline. I am saying without the policing system how would we get them to do what needs to be done, how would we know what they are not doing? (EO1, pers. comm., 26 November 2014)

Well we should have the education officers or superintendents, whatever term you want to name them who would be the police. I remember going to a school and a little boy asked me “are you the education police?” and I smile and thought he that has got it right. He saw the officer. Someone probably said the word officer and he understood that to mean we are the ones who bring order, who check to make sure that the laws and policies are adhered to. So we should have the education officers which I call the foot soldiers who visit schools to collect data and on the spot try to correct deficiencies. The things that are beyond our scope we should be able to refer to a training institution to have them addressed. The other issues that require policy we would refer them to the hierarchy, those persons above the officer. (EO1, pers. comm., 26 November 2014)

The use of the term ‘policing’ to describe the role of the education officer reflects a perception of the education officer being in charge, surveilling the practices of teachers and principals and meting out ‘punishment’ when they determine that rules and regulations have been breached. This view is linked to Bristol’s (2010) concept of plantation pedagogy as a managerial practice which promotes surveillance as a form of control. This form of monitoring is sure to influence how persons respond to education officers and consequently will affect the quality of their relationships.

The education officers also perceived that their role has changed or has been diminished especially in light of the system-wide reforms, such as the re-organisation of posts in the hierarchical structure of the education system, which in their view affected the status and authority of the post of education

officer. Some officers spoke quite passionately about this issue and shared the following views:

We are supposed to, all categories of education officers, uh, we are supposed to function in this supervisory role. However, there is an anomaly which was caused by this job evaluation that we had, the officers and seniors are now junior to principals at both primary and secondary schools. Therefore, the principals are saying that we cannot supervise them because they are paid more. So other bits of legislation have come to bear on how well we can supervise the system and how effective we can be as a group. (EO1, pers. comm., 26 November 2014)

If the officer is allowed to carry out his or her duties without any hindrances and issues, they would be able to find out what the teachers and principals are doing in the schools. Right now because of this strange thing, when we go to the schools we know that people are just going through the motions. Some say "Don't mind her". If it was different, we know there would be some kind of sanction, there would be accountability, and when we write our reports they would have weight and be taken seriously. We need to have our laws changed to make people accountable for what is happening in the schools. (EO2, pers. comm., 10 December 2014)

I think its importance has been reduced by some of the very same persons who are responsible for looking after education in Barbados, so I don't think in the scheme of things that the role is now viewed and treated as important as it is. (SEO2, pers. comm., 11 November 2014)

The legislative and organisational changes alluded to by the education officers may contribute to the erosion of the professional relationship which is desirable among education officers, principals and teachers. Furthermore, based on the comments provided above, the education officers' perception of their role includes ensuring accountability and adherence to the Ministry of Education's policies as well as providing guidance and support.

In contrast to the views expressed by school personnel about the need for education officers to play a more developmental role in the schools, the education officers interviewed generally seem to perceive themselves as the persons who exercise control and ensure accountability in the education system.

Here is what **EO1** said during our discussion about the role of the education officer:

If education officers are allowed to function as they ought to I can see the level of accountability being higher. The principals would then have to implement the Ministry of Education's policies or there would have to be some sanctioning for not doing so. The chief education officer must see that he is ultimately responsible for the functioning of this organization and when principals don't do what they have to do there must be sanctions. (pers. comm., 26 November 2014)

In contrast to the views shared by EO1, SEO2 stated the following:

I think the education officer's role is very important. I do not believe in big stick ruling, so when I talk about monitoring and evaluation I am not talking about going out there with a big stick. I am talking about a system offering support. Yes as part of that you have to be prepared to identify where there are shortcomings, offer suggestions to help point persons to where they can get assistance but there must also be that role of an officer to respond where there are persons failing because they are simply not competent, there must be that role for the officer in responding to that setting, that particular reality as well. I also think the role is important because you need quality assurance in every system. (pers. comm., 11 November 2014)

The data showed some difference in the perception of the education officer's role among the education officers interviewed, especially as shown above in the views expressed by one junior officer and one senior officer. It appears that the role of the education officer is limited in the primary and secondary schools to that of supervising the teachers only since they do not have the authority to supervise the principals. This situation can create difficulties and can affect the execution of the officer's role. The extent to which an education officer can effectively monitor administrative and instructional practices in schools is very dependent on their ability to have a professional relationship with the principal. In the absence of a professional relationship, the kind of support and cooperation that is needed at the level of the school to ensure that teachers adhere to educational policies may not be present.

Furthermore, the situation mentioned above brings into focus the interpretation of the word 'supervision' and raises several questions in the process. Can only a supervisor give 'advice'? Within the field of education, can principals not expect and accept advice based on expert skills and competence and not just

from position in a hierarchy? Similarly, in the field of medicine, can a nursing supervisor not advise a doctor based on his or her area of expertise? In the public service, can an administrative officer not advise a Minister based on expertise? The situation also exemplifies the perception that ‘supervision’ and ‘power’ are synonymous. As I stated in chapter two, this ‘mind-set’ had its genesis in the managerial and socialisation practices of the plantation era and has become entrenched in the psyche of our people.

Thus, it appears that there are mixed views about the education officer’s role among some teachers at the primary and secondary levels of the education system as well as among some education officers. These negative perceptions may be as a result of a lack of information about education officers as well as the officers’ infrequent visits to schools. The view about officers’ infrequent visits to secondary schools was corroborated by SEO1 who stated that the Ministry of Education is often referred to as the primary school Ministry of Education because teachers at secondary schools hardly ever see education officers on the schools’ compounds.

It is also worthy of note that there is a difference between the views of the two categories of education officers mentioned previously. The junior education officer perceives the education officer’s role as being control oriented; holding principals and teachers accountable for implementing educational policies. In contrast, a senior education officer perceives that education officers function in a developmental role as well as ensuring that quality services are delivered by teachers and principals across the education system. Additionally, I suspect that the junior officer was referring to the Ministry as the ‘organisation’ while the senior officer was referring to the education ‘system’ as a whole.

Within the context of the education officer’s role, interviewees were asked to respond to a question about the kinds of resources that are required for an education system to be monitored effectively. Based on the views of the participants, it appears that the lack of adequate resources in the education system may also be contributing to the negative perceptions about the education officer’s role. All of the teachers interviewed expressed concern about the education officers’ inability to adequately assist them in the

execution of their classroom duties since they were rarely seen in the schools and were often more critical than helpful. According to the view of one primary school teacher, '*Officers should be seen more often. Years ago officers seem to have had more time to be at the schools*' (PT1). This statement suggests three things: firstly, that some teachers believe that there is a role for officers' to play in the schools; secondly, that there may be hindrances to the officers' visibility in schools and thirdly that a change may have occurred in the education officer's role and scope of work over the years. Based on my knowledge and experience, I suggest that the infrequent visits may also be as a result of insufficient officers or the inefficient deployment of officers to monitor the sixty-nine public primary and twenty-two public secondary schools in Barbados.

The perceived lack of visibility of the officers in schools raises an issue about the human and financial resources available to the Ministry of Education for the purpose of monitoring education in Barbados. There can be no doubt that substantial funding is required to manage the many processes that make up the education system in Barbados such as constructing and maintaining schools, paying salaries, out-fitting classrooms with furniture and resources, training of staff and the provision of meals for students. Presently, the Ministry of Education receives the second highest percentage of the country's national budget, second to the Ministry of Health. In small developing islands like Barbados, where access to funding for programmes is an ever present concern of the Government, using financial and human resources effectively and efficiently is the key to good governance.

Irregularity of contact between education officers and personnel in the schools, for whatever reason, would certainly contribute to a lack of information about education officers and may, therefore, create an environment of doubt and uncertainty among teachers in the schools. The multifaceted nature of the education officer's role which entails fulfilling administrative responsibilities at the central office, monitoring the implementation of policy in schools and addressing the needs of teachers through the provision of advice, training and coaching, can also result in one

or the other role being overlooked or neglected to the detriment of the students, teachers and the entire education system.

The issue of the lack of adequate human resources and thus irregularity of visits to schools by education officers was also raised by the primary school principals. Interviewees were cognisant of the need for there to be adequate trained and knowledgeable human resources in the system:

You need to have persons coming in on a regular basis so that when teachers see an education officer they don't get frightened and think that the officer has come to write them up but that they see the officer as coming to enhance what they are doing in the school. (PP1, pers. comm., 18 November 2104)

There are so few education officers when compared to the teachers in the schools that sometimes weeks pass and you don't see anybody from any department of the ministry and because of that you get the sentiment from the teachers and people in the schools that officers are distant, not really helpful. They just pass through to look at what you do. (PP2, pers. comm., 3 December 2014)

I think you have to have enough officers for them to get to these different schools. I don't think they are seen enough. ... so I would like to see them more in schools in an advisory capacity. (ST2, pers. comm., 24 November 2014)

The call by participants at both levels of the system for a greater advisory role for education officers provides evidence that there is a general view that the officers would be more beneficial to teachers if they were to provide guidance and support. These perceptions may also be attributed to the participants' former experiences with education officers.

The comments highlighted above provide additional evidence that the education officer's role application is viewed generally in a negative light. The views also highlight the impact that inadequate human resources or inefficient deployment of personnel can have on the perception of the education officers' effectiveness in the education system.

An examination of resources must also include perspectives about preparation of education officers for the role they are expected to play. The issue of training for education officers was raised by several participants who agreed

that officers must be adequately prepared for their roles. Some of them expressed the following views:

Education officers need to be trained and to be provided with books and other literature to help prepare them for their roles. (EO2, pers. comm., 10 December 2014)

When you become an education officer you should have some management experience because you are coming in at management level. (SEO1, pers. comm., 13 November 2014)

There is a need for human resources, persons who are actually trained because you need extra training outside of being academically qualified for your post as education officer, but training in management. (PT1, pers. comm., 1 December 2014)

Well one thing they have to do is to be trained. They have to be on the cutting edge and I mean not just in having a degree, trained in what your role is, this is how we want it to be, so one resource would be training. ... I would hope they have the skills and attitude to do it as well. (PP1, pers. comm., 18 November 2104)

You need to be able to access training. I think one of the biggest issues is training for education officers because if they are to be out there monitoring, advising, guiding, and supporting they must be on the cutting edge. A lot of the teachers out there are very knowledgeable and you don't want to be supervising and the person you are supervising can tell you what to do. I believe that that is the main area of need in terms of resources, there must be constant training. Officers will also need resources to help them conduct workshops for teachers, resources which will help to make their jobs easier but be more effective. (PP2, pers. comm., 3 December 2014)

The view expressed by the participant SEO1, is similar to other perceptions that the Ministry of Education is the central administrative authority in the system and as such has responsibility for managing and supervising the processes and personnel in and across the education system. By extension, therefore, it can be perceived that the Ministry's officers, who are employed at the central administration offices and who act as agents to the Chief Education Officer should also be responsible for managing the processes across the education system. Based on these premises, the call for the education officers to have management training is a reasonable one when placed within the context of the Ministry of Education's perceived management focus and role.

6.3.3 Question 3

What differences, if any, are there between the perceptions of education officers and those of teachers and principals?

The major difference that exists between the perceptions of education officers and those of teachers relates to their views about what the education officer's primary role should be. Teachers generally prefer to see education officers focusing on teachers' professional development and the provision of pedagogical support and advice in the classrooms.

Here are some of the teachers' views:

The education officer to me is the crucial link between the school system and the policy managers... They should be able to make decisions regarding adjustment of the curriculum and offer advice and guidance to teachers. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

I would be glad if they work closer with Heads of Department. I would like them to be more evident in the schools. So I would like to see them more in the schools in an advisory capacity. (ST2, pers. comm., 24 November 2014)

The officer comes to see the practice, teachers functioning in the classroom. Their general function as they come into the school is student performance. They also look at teacher performance. Ahmm the education officer in my opinion spends too much time with the principals. There needs to be a lot more movement around the classrooms, interacting with the teacher and the students. (PT2, pers. comm., 20 February 2015)

The data also revealed that the principals generally perceive education officers as experts who should function in an advisory capacity, mentoring and providing technical support, especially as it relates to the delivery of the curriculum.

I have deep respect for my education officer as a knowledgeable person, someone that can assist me, someone that can bring a different perspective to how I am looking at things. So it is a sharing process. All schools, all principals and teachers should see the education officer in that capacity. (PP1, pers. comm., 18 November 2104)

I think an education officer should be a person who is very knowledgeable of the system and the area where he or she is assigned. A person who effectively provides advice, who can bring some solutions or resolutions to problems. (SP2, pers. comm., 20 November 2014)

Well I believe the education officer's role is one of supervising, advising regardless of the unit or section of the Ministry represented. It should really be a supporting role and making sure that the ministry's policies are put in place and are being carried out in the schools. To my mind that is the general role which includes supporting, sharing, encouraging as well as putting things in place to make sure that the principals and teachers understand what is expected of them. (PP2, pers. comm., 3 December 2014)

In contrast to the views expressed by the principals and teachers who emphasized the education officer's developmental role, education officers highlighted their dual role: holding school personnel accountable as well as fostering their development. The following extracts provide evidence of these views:

There would always be a need for education officers. You must have a person there, not necessarily to hand down orders, but to direct, provide assistance, to ensure that the overall policies are being followed. (SEO1, pers. comm., 13 November 2014)

I am saying without the policing system how would we get them to do what needs to be done, how would we know what they are not doing? I am saying if we are serious about education and about getting returns for our investment we cannot have a system out there that is not policed. (EO1, pers. comm., 26 November 2014)

We definitely are the link between the schools and the Ministry of Education. ... Not only do we go in and make sure that the teachers are doing the correct thing. We are a team working for the children of Barbados. (EO2, pers. comm., 10 December 2014)

The ministry must have a system of quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation. And I am not talking about big stick ruling. I am talking about a system offering support. I think the officers are here because of the quality of the individuals and they have something to offer. Yes you also have to be prepared to identify where there are shortcomings, offer suggestions and point persons to where they can get assistance. But there must also be that role of the officer to respond where persons are failing for whatever reasons. (SEO2, pers. comm., 11 November 2014)

Although emphasis on the need for control and accountability is quite evident in the views expressed by the education officers, the data has also shown that some of them also view the education officer's developmental role as being

equally as important in the monitoring process. It is not surprising that the education officers highlighted their control/accountability role since they view themselves as members of the education hierarchy and as agents of the Chief Education Officer.

6.3.4 Question 4

What differences, if any, are there between the perceptions of teachers at different levels of the education system?

Although the perceptions of teachers at both the primary and secondary levels were generally mixed, the secondary school teachers who were interviewed had stronger negative perceptions of the education officers' role. This may be attributed to several factors. Secondary school teachers reported that education officers are not seen in their schools on a regular basis. As a result, secondary school teachers may be less knowledgeable about the education officer's role and, therefore, may be apprehensive about the prospect of an education officer visiting their classroom.

Additionally, as one secondary school teacher reported, very often when education officers do visit the schools they spend most of the time in discussion with the principals and heads of department rather than in the classrooms with teachers. Thus, opportunities for communication and building of relationships between education officers and teachers at the secondary schools are minimised.

6.3.5 Question 5

How do education officers view their position in the education structure?

Education officers view the post of education officer as being important in the organisational structure of the Ministry of Education and in the education

system as a whole. The use of the terms such as ‘first responders’, ‘important link’ and ‘quality assurance officers’ suggest that they view the position as being critical to the effective monitoring of the education system in Barbados. However, the education officers spoke critically about their current position in the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education. All of the education officers interviewed spoke about a restructuring-programme which resulted in the post of education officer, which was previously above the post of principal at the primary level in the organisational structure, falling below the post of principal at the primary level. This change, in their view, has made the position of education officer in the system less relevant than it was previously. The following extracts from the data demonstrate the views of two education officers on this issue:

I do not believe that the current structure in terms of how persons are placed.... It militates against the effective implementation of monitoring and evaluation because if you have a system where persons charged with responsibility to evaluate another post are placed at a level below the persons they are supposed to monitor and evaluate, we have a problem because within the Barbadian setting it is by law that your seniority is determined by your salary. So this imbalance will have implications for effective monitoring. (SEO2, pers. comm., 11 November 2014)

We are supposed to function in this supervisory role. That is what our job description says. However, there is an anomaly which makes the posts of education officer and senior education officer junior to principals at both the primary and secondary schools. Therefore, the principals are saying that we cannot be their supervisors because they are paid more money, and they are right. (EO1, pers. comm., 26 November 2014)

The interview data also revealed that issues of seniority and interaction between persons who occupy senior and junior roles sometimes resulted in tensions and conflict between education officers and school personnel. One respondent shared the following view:

Another issue is that we have a culture here in Barbados where senior persons don't always take kindly to directions and orders from junior persons in terms of age. You would find that most education officers are sometimes significantly younger than the principals that they have to supervise. Because of our culture some principals would see that as an affront, how dare you as a young up-start come to tell me what to do. (SEO1, pers. comm., 13 November 2014)

The view expressed above exemplifies plantation culture. In post-colonial Barbados, there is a widely held view that respect is due to the elders in society and age is to be considered over youth. In the past, this thinking often impacted the hiring practices in the civil service. As was stated in chapter five, age and experience were dominant factors that informed the selection of the earliest education officers. It is my view that the emergence of a culture which promotes a focus on knowledge and certification and which equates knowledge with power as identified by Foucault, is to some extent a dysfunction. As a result of this shift, being older is now not viewed as necessarily better qualified or knowledgeable.

6.3.6 Question 6

How do teachers and principals view the position of education officer in the education structure?

Principals and teachers at the primary and secondary levels of the education system have different views about the position of education officer in the organisational structure of the Ministry of Education. Teachers generally agreed that there is need for an adequate number of persons with responsibility for monitoring education in the schools. This appeared to be their greatest concern which was reinforced by calls for the post of education officer to be expanded to ensure that education officers can have greater contact with teachers in the schools. Additionally, the teachers view the position of education officer as being part of the management structure of the Ministry of Education, a position of authority which should be accorded greater status and respect.

Ahmm I know that there are varying levels of personnel who are given specific duties to oversee the process. There is the chief education officer and two deputies who oversee the schools and management of the programmes and so on. After that I think there is a need for more officers who can effectively monitor twenty-two secondary schools. This is where you can get deficiencies and fall-out, in the middle management. Because of these deficiencies, there are too few visits... I would suggest that they extend that supervisory team within the Ministry

so that there can be frequent conversations between teachers and the Ministry. If you are not having conversations with middle management then there is not that comfort and ease of access. (ST1, pers. comm., 12 November 2014)

Well I don't know how many officers they have. But I am not concerned with the Chief Education Officer and the Deputy Chiefs and so on. I am more concerned with having enough officers on the ground that you can reach them, that they can come to inform you of changes, inform about the syllabus and so on. It is the numbers on the ground that I am concerned about. (ST2, pers. comm., 24 November 2014)

The principals recognized that there is a hierarchical structure at the Ministry of Education in which the technical branch is headed by a chief education officer, followed by two deputy officers, several senior officers and finally several education officers. They are also aware of the education officer's position in the structure. Principals, like teachers, seem to be more concerned with there being a sufficient number of education officers to monitor effectively all of the schools in the education system. Furthermore, one secondary school principal suggested that there is a need for an additional post in the hierarchical structure of the ministry of education which would confer more officers with the authority to monitor the work of the principals.

Now the structure as it is I see nothing wrong with it as long as there is communication going back to the Chief.... If there is not feedback and action on the feedback to drive policy, then you are not achieving anything. (SP1, pers. comm., 19 November 2014)

I am not totally sure that we have all of the players of a structure that can be effective. Ahmm if we have officers in the ministry who are to carry out the bidding of the Chief Education Officer then we have to look to see where let's say in the senior education officer's case, where they fall in the structure of things because you cannot effectively supervise somebody who is beyond you. You can't report to someone who is junior to you. So we have to obviously look at the system.... There might be another level that can be put between the Deputy Chief Education Officer and the Senior Education Officer. (SP2, pers. comm., 20 November 2014)

I conclude that principals and teachers have mixed views about the position of the education officer in the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education. Some have no difficulty with the current position of the education officers. Others recognize that the power and authority for monitoring reside with the chief education officer and, therefore, suggest that information and

concerns be forwarded to the head of the professional team for decision-making and action to occur.

6.4 Summary

An examination of the data collected from the interviewees revealed generally mixed perceptions among teachers, principals and education officers. Although there was agreement among the participants that the education officer's role is important within the context of monitoring, the evidence suggests that there are administrative, economic, social and cultural hindrances to the effectiveness of the education officer's role. Slight differences were found between the perceptions of teachers at the primary and secondary levels. Furthermore, participants highlighted the need for greater cooperation, collaboration and interaction between education officers and staff in the schools at all levels of the system. This opinion was, however, very evident among the secondary school teachers who were interviewed.

The data also provided insights into the relationship which exists between some education officers and principals which appears to be strained. There is also evidence of the existence of tension and conflict in the relationship of some education officers and principals, especially principals at the secondary level. I have concluded that the existence of a less than ideal relationship between these two groups of education personnel is as a result of the ambiguity in the role of the education officer; whether that role should focus on achieving accountability through methods of control or whether the focus should be on the professional development of teachers. Evidence also suggests that there is the presence and interplay of power in the relationship between the education officers and the principals as well as issues surrounding seniority.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, and Implications for Practice and Research

7.1 Introduction

In this the final chapter of the thesis, I review the aims of the study and discuss the findings in relation to the theoretical framework which guided my thinking and analysis throughout the research process. Based on the research topic, I chose to focus on the Foucauldian concepts of surveillance, power and knowledge, Lavia's and Bristol's explanation of how plantation management styles have been incorporated into the education system and Weber's concept of bureaucracy. These three theories combined to provide an appropriate framework on which to build my discussion about the evidence that emerged from the interviews conducted and the documents that were examined.

7.2 Review of the Aims of the Study

My research investigated teachers, principals and education officers' perceptions of the education officer's role within the context of the education system in Barbados. As was stated earlier, my interest in this topic stemmed largely from the experiences which I gained over the course of my career firstly as a teacher and later as an education officer. My study is pertinent because as far as I can ascertain, no study exists on the perceptions of education officers, principals and teachers about external supervision and monitoring in Barbados. Additionally, the research contributes to the body of knowledge which already exists in the field of inspection, evaluation, supervision and general management of education systems.

As was shown in my literature review, the field of inspection, supervision, management and monitoring in education has received the attention of several researchers worldwide. Over the years in some countries, monitoring in education evolved from a focus mainly on inspection and evaluation to that of

a more advisory role which focused on empowering and developing teachers. However, as has been shown in the research literature cited in this document as well as my own findings, some teachers reported feeling demeaned and traumatised as a result of experiencing external inspection in their schools.

I believe that my study which was designed to explore perceptions about the role of education officers is timely in light of the fact that the role is being questioned by persons from inside (education officers) as well as outside (principals and teachers) the Ministry of Education. The following questions guided my research:

1. How is the education officer's role perceived by teachers and principals?
2. How is the education officer's role perceived by education officers?
3. What differences, if any, are there between the perceptions of education officers and those of teachers?
4. What differences, if any, are there between how teachers at different levels of the education system perceive education officers?
5. How do education officers view their position in the education structure?
6. How do principals and teachers view the position of education officer in the education structure?

With the help of a purposive sample of twelve (12) participants drawn from the primary and secondary levels of the school system as well as education officers, I utilized interviews to collect information which was deemed pertinent to the research question. As I engaged in the process of extensive transcription and coding of the interview data, recurring themes were noted, categorised and analysed. The major themes I consider to be grounded in the data are as follows:

- Surveillance, power and control of persons
- Monitoring: Evaluation; control of systems
- Limitation of Financial and Human Resources
- Interpersonal relationships: Interaction and communication gaps
- Culture, Conflict and the Education Officer's Role

7.3 Discussion of the Findings

Based on my interpretation of the data, I highlight several findings about teachers', principals' and education officers' perceptions of the education officer's role and the education system in Barbados. The main finding of the research is that there is a lack of clarity and shared understanding about the role and purpose of the education officer. This and the other findings listed below have been discussed.

1. Teachers, principals and education officers in the sample have both negative and positive perceptions of the education officer's role.
2. The primary school teachers' perceptions differed slightly from those of the secondary school teachers.
3. There are also slight differences in the perceptions of education officers about their role and location in the education structure.
4. There are administrative, economic and cultural hindrances to the effectiveness of the education officer's role.

7.3.1 Mixed Perceptions

The data revealed that the participants have both positive and negative perceptions about the education officer's role in the education system in Barbados. This finding is consistent with the findings of studies (Bitan et al., 2015, Adewale et al. 2014; Brimblecombe et al., 1995), highlighted in chapter four. These studies were conducted with teachers, principals and inspectors/superintendents/quality assurance officers in countries such as the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Israel, Kenya, and Germany, to name a few.

I conclude that the negative and positive perceptions can be attributed mainly to the biography of individual participants rather than their position and the level of the system in which they work. Additionally, experiences gained by participants during the inspection process as well as the education officer's approach towards supervision/inspection also contributed to their perceptions. Each teacher, principal and education officer brings his or her unique personality and background to the monitoring process which may affect or

influence the way they perceive being monitored in the schools. Research also indicates that the actions of inspectors and supervisors during the monitoring process can affect how teachers and principals perceive the inspection process and the role of the inspector. Wilcox and Gray (1994) and Brimblecombe et al. (1995) found that the behaviour shown by school inspectors and the way they interacted with teachers contributed significantly to how they were viewed by teachers. As I examined the findings of some of the research conducted in the field of education monitoring, evaluation, inspection and supervision over the last three decades and compared those with the findings of my research, I concluded that there has been little change in the perceptions of teachers, principals and education officers about the role of the education officer in Barbados.

Monitoring practices in education is a form of surveillance. This form of monitoring also contributed to the development of mixed views about the role of the education officer. Surveillance in the form of visits to schools, which are very often unannounced, exemplifies Foucault's (1982) concept of 'power-knowledge and surveillance'. Education officers, functioning as agents of the Chief Education Officer, visit the schools to conduct observations, conference with staff and students, collect data and make recommendations in keeping with the Ministry of Education's policies. Additionally, as technical officers in the Ministry of Education it is expected that education officers would be knowledgeable in their area of specialty, be it curriculum, assessment, management and supervision or evaluation. This kind of 'expert knowledge' identified by Gray (2013) contributes to and strengthens the position of education officers as they monitor the system on behalf of the Ministry of Education.

The way in which education officers carry out their duties also contributes to the formation of both positive and negative perceptions about their supervisory and monitoring role. While their use of approaches which promote the teachers' professional growth and development generated positive perceptions, in contrast, approaches which focused on accountability and control only were generally perceived in a negative light. Bearing in mind that the social and

economic fabric of Barbados was impacted by colonial practices, it is not surprising that as a result of the influence of the plantation management style in education, participants would reject monitoring approaches which seek to control them and expose them to greater scrutiny.

The use of power can have both positive and negative consequences. As was gleaned from some of the vignettes collected from the research participants, the education officer's approach to their work contributed immensely to the participants' perceptions. As such, the education officers' use of direct power and control often creates tensions and non-compliance among principals and teachers. Additionally, the existence of bureaucratic structures and practices similar to those identified by Max Weber in his theory of bureaucracy, contributes to the presence of mixed perceptions about the education officer's role. For example, the current ranking of the post of education officer in the organisational structure of the education system vis-a vis that of the principals facilitates negative perceptions among teachers, principals and education officers. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that by law, seniority in the public service in Barbados is determined by salary.

I determined that although there is some authority which is granted to education personnel by virtue of the 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations, this authority is vested in the posts which occupy the hierarchy of the education system; that is, the Minister, the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Education Officer. However, this authority is not explicitly assigned to the education officers who occupy junior posts in the organisation's hierarchy and who are responsible for the day to day monitoring and supervision of the schools. This situation reduces the education officers' ability to act as agents of the Chief Education Officer.

Thus, in the absence of 'legal-rational authority' as proposed by Weber in Mansfield (1973), the education officer's role is rendered ineffective and as was identified in the data, they are made powerless and without direct authority to effect changes in the schools. I believe that the education officers' 'limited power' (Gray, 2013) also contributes to the negative perceptions of their role, especially since they function in a post-colonial society where

greater recognition is given to those who possess power and legal authority. Perception of the presence of power and authority is more likely to evoke cooperation, respect and positive perceptions. In the absence of the conferment of direct-power on education officers, and in keeping with the tenets of the bureaucratic structure in the Ministry of Education, education officers are required to report matters to their superiors for resolution.

Despite there being the presence of negative perceptions of the education officer's role, however, there is also evidence that some participants view the role of the education officer as important to the education system in Barbados because there is a need to find out whether the education system is achieving the goals determined locally by the Ministry of Education and nationally, as determined by the Government of Barbados.

7.3.2 Differences among the Perceptions of Teachers and Principals

Despite the size of my research population, I found that perceptions differed between the teachers who work at the primary level of the system and those who work at the secondary level. The teachers who work at primary schools generally reported positive perceptions about the education officer's role while their secondary school counterparts reported generally negative views about the inspection process and the education officer's role. This finding is similar to those reported by Adewale et al. (2014); Haule (2012); and Ijaiya, (1997) who all reported the presence of generally negative perceptions of inspectors and the inspection process in their studies. Bearing in mind that perceptions are shaped by experiences, I conclude that the primary school teachers had greater positive interactions with education officers. This can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the perception of the education officer being a knowledgeable expert in a position of power (Foucault, 1982) may also influence the primary school teachers' responses. As was mentioned by one interviewee, education officers have long been perceived as 'primary school' officers since they were seen more often in the primary schools than in the secondary schools. Additionally, the primary school teachers experience many more visits from education officers than the secondary school teachers

and, therefore, are afforded opportunities to build professional relationships. I conclude that infrequent visits to the secondary schools may have contributed to the negative perceptions of the secondary school teachers. Over the years, the absence of monitoring of the secondary schools may also have contributed to the perception that secondary schools fall outside of the Ministry of Education's direct responsibility and as such are not required to be monitored by education officers.

7.3.3 Differences in the Education Officers' Perceptions

There are slight differences in the education officers' perception of their role. While all education officers agreed that the education system in Barbados should be monitored, they differed in their views about whether the monitoring should be control oriented or developmental. In fact, one participant expressed strong views in favour of the 'policing role' of the education officer. This view is reminiscent of plantation management which promoted the master-servant relationship that perpetuated the need for subordinates to be watched in order to maintain control and to effect conformity and performance.

Some education officers view themselves as knowledgeable qualified 'experts' who contribute to maintaining the quality of services provided in the education system. This perception can be linked to a cultural shift in the society as it relates to the value placed on the acquisition of knowledge and its associated power. This perception exemplifies Foucault's concept of power-knowledge in institutions where the bureaucratic structure contributes to and perpetuates the perception that legitimate power should reside with those persons who are more qualified than others.

Some education officers, although acknowledging that they act as agents of the Chief Education Officer, perceive that they should be granted more direct power to execute their duties and to ensure that the policies of the Ministry of Education are implemented. Education officers, however, function within the bureaucratic structure of the Ministry of Education where direct power resides with the posts at the top of the hierarchy and as such can only be dispensed by

those persons. Therefore, clarity of the education officer's role is needed to ensure that misunderstandings are avoided and that education officers understand their role so that they can perform their duties effectively.

7.3.4 Hindrances to the Effectiveness of the Education Officer's Role

While examining the data I discovered several possible hindrances to the effectiveness of the education officer's role. Firstly, the current organisational structure of the education system which places the post of education officer below the level of the post of principal of primary and secondary school renders monitoring of the Principals' work ineffective since it is illegal for a junior civil servant to monitor, supervise and write reports on the performance of a senior civil servant. This hindrance is compounded by the presence of remnants of the plantation cultural beliefs which associate seniority with age, knowledge and wisdom and which, therefore, suggest that younger persons may be incapable of functioning effectively in senior roles in the education system.

Secondly, the education officer's scope of work which includes performing administrative duties at the Ministry of Education often reduces the amount of time they can allocate for making visits to the schools. Infrequent visits impact negatively on the education officers' visibility in the schools and, thus, on the opportunities for them to interact with and build positive professional relationships with the principals and teachers. In contrast to Max Weber's concept of bureaucracy as a means of supporting organisational structure and efficiency, my research has demonstrated how this same structure can work to reduce the effective operations of the education officer and, by extension, the Ministry of Education.

A third factor which contributes to the education officer's ineffectiveness in the education system and negative perceptions of the role is inadequate financial and human resources. It is important for organisations to have adequate financial and human resources to facilitate operational effectiveness. The availability of adequate resources can contribute to effective preparation of personnel, deployment of resources and division of roles. Currently in

Barbados there are twenty-two (22) junior education officers and six (6) senior education officers who monitor and supervise sixty-nine (69) public primary and twenty-two (22) public secondary schools. The Ministry of Education organised its primary schools into districts to facilitate management and monitoring. The perceived shortage of education officers or their ineffective deployment to monitor the system may also be as a result of the way the Ministry of Education is organised and how the human resources are being managed and deployed.

On the issue of there being adequate human resources for effective monitoring in the education system, a significant number of participants spoke about the need for education officers to be trained in management and other skills to prepare them for their role. I believe that preparation for every new job requires training in the requisite knowledge and skills. As is the case with the preparation of teachers for their pedagogical role through training at Erdiston Teachers' Training College, newly recruited education officers may benefit from being exposed to training, especially since having administrative experience is no longer mandatory. As was mentioned in chapter two, the practice of recruiting education officers seems to have changed in the 1990s, as was evidenced by advertisements for the post. Previously, local inspectors assumed their posts after gaining experience as head-teachers. Thus, the pathway to the post of inspector, as it was called previously, was through the school system from assistant teacher to teacher to head teacher then to the Ministry of Education, Central Administration, as an inspector. It is, therefore, unreasonable to expect education officers to assess administrative practices in schools effectively, when they do not have any knowledge of the processes that are involved in this aspect of education and no knowledge of the practices they should be observing.

7.4 Contributions of the Study

This study, being the first of its kind done locally, will contribute to the cache of knowledge about external monitoring of education by inspection or

supervision and perceptions of the education officer's role in the process of monitoring in Barbados and the wider Caribbean.

The study expects to make a contribution to existing local and international knowledge about perceptions of school inspection. I will make it available to local libraries where it would be accessible to educators and researchers. The thesis will also be published electronically on the University's e-thesis platform to make it accessible to an international audience. Opportunities for publication in journals and presentations at conferences will also be explored.

Additionally, the findings of the study may be of interest to the management of the Ministry of Education in Barbados as it provides valuable insights into the opinions of key stakeholders in education whose views can contribute to the reformation of existing policies as well as the formulation of new education policies. Teachers, principals and education officers will also benefit from the study which will contribute to deepening their understanding of the monitoring process in Barbados. As key personnel in the education sector, these groups have a critical role to play in ensuring that the goals of education are achieved.

Finally, the research has contributed significantly to my own personal growth, to my development as a researcher and to the expansion of my knowledge of external monitoring in education by supervision and inspection. Additionally, I have gained insights into how people perceive the role played by education officers. I believe that the research will allow me to make a further contribution to education in Barbados by providing me with empirical evidence which I can use to present proposals for training of personnel and for reforms in the monitoring process.

7.5 Implications

My investigation found that perceptions of the education officer's role were mixed with expressions of both positive and negative views. I can also state that perceptions which were generally negative contribute to the

ineffectiveness of the education officer's job. This finding has several implications for the Ministry of Education and the education system as a whole.

Firstly, the findings suggest that the Ministry of Education needs to clarify for all stakeholders its monitoring policy and the role that the education officer is to play in the monitoring process. At present there is some ambiguity about whether the education officer's role is to be evaluative or developmental or both. Clarification of this issue requires political will to revise the legislation which guides how all personnel in the education system are required to function in their various roles.

Secondly, a re-examination of recruitment and preparation of applicants for the post of education officer can ensure that candidates are not only qualified but that they possess the experience which is necessary, especially in light of the requirement for clarification of the Ministry of Education's monitoring policy. This approach can be buttressed by a programme of initial and continuous training for persons recruited to function in the capacity of education officer.

7.6 Conclusions

Education officers in Barbados are perceived by some teachers and principals in a negative light. I determined that there are several reasons for this negative perception. These include lack of clarity about the education officer's role; ambiguity in the Education Rules and Regulations; lack of understanding of the power and authority granted to the education officer; in-frequent visits to schools; the education officers' approach to their role; and insufficient opportunities for building professional relations. Despite this generally negative perception about the role of education officers, however, there is evidence from the interviewees which suggests that it is important for the education system in Barbados to be monitored in an effort to promote quality standards and effectiveness. This view is supported by the 1983 Education

Act and 1982 Regulations which provide the legal framework and guideline for school inspection in Barbados.

7.7 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The strength of my study resides in its methodology and methods. The use of a qualitative design involving the use of semi-structured one-on-one interviews afforded me the opportunity to collect rich data from interviewees about their experiences with school inspection in Barbados. I was able to obtain and analyse the views of twelve participants who were purposefully selected from primary and secondary schools as well as from the Ministry of Education. The research sample comprised teachers, principals and education officers.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, data collected from the interviews was supported by the analysis of documents. Additionally, I engaged in the processes of respondent validation, triangulation and reflexivity. The declaration of my position as an insider researcher also contributed to the trustworthiness of the study. Furthermore, a clear statement of my data collection and analysis processes contributed to the quality of the study.

However, the research process was met with some challenges. There was a dearth of empirical research on the subject of school inspection and perceptions of school inspection in the Caribbean. I, therefore, relied on locally published information in Education Reports which were accessed at the National Archives Department. I also accessed a variety of internationally published journal articles on the subject of school inspection and perceptions. Additionally, I was able to access a journal article written by London (2004) which focused on school inspection in colonial times in Trinidad and Tobago. This article helped to provide a historical context for comparison with Barbados. One other journal article by Morrison (2009), although not related directly to the Caribbean, provided information about the social, cultural and economic issues of school inspection in Small States and Territories (SSTs).

This limitation gives credence to my belief that my study will make a valuable contribution to research in Barbados, the Caribbean and wider world.

7.8 Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Study

My research into perceptions of the education officer's role in the education system in Barbados has highlighted some issues in the education system which, if addressed, can contribute to improvement and others which can provide topics for future researchers to explore.

My study investigated perceptions of three groups of education personnel; teachers, principals and education officers. There is, however, scope for further research into the perceptions of each group individually. Additionally, there is scope for research based on a comparative analysis of the use of inspection as a monitoring tool in other Caribbean islands which have had similar colonial experiences. Furthermore, a more in-depth comparative analysis of perceptions of teachers at the primary and secondary levels of the education system can be undertaken.

As a result of the findings of my study I am recommending that the following matters be addressed by the Ministry of Education.

- The 1983 Education Act and 1982 Regulations should be amended to give recognition and value to the role of the education officer.
- A monitoring policy should be produced which articulates the Ministry of Education's mandate and clearly informs what approach to monitoring is to be used by education officers to ensure that quality standards are upheld and to promote accountability among all education personnel.
- The number of established posts for education officer should be increased to ensure that all schools are visited frequently and that challenges can be addressed in a timely manner.
- Schools at all levels of the education system should receive visits periodically from members of the management staff of the Ministry of Education. This proactive approach would contribute to the process of

building relationships between central administration and the stakeholders in the schools.

7.9 Reflections on the Research Process

My doctoral research journey has been both rewarding and challenging. Throughout the process, I have grown as an individual and a researcher. I learnt to persevere despite the personal challenges which confronted me over this five year journey. As a researcher, my belief in the value of qualitative research and the lessons which can be learnt from hearing the experiences of others has been renewed. The insights gained from the research process, which was truly iterative, and from the participants were immeasurable.

As the research progressed from one phase to another, there were many times when I questioned my ability to successfully complete this journey. It was during these times that I thought of my participants and the debt I owed to them to let their voices be heard through the completion and publication of the research. I am also extremely grateful for the support and encouragement I received from my supervisor, family members and friends.

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Appendix 1

Ethics Approval Letter



Downloaded: 03/01/2018
Approved: 11/08/2014

Christina Morris
Registration number: 110274515
School of Education
Programme: Ed.D Caribbean

Dear Christina

PROJECT TITLE: EDUR29- External Supervision and Monitoring of Education in Barbados: Perceptions of the education officer's role in the supervision and monitoring process
APPLICATION: Reference Number 001603

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 11/08/2014 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 001603 (dated 23/07/2014).
- Participant information sheet 002254 version 1 (23/07/2014).
- Participant consent form 002207 version 1 (21/07/2014).
- Participant consent form 002255 version 1 (23/07/2014).

If during the course of the project you need to [deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation](#) please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

David Hyatt
Ethics Administrator
School of Education

Appendix 2

Interview Guide

Date:

Identification Code:

❖ *Supervision and monitoring in education generally (mandate, structure, relevance, resources, processes, social and economic issues)*

Q. First of all let us talk about supervision and monitoring of education generally. What is the purpose of supervision and monitoring in education?

Q. Why is there a need for supervision and monitoring in an education system?

Q. What processes are involved in supervision and monitoring?

Q. What resources are needed for supervision and monitoring in an education system?

Q. What are some of the social and economic issues that are linked to the process of supervision and monitoring of education?

❖ *External supervision and monitoring in Barbados (Ministry's role, legal framework, relevance, structure, resources, processes, issues/challenges)*

Q. Let us look at some specifics relative to Barbados. What is the role of the Ministry of Education in the supervision and monitoring process?

Q. Let us talk a bit about the structure of the Ministry of Education and how its structure allows it to do some of the things you just mentioned.

Q. If you had the opportunity to make recommendations to the Ministry of Education about the resources needed to monitor the education system, what would you recommend?

Q. What are some possible issues or challenges that may arise as the Ministry of Education seeks to implement the processes of monitoring and supervising education?

❖ **The Education Officer's Role**

Q. Let us bring some specifics to the education officer's role. What is the mandate, purpose or scope of the officer's role in supervision and monitoring of education?

Q. On a scale of one to ten, what value do you place on the education officer's role in the processes you just identified?

Q. Let us look now at the resources available to the education officer to help carry out the mandate set out by the Ministry of Education. What resources are available? What recommendations would you make?

Q. What do you see as some possible outcomes or impacts of the education officer's role in the monitoring and supervision process?

❖ **External monitoring and supervision and its effects on individuals**

Q. Let us look now at how monitoring and supervision by the Ministry of Education and by extension the education officer can affect individuals. What are some possible effects?

Q. Let us also talk about your experiences as an education officer working in the schools.

❖ ***The future of external supervision and monitoring***

Q. Let us take a look now at the future of external monitoring and supervision. How would you evaluate the current process and what suggestions if any would you make for improvement?

Q. What implications do your suggestions have for the current structure or organisation of the Ministry of Education?

Q. As we come to a close are there any general views about external monitoring and supervision that you would like to share with me?