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Title	
An investigation into stakeholders' definitions of effective learning, student success and perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving effective learning and students' success and the opportunity costs that are involved, at a denominational girls' secondary school in Trinidad & Tobago.	
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ABSTRACT

As an educational researcher and a secondary school teacher in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T), one of my key areas of educational interest is that of the role of paid academic extra-lessons. In this research, extra-lessons are paid academic classes that are run in parallel to the local formal secondary school education system in T&T. This research is focused on a denominational girls' secondary school and examines stakeholders' definitions of effective learning, student success and their perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving effective learning and students' success and the opportunity costs that are involved. In T&T to date, there have only been three substantive studies in the area of extra-lessons. Thus, these findings may prove important, and timely, to constructively engaging and analysing the extra-lessons phenomenon as the findings may realistically have educational, cultural and social implications. A mixed methods approach was adopted where relevant comparable and contextual data were collected, from the students and their parents in the examination classes, as well as teachers. The results showed that all stakeholders recognised the importance of effective teachers to ensure effective teaching and learning, whether in-school or in extra-lessons. Also, the pressure for scholarship success was established to be a key catalyst for stakeholders seeking out extra-lessons, and for the most part, at the expense of extra-curricular activities. Notably, there was clear evidence of scholarship success without extra-lessons, that significantly involved all-round and holistic development opportunities.

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INTRODUCTION

Personal interest and direct experience with a situation of educational significance is usually part of a researcher's motivations for engaging in prolonged and disciplined inquiry (Davies 2005, p.2). As an educational researcher and a secondary school teacher in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T), one of my key areas of educational interest is that of paid academic extra-lessons. These extra-lessons may be defined as:

all teaching/learning activities outside of the normal school timetable that attempt to cover the formal school curriculum at a cost to the student or parent. (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.46).

In this research, extra-lessons are not considered to be external non-academic classes, such as music, dance, drama etc., or free additional academic lessons, but where these paid supplemental classes are attended for revision, remedial and exam preparation purposes. These extra-lessons exist alongside, and are run in parallel to, the local formal institutional systems of education while simultaneously interacting with and functioning outside of the regulatory frameworks, which govern secondary education in T&T.

In T&T's secularised education system there is a *'hierarchically structured system, rigidly stratified along the lines of social class'* (Mustapha and Brunton 2002, p.149). Based on the Secondary Entrance Examination (SEA), primary school students are selected for different levels of the secondary school system. Denominational secondary schools, that is, schools guided by a religious denomination, are traditionally at the top of the choices. Excellence High (*pseudonym*), the school in which this research is focused, is considered to be at the highest level and is referred to as a *"prestige"* school highlighting its elitism in the system, hence why I chose the name "Excellence High". This empowerment is primarily due to colonial influence, society's perception and the Ministry of Education's (MOE) placement of the higher achievers in these denominational prestige schools. Excellence High is a Christian based denominational school, which follows the traditional grammar school-type curriculum and promotes a culture of high academic achievement.

Since 2000, I have been a teacher at Excellence High, a prominent girls' denominational secondary school in T&T that is like the secondary school I attended twenty odd years ago. At that time, some of my classmates attended extra-lessons,

however I never did, as I thought that my schoolteachers were effective. However, I must acknowledge that I could not have afforded extra-lessons. My time out of school was spent engaging in what I deemed constructive, enjoyable and relaxing activities such as sports, music, family activities etc. These, I believe, contributed immensely towards my holistic development and success, firstly, as a student and now, as a teacher, parent and educational researcher.

At Excellence High, I have observed that many students from the examination classes, of forms five and six attend extra-lessons after their normal school day from Monday to Saturdays, sometimes Sundays. Additionally, in the formal classroom setting, I have observed that these students seem to appear mentally and physically exhausted, even disinterested. I suggest that it is critical to investigate the possible role of extra-lessons in my observations. Furthermore, T&T's secondary school system appears to be a highly selective system and many of the students who gain entrance to Excellence High through the SEA examinations will likely have attended extra-lessons in primary school. That being said, if parents are willing to seek out these extra-lessons in spite of their child's possible exhaustion and overload, then they may see it as a necessary sacrifice or opportunity, to ensure their child's effective education and academic success.

As a teacher and educational researcher, I am mindful of Carr's (1998, p.16) assertion that education is rooted in some form of ideology: '*classical humanist*', which views society as aristocratic and ruled by elitism, '*liberal progressive*', which focuses on the political aspect of education with an egalitarian viewpoint and '*vocational*', which is characterised by mass schooling with a focus on education as an economic function to prepare students for the world of work. These varied ideologies, or combinations of them, may very well dictate the current thinking regarding effective education and student success and may be representative of differing '*cultural models*' (Rinne and Fairweather 2011, p.3) regarding education in the wider national community. These ideologies and models depend on people's varying belief systems, and so will influence educational stakeholders' understanding of effective learning, success and a successful student in T&T's secondary schooling system. In a democratic country like T&T, in which the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GoRTT) provides free pre-tertiary education; I am committed to the ideal where the

formal secondary schooling process must be equitably, completely and effectively capable to prepare the students in its charge to achieve effective learning and educational success. That being said, I must also acknowledge that students, and their parents, are within their rights to seek out what they may consider to be potentially advantageous educational opportunities outside of the formal school system.

I use the term *opportunity costs* to convey the financial cost together with other opportunities both academic and non-academic that may be sacrificed, traded and/or compromised to attend extra-lessons. Thus, the question of how these opportunity costs may affect stakeholders' perceptions surrounding effective learning and students' success is significant. Brown (2003, p.142) describes the concept of opportunity costs in seeking competitive advantage in noting that:

[t]he personal costs incurred in realising our 'opportunities' are increasing because success depends on getting ahead in the competition for tough-entry schools, universities and jobs. Middle-class families are adopting more desperate measures to win a positional advantage. (Brown 2003, p.142).

Extra-lessons may very well be a tangible avenue to provide this positional advantage. In the T&T context, at another denominational school, Lochan and Barrow's (2008, p.61) research showed that students '*not only participated in extra-lessons at a greater rate ... but they also enrolled in a much wider range of subjects.*' Although their research is limited to one denominational school, my own experience as a student and my own observation as a teacher at Excellence High, tend to support their conclusion.

My interest is also rooted in how extra-lessons may affect the opportunity costs associated with holistic development. Hence, I feel that it is imperative to pursue a critical in-depth examination surrounding extra-lessons in the denominational secondary school context. This research, therefore, aims to explore Excellence High's stakeholders' definitions of effective learning, student success and stakeholders' perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving effective learning and students' success and the opportunity costs that are involved. The stakeholders include students, parents, teachers, administrators and teacher-parents, that is, the teachers whose children attend Excellence High.

Following in this educational research thesis are five (5) chapters:

- Chapter 1: Rationale;
- Chapter 2: Literature Review;
- Chapter 3: Research Methodology;
- Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis;
- Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations.

Chapter 1 sets the premise and foundation for the research by examining the study's rationale under the headings of Educational Inquiry; Extra-Lessons and the Denominational Setting; Historical and Socio-Political Context; Effective Learning and Success; Holistic Development and Opportunity Costs; Corruption and Ethics; Culture and Socio-Economic Status and finally Research Questions. This rationale aims to present a clearly organised basis articulating the necessity for this educational research and to underscore the study's significance.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature under the headings of Academic Achievement, Effective Learning and Stakeholders' Perspective; Extra-Lessons and Supplementary Tutoring; and Extra-Lessons and Opportunity Costs.

Chapter 3 examines the research methodology and the research processes used in the study and provides a detailed description of research perspective, data collection methods and reasoning for the approaches taken.

Chapter 4 presents the findings together with the data analysis from the data collected from questionnaires and interviews with stakeholders. These findings will reveal the stakeholders' perceptions regarding the research questions and examine them in relation to the research questions and the theoretical framework.

Chapter 5, the final chapter of the study, concludes the research, considers the contribution of the study to the field of extra-lessons in the T&T secondary school context and suggests pertinent recommendations.

CHAPTER 1 - RATIONALE

In this rationale, the discussion explores the educational, social and cultural issues relating to extra-lessons that require critical examination. These issues will be discussed under the sub-headings of:

- Educational Inquiry;
- Extra-Lessons and the Denominational Setting;
- Historical and Socio-Political Context;
- Effective Learning and Success;
- Holistic Development and Opportunity Costs;
- Corruption and Ethics;
- Culture and Socio-Economic Status and
- Research Questions.

1.1 Educational Inquiry

The basis for educational and social inquiry often depends on the researcher's chosen paradigm and thinking, that is, his/her ontology, epistemology and axiology. Sikes (2003, p.21) explains the importance of the researcher's positionality in noting that:

the most significant factor that influences understandings of approaches to research is where the researcher is coming from in terms of their philosophical position and fundamental assumptions concerning social reality: their ontological assumptions; the nature of knowledge – their epistemological assumptions; human nature and agency – specifically their assumptions about the way in which human beings relate to and interact with their environment. (Sikes 2003, p.21).

I must identify my history as a student of lower income background who used out of school time for revision, leisure, sport and family activities. Additionally, I have never attended paid extra-lessons in any form, and so I acknowledge that my views regarding the opportunity costs involved in extra lessons may play a key aspect in this educational research. Greene (2006, p.93) further reiterates the importance of the researcher's context in explaining that social inquiry must include stances regarding objectivity and subjectivity and the role of context in social perceptions. Hence, my context and positionality is key to rationalising, constructing and undertaking this research.

I seek to understand Excellence High's stakeholders' ideologies surrounding effective learning, students' success and the role of extra-lessons in achieving effective learning, students' success and the opportunity costs of attending extra-lessons. At this stage it is important to recognise that these extra-lessons may provide two critical functions: to enhance the basic curriculum and knowledge and skill acquisition; and provide remedial education. The results of this investigation may effectively represent stakeholders' understandings of effective learning, student success, and how extra-lessons fit into the measures they think best to achieve them. However, I am also a stakeholder who is pursuing this investigation because of my educational interest and also being a teacher and now insider researcher at Excellence High. Thus, my educational perspective is important to this inquiry.

For any educational inquiry, of considerable importance is the researcher's philosophical perspective, that is, my educational research paradigm as this may guide the proposing, planning and undertaking of any research. Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p.19) and Guba (1990, p.17) have surmised that a paradigm is a basic set of beliefs and values that guides one's actions. I believe that our education system is essential to the production of the '*good society*' (Carr 1998, p.19) as our entire schooling process is dependent on an educational experience that reaches students where they are and effectively develops them from that point to become intelligent civic-minded citizens who may substantially contribute to the social, economic and cultural development of T&T.

Three of the established paradigms of educational research are scientific and positivistic, naturalistic and interpretive, and critical theory. Positivism is rooted in the scientific and empirical approach to research and as such has been highly criticised in the social science field. One of the most famous criticisms of positivism comes from Wittgenstein (1974, in Cohen *et al.* 2003, p.19) in noting that when all possible scientific questions have been addressed the main problems of life are left untouched. Interpretive research is based on the ideas that some people adopt, and the interpretive aspect is based on the context that:

[a]n individual's behaviour can only be understood by
the researcher sharing their frame of reference;

understanding of individual's interpretations of the world around them has to come from the inside, not the outside. (Cohen *et al.* 2003, p.20).

This frame of reference is critical in seeking and understanding the varied views of the stakeholders at Excellence High. Beck (1979, quoted in Cohen *et al.* 2003, p.20) clarifies that the social sciences offer explanation, clarification, and demystification of social forms. This essentially describes the basis of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) where theory emerges from the situation. This grounded information will help to understand the social reality as different people see it and to demonstrate how their views may shape the action, which they take. This kind of scenario seems to somewhat mesh with my research ideology, as I seek to understand the choices that Excellence High's stakeholders make regarding the role of extra-lessons to achieving effective learning and student success and the opportunity costs of attending extra-lessons.

The third paradigm of critical theory educational research is not merely to understand situations and phenomena but to change them (Cohen *et al.* 2003, p.28). This notion of transformation reflects the '*emancipatory*' (Habermas's 1972, in Cohen *et al.* 2003, p.29) interest, which is concerned with reflexive action that is informed by investigation, analysis and reflection with the aim to improve and liberate. Thus, in critical theory educational research it is important to recognise that the methodology that may be adopted, may reflect any combination of the three paradigms, as a researcher may be objective, interpretive and critical. In this research, while transformation may not be part of the actual research process, it is hoped that the findings may provide pertinent knowledge to engender some level of positive transformation regarding the initiation and development of education policy involving extra-lessons in the T&T context.

In my view, in addition to the research paradigm, educational research involves a commitment to an educational philosophy. This educational philosophy may be based on some form of ideology and so may realistically be dependent on society's diverse value systems (Carr 1998, p.6). Thus, researchers' life histories, beliefs and experiences ultimately inform their research practice. Sikes (2003) substantiates this by saying that:

the way in which researchers are biographically situated, the consequent perspectives they hold and the assumptions that inform the sense they make of the world, inevitably have implications for their research related understandings, beliefs and values, for the research paradigms they feel most comfortable with, and, thereby, for their research practice. (Sikes 2003, p. 23).

In trying to understand the role of extra lessons at Excellence High, a long standing, traditional and highly successful girls' denominational school, my interest stems from an approach, which intends to explore the cultural practices, values and behaviours of stakeholders at Excellence High, as an integral part of the research methodology.

This specific approach to Excellence High is based on the premise that the stakeholders may be the inheritors and practitioners of a particular type of culture and way of relating to their local community and educational environment. This is particularly important as an individual's cultural and social ideas and customs originate from his/her perspective as well as the group to which he/she may belong. Through this approach of investigating the cultural protocols values and behaviours of the community in the denominational setting of Excellence High, I aim to understand their particular contexts and aspects of education (Bassegy 1992, p.3). Furthermore, in exploring perceptions surrounding extra-lessons, I aim to explore an area that I have never actively participated in but have observed from the outside as a student and now as a teacher.

In T&T, to date, there have been three published pieces of research investigating extra-lessons: Brunton (2002) which used a national sample of 500 secondary school students; Lochan and Barrow (2008) which focused on two schools, a denominational and government secondary school; and Lochan and Barrow (2012) which focused on extra-lessons at the primary school level. In their first study, Lochan and Barrow (2008) recognised the dearth of research in noting that:

there has been no systematic study of this phenomenon by schools, levels of the school system, and levels within the school system. (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.46).

However, throughout the world private tutoring exists as an industry that provides supplementary instruction to students who are in the official/formal education system.

Dang and Rogers (2008, p.1) highlighted that private tutoring was a widespread educational phenomenon. Zhou and Wang (2015, p.363), writing about The Family Socioeconomic Effect on Extra Lessons in Greater China, also advocate that private supplementary classes due to their immense growth requires further research. In the T&T context, these extra-lessons are well explained as tutoring in an academic school subject taught in addition to mainstream schooling for financial gain (Bray and Silova 2006, p.29) and is somewhat identical to Stevenson and Baker's (1992) '*shadow education*' system. In T&T, while the research is sparse, the actual practice of extra-lessons appears widespread. Hence, this study seeks to substantially add to the fledgling discussion involving extra-lessons in the T&T context, more specifically at the denominational secondary school level. This research aims to undertake an in-depth exploration of the social, cultural and educational issues surrounding extra-lessons at Excellence High, a girls' denominational secondary school.

1.2 Extra-Lessons and the Denominational Setting

Regarding denominational schools, the T&T national policy document known as The Concordat of 1960 (MOE, 1960) preserves the rights and privileges of religious denominational boards that govern secondary schools. Some of these privileges include property ownership, teacher selection and, significantly from the selective educational perspective, the privilege to handpick 20% of their school's student allocation from the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) examination. Notably, these privileges are not available to the government secondary schools and may support the assertion that in the historical evolution of T&T's secondary school system, there is a somewhat unfair division into perceived prestige and non-prestige schools (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.47). These prestige denominational secondary schools, like Excellence High, follow the traditional grammar school-type curriculum with a characteristic culture of high academic achievement, which influences how society views and values them (Mustapha and Brunton 2002, p.158).

Out of Brunton's (2002) national sample of 500 secondary school students, 56% of students in the denominational prestige schools, like Excellence High, sought extra-lessons. He further noted that:

[s]tudents enrolled in extra-lessons were likely to attend extra-lessons from one to fifteen (15) hours per week.

The mean number of extra-lessons was 4.9 and the mode of 3.0 hours per week. (Brunton 2002, p.174).

Moreover, in T&T's secondary school context, extra-lessons seem to be most sought in the period leading up to final examinations. Bray (2006, p.515) reiterates this link between extra-lessons and examinations in noting that extra-lessons are '*especially prominent at the transition points at which students are selected for the next stage of education.*' Hence, in my research at Excellence High, I propose to use the examination classes of forms five and six as these students and their parents would have their own ideologies of what is required for success which ultimately shapes future life opportunities. It may reasonably follow that students who are high performers are likely to have access to progressive tertiary level educational opportunities and hence subsequent well-remunerated employment and positive economic prospects. However, in investigating just why extra-lessons seem so prevalent, particularly in the denominational secondary school setting like Excellence High, the historical and socio-political context also needs to be examined.

1.3 Historical and Socio-Political Context

Regarding the education system in T&T and the historical implications, De Lisle *et al.* (2009, p.2) remind us that:

[t]he education system inherited from British colonial rule was noticeably elitist and examination-oriented, designed to filter, segregate and retain students based on perceived meritocracy. (De Lisle *et al.* 2009, p.2).

Excellence High falls into this category of elite and prestige type school in which students vie for the few available places. Moreover, T&T's colonial legacy of an examinations-driven school system, both at the primary and secondary level, may realistically fuel the demand for extra-lessons (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.45). Consequently, in this historical prestige school setting, where academic excellence appears to be the benchmark of success, extra-lessons may be viewed as a necessity to ensure this excellence, and so, in my view, must be explored. In addition to the historical context, the socio-political implications are also extremely important.

Examination of socio-political issues refers to how the '*location of the inquiry in society is articulated and defended*' (Greene 2006, p.94). Of the GoRTT Strategic Plan's (2011, p.xi) twelve guiding principles, the eighth principle speaks of being

equitable such that every student will have the benefit of high-quality learning opportunities. However, there is no mention of the existence of, and possible, inequalities that extra-lessons may create, and possible mechanisms to reduce the inequalities. Such mechanisms may include the effective monitoring of curricula delivery, and teacher and student performance, such that any remedial help can be done within the structure of the formal education system at no extra financial cost to the students. Reasonably, those who are unable to access extra-lessons may indeed be at a disadvantage regarding the GoRTT's claim of equitable educational opportunities. Democratically elected governments do have a duty to their citizens when fulfilling promises of equity and equality. In the case of extra-lessons, I support the advocacy that governments should explore the use of tutoring as a tool to improve equity (Dang and Rogers 2008, p.16). However, in the denominational school setting where students appear to pursue success in the form of outstanding examination performances and tertiary scholarships, extra-lessons may be even targeted by high achievers who want to further excel (Bray 2006, p.520). Thus, from the socio-political context, some of the middle to upper class stakeholders at Excellence High may reasonably believe extra-lessons to be critical to students' success through effective learning opportunities.

1.4 Effective Learning and Students' Success

It is important to consider the application of educational psychologists' different learning theories to how students learn and how teachers teach to construct a clear understanding for effective learning. Skinner (1938, 1953 in Bolton and Clough 1998) proposed behaviourist learning, whereas Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky proposed cognitive learning theories that are critical to the concept of effective learning in which students are constructors of their own knowledge through their own learning experiences (Elliot *et al.* 2000, p.50). Bruner (1996 quoted in Elliott *et al.* 2000, p.2) urged educators and fellow psychologists to view children as thinkers and introduced four major themes in analysing learning: structure, readiness, intuition and motivation. Thus, in my view for effective learning, learning must be regarded as an active process, where teacher and student should engage in constructive discussion that leads to the creation of new ideas based upon their previous knowledge.

Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory speaks of the zone of proximal development, which refers to the distance between a child's actual development level and a possible improved level with professional guidance and importantly emphasised the intervention of expert teachers for effective learning (Bolton and Clough 1998, p.23). This notion of expert has thoughtful implications for the extra-lessons phenomenon, as significant stakeholders such as the parent and student are the key decision makers when it comes to trusting the expertise of the teacher, whether in the mainstream or supplementary setting. Vygotsky's (1978) theory is key to situated learning theory and anchored instruction in which learning is a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs (Lave 1998). Thus, for effective learning teachers are critical as they need to continuously increase their knowledge to enrich their student's learning (Elliott *et al.* 2000, p.10). In the context of extra-lessons, stakeholders' determination of who is an effective teacher may well determine the need for extra-lessons to facilitate effective learning, particularly in the conducive setting.

Farrant (1988, p.107) proposes that:

learning is the process by which we acquire and retain attitudes, knowledge, understanding, skills and capabilities that cannot be attributed to inherited behaviour patterns or physical growth. (Farrant 1988, p.107).

This learning process can be '*formal*' in the school setting and '*natural*' (Bolton and Clough 1998, p.1) in the home and community setting. However, I suggest that this combination of mainstream schooling and extra-lessons seem to represent a new, almost a hybrid, learning environment. I submit that effective learning to produce successful students best occurs when students are encouraged to generate, even co-author, knowledge through a process of critical investigation aimed at producing informed, reflective and critical judgments, both for academic as well as life's challenges. This type of effective learning process then becomes quite representative of Freire's (1985, p.106) '*process of conscientization*' in which students can become active in transforming their understandings by using the critical nature of their consciousness through thought and action. Whether this type of learning best happens in school, extra-lessons, or a combination, is important to establish from the community at Excellence High. Moreover, these stakeholders may have quite varied

expectations and interpretations where effective learning and academic success is concerned.

In Excellence High's context, stakeholders' perceptions of effective learning and students' success in the formal schooling system are particularly important since they may ultimately determine stakeholders' rationale to or not to seek extra-lessons. The possibility exists that stakeholders may argue that the examination system demands that rote learning and memorisation is the effective learning that is needed to ensure a competitive advantage to facilitate educational success. Brunton (2002, p.167) notes the key role of extra-lessons in getting the competitive advantage in highlighting that:

students, parents and even teachers view extra-lessons as providing a competitive edge in the battle for educational qualifications. (Brunton 2002, p.167).

This competitive edge may represent stakeholders' view of effective learning towards students' success and allow for the increased popularity of extra-lessons, particularly in the lead up to external examinations, when compared to other non-academic type holistic development opportunities. Thus, it is important to examine extra-lessons and students' success in the context of students' holistic development, particularly to determine the opportunity costs involved.

1.5 Holistic Development and Opportunity Costs

As mentioned previously, it appears that many of Excellence High's students in the examination classes attend extra-lessons every week, from Monday to Sunday, which presents the case for students' mental and physical fatigue. Bray (2003, p.34) recognises the physical exhaustion students can face as he notes that:

[f]or many participants, supplementary tutoring leads to fatigue. Most obviously affected are the pupils who go straight from mainstream school to supplementary class. (Bray 2003, p.34).

In my view, not only will the students be exhausted, but, also, they seem to have no available time for holistic development opportunities through extra-curricular activities. Massoni (2011, p.84) speaks of the immense value of extra-curricular activities in stating that:

the positive effects that extracurricular activities have on students are behaviour, better grades, school

completion, positive aspects to become successful adults, and a social aspect. (Massoni 2011, p.84).

In my own experience, as student, teacher and parent, I tend to agree with these positives resulting from beneficial extra-curricular activities towards all-round development in a physical, emotional and psychological sense.

In examining the role of extracurricular activities to holistic and meaningful education Lunenburg (2010, p.2) importantly recognises that extracurricular activities:

provide experiences that are not included in formal courses of study. They allow students to apply the knowledge that they have learned in other classes and acquire concepts of democratic life. (Lunenburg 2010, p.2).

Notably, The World Bank (2011) advocates that *'[e]ducation is a fundamental building block of human development'* and so the onus should be on the mainstream schooling, provided by the government to its citizenry, to provide these human development opportunities. In T&T's secondary school educational setting, for holistic human development, Rampersad (2002, p.1) suggests that students must be provided with:

academic skills as well as specialised knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to health, and not only promotes physical, psychological, and social well-being, but also lays the foundation for healthy development. (Rampersad 2002, p.1).

The environment to facilitate this kind of holistic development may ideally exist both in and out of school. However, determining the ideal holistic educational process and the accompanying setting can indeed be a very subjective and contextual matter and are dependent on stakeholders' perspectives and perceptions. If extra-lessons are viewed as the primary option towards effective learning and students' success, then the opportunity costs involved arise as students may opt out of extra-curricular holistic type development opportunities for the perceived better academic opportunities. Moreover, if extra-lessons are afforded this prime role, then the reality of exploitation arises as the extra-lessons providers may now hold market control.

1.6 Corruption and Ethics

Private supplementary tutoring may be used to improve student learning, provide remedial assistance and significantly offer extra income to already salaried teachers.

Through a combination of private tutoring and mainstream courses, students can benefit and improve their aptitude and confidence in school (Hallak and Poisson 2007, p.257). However, in some cases private tutoring adversely affects mainstream education. In a comparative study undertaken by the International Institute for Education and Planning (IIEP) on teacher codes of conduct in Canada and South Asia, private tuition was regarded as a major source of unethical behaviour in Bangladesh, India and Nepal (van Nuland and Khandelwal 2006, p.126-135). Unethical behaviour may lead to questionable and possibly corrupt practices and significantly, the attempt to justify such practices. Hallak and Poisson (2002, p.33) define corruption in the education sector as:

the systematic use of public office for private benefit, whose impact is significant on the availability and quality of educational goods and services and, as a consequence, on access, quality or equity in education. (Hallak and Poisson 2002, p.33).

In T&T, private tutoring seems to be offered on a large scale towards the end of secondary education to assist students to pass entrance exams to higher education. In these types of situations, private tutoring may well prove to be a major source of unethical and corrupt practices as teachers may intentionally underperform in the mainstream to place pressure on students to attend their private classes. Moreover, teachers may place more emphasis on the supplementary classes to the detriment of the mainstream classes since their mainstream salary is guaranteed. Hence, the role of the classroom teacher in the extra-lessons and private-tutoring context is critical to the discussion of corruption and unethical behaviour. It follows that the questions of possible unethical practices require investigation in the extra-lessons operations and its impact on the mainstream education.

Any situation in which students may have to pay for instruction during formal school hours, or, the delivery of the school curricula is purposefully undermined to promote extra-lessons, exemplify unprincipled practices. In the T&T context, the T&T Express Newspaper editorial (2011) warned that *'[h]aving private lessons as a source of additional income gives teachers an incentive to under-perform in the school classroom.'* The newspaper editor, in presenting this ethical concern to the population, may reasonably create some legitimate awareness as the daily newspapers do reach the range of classes of people throughout T&T. Furthermore, with the

GoRTT not taking a position or even acknowledging the extra-lessons challenges in T&T, the avenue of the daily newspapers is really a good way to communicate significant issues to the general public and may hold some sway with public perception. Arguably, the teacher empowerment created by the government's inaction regarding extra-lessons, can allow for corrupt and unethical practices and does not reconcile with the GoRTT's guiding principle of teacher empowerment to create an environment for excellence in teaching practice that improves learning (Strategic Plan 2011, p.ix). Hence, parents may reasonably feel pressured particularly in circumstances where the formal teacher is also the extra-lessons teacher and there may be the risk of student victimisation and discrimination. Furthermore, in the culture of the prestige denominational setting of academic success, stakeholders may even seek to justify possible unethical practices in the search for a competitive edge towards maintaining the prevalent culture of academic excellence.

1.7 Culture, Ethos and Socio-Economic Status

The Jules report (1994), which examined the secondary school population in T&T placement patterns and practices, concluded a clear relationship between students' socio-economic background and distribution across school types. The study showed that students who attended prestige (denominational) schools had parents with overall higher occupational levels and higher educational qualifications. However, students attending junior secondary and senior comprehensive schools mainly came from families in which parents were labourers and possessed lower levels of education. These findings are in sync with the assertion that, in T&T, a school's culture may be representative of a particular social class within society (Mustapha and Brunton 2002, p.156). Hence, the formal and hidden curricula, societal perception and, most critically, the school's community all effectively contribute towards the culture and ethos that characterise a school.

Most significantly, Brunton (2002, p.174) notes that:

[t]he strongest variables limiting student's access to extra-lessons were found to be student's economic status and the type of school they attend. (Brunton 2002, p.174).

In my own case, although I was of low-income background, my academic merit placed me in a denominational prestige school with a culture of high academic

excellence. While I was happy with my schoolteachers, it is indeed significant that my inability to afford extra-lessons could have possibly influenced my thinking that extra-lessons were not necessary. However, many of my classmates felt that extra-lessons were important and regularly attended. Notably, on academic performance I measured up, even surpassed, the extra-lessons attendees. Twenty odd years later, these views regarding extra-lessons seem quite characteristic of my observations of the students at Excellence High. Hence, the culture of secondary schools, particularly denominational ones, may be a powerful factor in determining stakeholders' perceptions regarding the role of extra-lessons and the accompanying opportunity costs. Moreover, the culture and ethos of a school community may be reasonably influenced by the socio-economic status of the stakeholders.

Filmer and Pritchett (1999), in their examination of 35 developing countries, observe that household wealth is strongly related to educational attainment of children. Moreover, Bowles and Gintis's (1976) view of schools as socialising mechanisms for the capitalist economy and Bernstein's (1975) examination of the linguistic skills resulting from social and economic status, all support social reproduction theory. In so doing, the education system and opportunities may contribute to the reproduction of power relationships and the distribution of cultural and educational wealth among differing socioeconomic classes. Thus, students' attitudes and actions may also reflect their varied socio-economic status and '*cultural capital*' (Bourdieu 1977) and may reasonably influence, even determine, their educational choices and opportunities. Edgerton, Peter and Roberts (2008) reiterate that schooling may contribute to the reproduction of class differences through intergenerational transmission of economic, social and cultural resources. Hence, family structure, socio-economic status and school culture, particularly in the denominational prestige setting of Excellence High, can be key determinants towards stakeholders' views and their resulting choices for perceived effective educational opportunities such as extra-lessons.

The overall socio-economic disadvantages that may result from educational opportunities, are explained in a much clearer context by Safarzyńska (2011, p.2) in noting that:

the impact of private tutoring on education inequalities may be minor when compared to the other advantages children from wealthy families enjoy, such as better learning equipment, private schooling etc. (Safarzyńska 2011, p.2).

It follows then, that cultural capital may be effectively used to understand social class differences in students' school experiences (Lareau 1987, p.73), and may prove critical when examining stakeholders' views on, access to and participation in, extra-lessons. The reality may be that the socially and financially disadvantaged are also educationally disadvantaged since only those who can afford extra-lessons may benefit (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.48). In recognising this socio-economic disparity Brunton (2002, p.165) warned that:

if extra-lessons do indeed pass on educational advantages to those who enrol in these sessions, then it may be seen as a mechanism for reproducing social inequalities. (Brunton 2002, p.165).

Thus, in the denominational prestige setting of Excellence High, it is important to find ways to effectively identify these cultural, social and economic differences when examining perceptions surrounding the role of extra-lessons towards students' success, the opportunity costs involved, and students' performance with and without extra-lessons.

In prestige denominational schools, like Excellence High, Baksh (1986) notes a higher percentage of students from the middle-class to upper-class backgrounds may benefit from superior financial and educational support systems at home. For these families, private tutoring in small groups, together with well-balanced extra-curricular classes, may be a viable option for holistic development. If private tutoring successfully helps students, then the in-school experience may improve, and they may be more inclined to continue or even further their education (Bray 2006, p.521). On the other hand, too much private tutoring may cause negative responses due to overwork and fatigue. Regarding private tutoring in elite families in Singapore, Cheo and Quah (2005, p.276) submitted that private tutoring could be counter-productive in their observation of overload on the children. This type of setting may be applicable to T&T's denominational secondary schools, like Excellence High, in which the affluent parents may have similar ideologies regarding the role of extra-lessons to their children's success and so ignore the possibility of fatigue and overload.

There may also be stakeholders like myself who value holistic development activities such as religious duties, family activities, sports, art and music as opposed to extra-lessons when seeking students' success. However, unlike the regular secondary school parent, in also being a secondary school teacher I have an in-depth knowledge of T&T's education system. Thus, as a parent I feel that I am better able to hold the formal schooling system accountable for my own children's education especially in situations that may involve possible unethical practices in the teaching process. This type of scenario is again characteristic of the advantageous opportunities of the educationally, socio-economically and culturally privileged, as my position as a teacher proves advantageous in the education process of my own children, an advantage that the average parent may not benefit from.

Another reality of the lower socio-economic status students may be such that the extra-lessons they can afford may not necessarily be considered as the best extra-lessons' opportunities. In the T&T context, this development was recognised by Brunton (2002, pp.181-182) as he noted that:

[t]his is not to say that extra-lessons by itself stratifies the secondary school population, but instead mirrors the modes of stratification found in the formal school system. (Brunton 2002, pp.181-182).

If students are not able to afford the perceived best and most sought after extra-lessons, then they will have to seek out those with lower rates and possibly lesser quality. Thus, if the quality of extra-lessons becomes a determining factor to students' success, then the role of formal schooling to students' success becomes, as it should have always been, of utmost importance. Thus, to examine this array of situations that may arise due to culture, ethos and socio-economic status, the research questions are key to the successful undertaking of this study.

1.8 Research Questions

Research questions are interrogative statements that are key to the study's purpose and the data, which the researcher needs to collect (Johnson and Christensen 2004, p.77). Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006, p.478) inform that research questions should:

provide a framework for conducting the study, helping the researcher to organize the research and giving it relevance, direction, and coherence, thereby helping to keep the researcher focused during the course of the investigation. (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006, p.478).

I explored research questions that are clear, concise and simply stated such that the purpose of the research remained evident. These research questions were constructed in such a way that they could be explored within the limits of available resources, through a clear, focused and manageable research design (Winter 2003, p.205). For this study at Excellence High, I used the following three research questions:

- **What are Excellence High stakeholders' definitions of effective learning and students' success?**
- **What are the beliefs of Excellence High's stakeholders regarding the role of extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students' success at secondary school?**
- **What are Excellence High stakeholders' perceptions regarding the opportunity costs of extra-lessons?**

In undertaking this research, I hope to tangibly contribute to the body of knowledge that Bray (2011, p.14) speaks of when he recommends that *'more attention be devoted to shadow education by researchers in order to generate a stronger foundation of evidence.'* Following this rationale, chapter two undertakes the literature review.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the literature review under headings that aim to give a clear organisation to the scope of literature particular to this educational research. The first section examines the literature under the heading “Academic Achievement, Effective Learning and Stakeholders’ Perspective”. The second section is titled “Extra Lessons and Supplementary Tutoring” and examines literature and research regarding extra-lessons and its varying terminologies and the overarching topics that are important to this study: Extra-Lessons and Terminologies; Cultural Implications; Scale of Extra-Lessons; Schooling Structure; Prestige Orientation; Financial Implications; Extra-Lessons, Corruption and Ethics; and lastly, Government and Policy. Finally, the third section of the literature review examines “Extra-Lessons and Opportunity Costs”.

2.1 Academic Achievement, Effective Learning and Stakeholders’ Perspective

Many may well believe that supplementary tutoring can lead to effective learning and so facilitate successful, even excellent, academic achievement. For this to be a reality though, the quality and standard of the private tutoring is crucial, coupled with the student’s purpose for attending. The compatibility between the extra-lessons teacher and the student is a key factor to the perceived success of extra-lessons towards academic achievement and effective learning. Bray and Lykins (2012, p.32) caution that:

[s]ome tutors have excellent skills but work with students who are unmotivated or not academically capable. By corollary, some students are motivated and capable, but their tutors lack content knowledge and pedagogical skills. (Bray and Lykins 2012, p.32).

However, there may be the perfect match in terms of star tutor and motivated student. While there are existing studies on academic achievement and supplementary tutoring, Bray and Lykins (2012, p.32) surmised that some of these tend to show correlations rather than causations.

2.1.1 Academic Achievement

From a global perspective, Kuan (2011, p.362) researched the Mathematics achievement of 10,013 grade 9 students in Taipei, China. He used a pair of data groups that allowed for control regarding students’ socioeconomic status, ability, and

attitude. His findings noted that students who received tutoring were on average more studious, achieved higher, and were from higher social classes. However, his research made no distinctions among levels of intensity or scale of tutoring. Liu (2012) followed up on Kuan's (2011) research and used part of the same database in Taipei, China and analysed a sample of 13,978 grade 7 students but did include data on the number of hours of tutoring per week. Bray (2011, p.27) talks about the appeal of long tutorial sessions in noting that:

[o]ne might expect secondary school pupils to have longer attention spans and to face more pressure from the end-of-schooling examinations, and thus to receive more hours of tutoring per week. (Bray 2011, p.27).

These long hours may have both positive and negative effects and really depends on the mental, emotional and physical state of the student as well as his/her motivations. It might well be that the student is quite tired from the normal school day but the parental pressure and even peer pressure demand attendance at extra-lessons. It follows that a student who may be fatigued both mentally and physically may not reap the intended benefits of extra-lessons. Liu (2012, p.47) found significant positive effects of tutoring on analytical ability and mathematics performance, however the data showed that these positive effects decreased when tutoring hours were increased and student fatigue came into focus.

In the Bangladesh context, Hamid *et al.* (2009, p.293) noted that of 228 grade 10 students in eight rural schools, those who had received supplementary tutoring had double the chance of attaining higher grades than those who had not. In the Korean context, Sohn *et al.* (2010) and Byun (2011) examined academic achievement involving supplementary tutoring. Sohn *et al.* (2010, p.26-27) summarized 11 studies and in six of those studies that examined relationships between expenditures and academic performance, five showed positive correlations. However, in one case when considering student background, the relationship disappeared. Byun (2011) used propensity score matching to compare the effect of tutoring on academic achievement in Mathematics for a nationally representative sample of lower secondary students and found that cram schools made a small difference in achievement gains. However, Byun (2011, p.21) recognized that his study focused only on the quantities of the different types of tutoring received and had no measures of quality. In the Singapore context, Cheo and Quah (2005, pp.280-281) investigated the learning achievements of

429 grade 8 “express” students in three premier secondary schools. They found that, although private tutoring can have a positive influence on the tutored subject, time taken away from other subjects possibly leads to a decline in overall academic performance. Thus, these aforementioned educational researches involving supplementary tutoring, show mixed findings due to the wide range of factors such as levels of intensity, scale of tutoring, types of schools, mode of tutoring delivery and duration of tutoring, that can influence academic achievement.

Although the studies would have allowed for large numerical data sets and resulting statistical modelling, issues relating to intensity, scale and class size coupled with socioeconomic factors, motivations and exhaustion can be lost in data interpretation. For example, data gathered from supplementary tutoring involving large classes taught by “expert tutors” involving technology and Internet use can be very different from one on one or even traditional teaching type classes. Then, in the case of the mainstream teacher being the private tutor, how the data is interpreted regarding positive results for academic achievement can be quite problematic. Nevertheless, once stakeholders believe, that is the perception, that extra-lessons can make a positive difference, they may seek tutoring that best fits the perceived educational needs to ensure academic success through what may be viewed as effective learning.

2.1.2 Effective Learning

In the most fundamental sense, Ileris (2007, p.3) proposes that learning can be ‘*any process that in living organisms leads to permanent capacity change and which is not solely due to biological maturation or ageing.*’ This follows Farrant’s (1988, p.107) suggestion that learning cannot be attributed to inherited behaviour patterns or physical growth. Thus, in this context it follows that that learning may not only depend on the knowledge transmission itself but also the conditions and environment in which the learning takes place together with who or what is facilitating this learning process as well as the motivations of the learner. Ileris (2009, p.20) also posits that learning involves two very different processes:

an external interaction process between the learner and his or her social, cultural or material environment, and an internal psychological process of elaboration and acquisition. (Ileris 2009, p.20).

Illeris's theory does comprehensively build on the learning theories of well-recognised educational psychologists such as Skinner, Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky and Lave, particularly his three dimensions of learning:

the cognitive dimension of knowledge and skills, the emotional dimension of feelings and motivation, and the social dimension of communication and cooperation all of which are embedded in a societally situated context. (Illeris 2003, p.396).

Skinner's (1938, 1953 in Bolton and Clough 1998) behaviourist learning theory describes positive reinforcement, which presents a positive reinforcer and negative reinforcement removes a negative reinforcer. While Skinner's theory attempts to provide behavioural explanations for learning, he did not acknowledge human creativity and that learning could be cognitive. This behaviourist aspect of learning is recognised in Illeris's (2009, p.20) internal psychological process of elaboration and acquisition.

Cognitive learning was developed and is prominent in the research of such educational psychologists as Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky. Notably, their ideologies are echoed in Illeris's (2009, p.20) external interaction process, which involves features outside the learner that are involved in the learning process and can in some way influence the learning process. In this study these external interactions may prove important to determine the stakeholders' perspectives regarding the role of extra-lessons in their views of effective learning and academic success. Piaget (1950, 1951, 1954 in Bolton and Clough 1998) proposed a developmental theory of learning based on his view of *'intelligence as adaptation'* that recognises cognitive development consists of a constant effort to adapt to the environment through *'accommodation'* and *'assimilation'* that lead to *'equilibration'* (Elliot *et al.* 2000, p.57), all pertinent processes when examined in the context of extra-lessons. Although Piaget is criticised for underestimating the role of social influence and overestimating the orderliness of development through his rigid sensori-motor; pre-operations; concrete operations and formal operations stages, the importance of Piaget's theory to effective learning is the recognition of learning as a cognitive process and further lends to the theories of Bruner and Vygotsky.

Bruner (1996 quoted in Elliott *et al.* 2000, p.2) urged educators and fellow psychologists to view children as thinkers and stated that:

[t]his model of education is more concerned with interpretation and understanding than with the achievement of factual knowledge or skilled performance.

Bruner (1996 in Elliott *et al.* 2000) introduced four major themes in analysing learning (structure, readiness, intuition and motivation), regarding learning as an active process, where teacher and learner must engage in active dialogue based on a structured organisation of concepts. Since learners construct new ideas based upon their previous knowledge, teachers must recognise the learners' pre-existing knowledge base, a key concept in Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory.

Vygotsky (1978) proposed the '*zone of proximal development*', which refers to the distance between a child's actual development level and a possible improved level with professional guidance. Interestingly, stakeholders may well view extra-lessons as critical to successfully manoeuvring this zone of proximal development in school life for the forms five and six students, through the intervention of what may be viewed as expert tutors in the extra-lessons setting. Vygotsky (1978, p.24) viewed speech as a crucial instrument in a child's cognitive development and believed that:

the most significant moment in the course of intellectual development, which gives birth to the purely human forms of practical and abstract intelligence, occurs when speech and practical activity, two previously completely independent lines of development, converge. (Vygotsky 1978, p.24).

However, what distinguishes his theory from Piaget's is the emphasis on '*the intervention of expert tutors for effective learning*' (Bolton and Clough 1998, p.23). This notion of expert is instructive, particularly in the context of both the formal schoolteacher and the extra-lessons teacher, as whomever stakeholders view as the best expert will determine the learning and teaching environment that is sought after. Vygotsky's (1978) theory is key to situated learning theory (Lave 1998), and anchored instruction.

Lave (1998) contends that learning is situated, that is a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs and is recognised by Illeris (2003, p.396) in his

social and emotional dimension of learning. This situated learning places the learner at the centre of an instructional process where *'activity, concept, and culture are interdependent'* (Brown *et al.* 1989, p.2). Regarding extra-lessons, the whole idea of situated learning is relevant as the status of the learning situation may actually provide the perceived need for extra-lessons. Furthermore, anchored instruction proposes that learning and teaching activities be designed around an anchor or situation. It may reasonably follow that the drive for academic success coupled with students' perspective of effective learning, may be representative of relevant anchors that place extra-lessons as necessary. At Excellence High these anchors may be as a result of stakeholders' thinking and the collective culture of the school.

Learning and thinking about the world and education may be situated in cultural settings. A simple example of this was me organising breakfast for my form two class and asking students what they would like and many of the students primarily of East Indian descent indicated that there must be roti. This basic example underscores the significance of cultural thinking to children's experiences and thought processing. Bruner (2009, p.188) talks about how culture shapes the mind of learners as:

[i]ts individual expression adheres in meaning making, assigning meanings to things in different settings on particular occasions.

Thus, any type of learning is influenced by the cultural background and experience of the prospective learners and also the teachers. Bruner (2011, p.193) supports this in asserting that *'[c]ulturalism takes as its first premise that education is not an island, but part of a continent of culture.'* It may well be that the extra-lessons participation at Excellence High may be part of the *'culturalism'* at the school, representative of one example in the continent of denominational schools in T&T. Stakeholders may construct realities and meanings that adapt them to the cultural education system present at the school and so may influence their view of effective learning particularly when it comes to recognising the quality of the teacher.

The challenge of the modern teacher, particularly in the prestige secondary school system in T&T, is well explained by Davis *et al.* (2015, p.12) as they posit that:

[t]he task of the professional educator is framed by responsibilities for planning, measuring, and reporting in an outcomes-driven, evaluation-heavy, and

accountability-laden culture of command and control teaching.

This really does describe the secondary school education scenario in the examination classes, particularly in prestige schools like Excellence High. Teachers are expected to be experts in their field, which inherently implies continuous learning. Furthermore, teachers must also be able to successfully transmit this knowledge to each student in their charge, that is to provide '*authentic*' (Davis *et al.* 2015, p.65) education. Stakeholders, particularly parents and students, are the ones who will determine whether the teachers in the school system are falling short of providing these real and effective learning opportunities and academic success in the '*standardized education*' (Davis *et al.* 2015, p.9) system of secondary schools in T&T. Thus, they may realistically seek out opportunities such as extra-lessons to gain an advantage in the search for academic success through their interpretation of effective learning.

As I stated before, in Chapter 1, in my own view, effective learning to produce successful students best occurs when students are encouraged to generate, even co-author, knowledge through a process of critical investigation aimed at producing informed, reflective and critical judgments, both for academic as well as life's challenges. In so doing, the range of learning theories inclusive of behaviourist, cognitive, anchored and situated must be effectively combined with the intervention and facilitation of quality teachers in a favourable learning environment. While this sounds all encompassing, in reality the varied stakeholders' understandings of effective learning may be quite different from my position. They may choose to prioritise particular aspects of learning theory based on their perceived need, for example the rote learning required for examination drills. Contemporary learning theories that advocate the shift from static knowledge to the dynamic process of '*knowing*' (Davis *et al.* 2015, p.81) and place learning as an action-oriented activity, do further highlight the difficulties of defining the concept of effective learning as one static standard type definition. Therein lies the crux of my research as the key information to shedding light on the whole idea of effective learning and academic success in the community of Excellence High directly depends on stakeholders' '*knowing*' (*ibid*), ideologies, life experiences and perspectives.

2.1.3 Stakeholder's Perspective

From a student's perspective, participation in extra-lessons can be from different standpoints as they may really need the remedial help, examination drills, or they may simply view the class as a chance to socialise. In France, Oller and Glasman (2013, p.7) have pointed out that tutoring support programmes:

act as 'intermediary spaces' in which children and adolescents have the chance to admit gaps in their knowledge without being punished at school or harassed by impatient parents. Students can thus do and redo tasks they did not perform well and, ultimately, take charge of their own learning. (Oller and Glasman 2013, p.7).

In this kind of setting students may feel more comfortable to make mistakes and even learn from them which may redound to improved learning and improved academic performance. The reality that students' in-school performances go on their official transcripts that may then be forwarded to Universities, do place extra pressure on students to want to perform successfully at all times within the school setting. This type of pressure is not applicable in the extra-lessons setting, and actually provides an example of how the 'shadow' is different from mainstream schooling. It may reasonably follow that not having the threat of poor performance on record may effectively allow students a more relaxing environment that may positively influence their ability to learn. These benefits may reasonably be categorised as the facilitation of effective learning and academic success. Thus, students' choices may vary based on their own perceptions of being weak or average and wanting to improve, being very good and wanting to become excellent or simply going for social interaction.

The social benefits of attending extra-lessons bring into focus the social and cultural aspect. Bray (2011, p.37) highlights motives other than academic achievement in noting that '*such reasons could include a desire to meet friends and fit into peer groups.*' Wenger (2009, p.240) acknowledges the importance of learners being social beings and the concept of '*learning as social participation.*' Hence the extra-lessons environment may fulfil this role of learning through social participation all to the benefit of participants. This type of social interaction can be reasonably linked to the age group of the students, as at Excellence High the prospective student participants are all teenagers, and the form six students are eighteen years and over. Ziehe (2009, p.215) talks about the importance of connecting learning style and youth culture

especially in noting that '*youth cultures are formed by changes in general underlying convictions.*' Students may feel that extra-lessons are par for the course for the year group that they belong to. Thus, investigating how extra-lessons fit into the culture of the students at the examinations level at Excellence High will be quite informative.

While it may be reasonable to suggest that tutoring may be sought by pupils, and their respective parents, whose academic performance is weak and may need remedial assistance, there is the other perspective of good students who want to improve and sharpen their skills. Bray (2007, p.42) talks of these students and even suggests that they may be in the majority as:

the dominant group is of students whose performance is already good, and who want to maintain their competitive edge. (Bray 2007, p.42).

In the setting of Excellence High, this type of tutoring for a competitive edge may well be a notable finding as the school is already viewed as one of the top schools in T&T, hence additional help may reasonably be to gain an academic advantage amongst their peers. Nevertheless, from the parents' perspective, their investment in private tutoring may give the confidence that they are best helping their children at these crucial stages as '*effective tutoring arguably enhances overall levels of human capital for society*' (Bray 2013, p.20). In the T&T context, Lochan and Barrow (2012, p.413-414) put forward findings from an unemployed disabled father who claimed that:

[L]essons was every evening after school till about five or half past five. The cost was TT\$ 75 per month. I did not mind paying it because I could not help him like some other parents who could help their children. (Lochan and Barrow 2012, p. 413-414).

Thus, parents may feel pressured to take whatever measures deemed necessary, within their means, towards ensuring their children's success. However, there is the possibility that parents may choose to opt for extra-lessons to appease their own concerns rather than recognising their children's needs.

In Malta, supplementary tutoring in academic school subjects is to either replicate or compensate for insufficiencies in daytime schooling that is provided by tutors for financial gain outside the school and the family (Buhagiar and Chetcuti, 2013), quite similar to T&T. At a girls' high school in Malta, somewhat similar to Excellence

High, private lessons were investigated among form five girls and Gauci and Wetz (2009, p.8) noted that:

[p]arents send students to private lessons in order to feel that they are doing all they could to help them. It is probably the case that [at least some] local students attend private lessons even when there is no real need. (Gauci and Wetz 2009, p.8).

Thus, the behaviour of parents may reflect perceived social norms and apprehensions together with what they deem as the educational needs of their children. It is hoped that my educational research will go a fair way into exploring this type of phenomenon at Excellence High, and so inform the extra-lessons narrative in T&T. However, while there are possible positive effects on academic achievement there are other challenges that supplementary tutoring may pose.

From both the teaching and learning perspectives there may develop a 'laissez faire' approach. From the teaching perspective, if many students in a class are attending extra-lessons then the possibility exists that the teacher may not have to work as hard (Bray 2007, p.51) as these teachers may find consolation in the knowledge that the children will cover the work regardless. Moreover, the in-school curriculum may not be taught in the same order of the extra-lessons curriculum for corresponding subjects and so may prove challenging for the students to keep up. These disparities of curricula delivery, knowledge and understanding displayed in the classroom setting due to the extra-lessons influence may now present further teaching challenges in the classroom. Bray (2007, p.51) recognises this challenge in noting that:

[s]ome teachers respond to these disparities by assisting the slower learners; but others may take the students who receive tutoring as the norm, and permit the gaps between students to grow. In the latter case, all parents are placed under pressure to invest in private tutoring for their children. (Bray 2007, p.51).

Nevertheless, as a teacher professional in the mainstream classroom, regardless of the effects of extra-lessons, the critical role of teacher learning and preparation must be emphasised, understood and accepted. The personal and professional development of teachers is crucial and impacts heavily on students' skills development, behaviour and self-confidence (Barth 1990, p.47). From the student perspective, the perceived safety net of extra-lessons may negatively affect their attention and effort in class. Whether the teacher is well prepared, or to what extent the student is attentive in the

classroom setting, parents and students still seem attracted to extra-lessons and supplementary tutoring.

2.2 Extra Lessons and Supplementary Tutoring

2.2.1 *Extra-Lessons and Terminologies*

There are various terms used to describe the occurrence of private supplementary tutoring such as out-of-school education, private tuition, private tutoring, private lessons, extra-lessons and shadow education. Both Lochan and Barrow's (2008, p.46) definition of extra-lessons and Bray and Silova's (2006, p.29) definition of private tutoring characterise a common core of '*additional teaching in academic subjects beyond the hours of mainstream formal schooling*' (Bray and Silova 2006, p.516), ideally at a cost or fee. In their publication on shadow education, as a product of partnership between the Asian Development Bank and the Comparative Education Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong, Bray and Lykins (2012, p.1) define the concept of extra-lessons as the '*tutoring in academic subjects that is provided for a fee and that takes place outside standard school hours.*'

In T&T, 'extra-lessons' is the term used to describe private lessons, private tuition and private tutoring that is done in addition to the formal school curricula for remuneration. In Jamaica, T&T's Caribbean neighbour, supplementary tutoring is also referred to as extra-lessons (Stewart 2015, p.26). Bray (2007, p.29) also points out that supplementary tutoring is found in many parts of the world, and especially in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America. In Ireland, the terminology used for private tutoring is '*grinds*' (Banks and Smyth, 2015 p.607). Further east in Japan, tutoring centres, which supplement the school system, are known as *juku* (Bray 2007, p.22). However globally, private supplementary tutoring's most renowned terminology seems to be '*shadow education*' (Stevenson and Baker 1992) and conveys the image of out of school education processes which run in parallel to formal schooling but are used by students to increase their own educational opportunities and performances.

This term shadow education seems self-explanatory as the idea of a shadow follows someone/something closely and secretly (Oxford, 2018). Thus, these extra-lessons

follow the in-school system and are dependent on the mainstream schooling to function effectively. Bray (2011, p.13) corroborates and further explains this shadow in stating that:

[i]f a new curriculum or assessment mode is introduced in the mainstream, in due course it appears in the shadow. And as the mainstream expands, so does the shadow. (Bray 2011, p.13).

Like a shadow, extra-lessons in T&T occur in the background and is like formal schooling in delivery, rationale and curricula, quite similar to Baker *et al's* (2001, p.2) description as '*school like processes.*' To relate shadow education to the T&T context, Brunton (2000, p.2) posits that '*extra-lessons "shadows" the formal system and as it is not intended to replace formal education, but to reinforce what has already been done in school.*' To further clarify, free assistance given by teachers, whether in or out of school, to children is not considered extra-lessons, neither is payment for extra-curricular activities that are located outside of the school's timetable. These supplementary tutoring or shadow education opportunities in the form of extra-lessons can be provided in different settings.

These settings may include in school but after school hours, at a location outside of school and even online. In these settings the class size may range from individual, small, large and lecture size. In T&T, these extra-lessons settings are very similar to Bray's (2013, p.18) description that:

[s]ome tutoring is provided by one-to-one by professionals, semi-professionals or amateurs; other tutoring is provided in small groups; and yet other tutoring is provided in lecture formats. (Bray 2013, p.18).

This private tutoring is predominantly sought for academic remedial or enhancement purposes. Zhou and Wang (2015, p.365), in their study which examined whether extra lessons reinforce or weaken the family effect on educational inequality in the Chinese context, describe in detail private tutoring as being either remedial, to improve students' understanding and achievement, or enhancement.

Additionally, extra-lessons can prove to be challenging to the existing formal school system in purpose and function. One major issue is that private tutoring may reasonably reflect the weaknesses of the existing formal system. Bray's (2011, p.17)

research, which focused on the Challenge of Shadow Education prepared for the European Commission and focused on the 27 countries of the European Union, discusses that:

[t]he shadow sector exposes shortcomings in mainstream systems, and offers a way to compensate for at least some of these shortcomings. (Bray 2011, p.17).

One of Bray's (2011) major recommendations based on this report was the need for more attention to be devoted to shadow education by policy makers and researchers, a task, which this research is geared towards accomplishing. Notably, most forms of supplementary tutoring require significant financial investment by parents, and also entail substantial amounts of students' time and concentrated focus outside of the formal school curriculum, in short, a practice and culture of extra effort is required.

2.2.2 Cultural Implications

Bray and Lykins (2012, p.vi) recognise the expansion of shadow education and its high cost particularly in Asia. In accounting for the popularity of extra-lessons on the global scale Bray (2013, p.18) notes cultural, educational and economic factors are key. Shin (2012, p.66) supports the cultural influence in noting that '*in the Confucian culture, an exam-based filtering system was developed and education has functioned as a way to improve social status.*' Hagwons are the supplementary tutored schools in South Korea (Bray 2013, p.19) and buxibans in Taiwan (Chou and Yuan 2011, p.1). Dierkes (2011) noted that Japan's jukus have been part of a social fabric that has stressed diligence and learning, and in so doing is seen as a major ingredient in the country's economic success. Thus, many Asian cultures, which are heavily influenced by Confucian ideologies, place strong emphasis on effort in determining educational success.

Similarly, the cultural influence regarding education is quite strong as T&T is unique in that our population is dominated by two groups primarily based on the ancestry of the East Indian indentured labourers and the African slaves (Brereton *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, our British colonial history resulted in an inherited elitist examination driven education system (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.45). The consistent teaching of our forefathers, both East Indian and African, underscores the role of educational

success to improve one's life and society. After T&T's independence in 1962, our first Prime Minister, the late Dr. Eric Williams, echoed our forefathers' sentiments as he wrote that:

[i]n such a colony, both in order to form a society and develop a spirit of community; and in order to train the people for self government, education would have an important role to play. (Williams 1962, p.962).

Through this East Indian and African ancestral culturings and influence, there seems to be much value for a culture of '*education enthusiasm*' (Shin 2012, p.66) throughout T&T's educational system. Consequently, in the T&T context there appears to be the fertile ground for the culture, environment and thinking that supports supplementary tutoring to ensure educational success. It may reasonably follow that supplementary tutoring is especially likely to be widespread in cultures like the T&T denominational prestige setting, which stress effort and educational excellence. However, although this yearning for education may drive the development of education, it may also produce problems such as over-education and shadow education (Shin 2012, p.66).

Regarding extra-lessons in T&T, Brunton (2002, p.164) in his research recognised the development of the extra-lessons '*industry*' which significantly impacts the formal education system. In T&T, both at the primary and secondary levels, students seek the support of private tutors outside of formal schooling (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.45 and Lochan and Barrow 2012, p.405). This practice seems to represent the need for students to feel that they are taking the best opportunity for their success as well as a safety guarantee of success, and is supported in Bray (2001, p.27) highlighting that '*[t]he intensity of tutoring is partly shaped by its purpose.*' Hence, extra-lessons seem prevalent in the T&T context and appear to serve a crucial purpose in the final examinations stage both at the primary and secondary level.

2.2.3 Scale of Extra-Lessons

In the T&T secondary school context, the scale of extra-lessons is relevant particularly in ascertaining key factors that result in the perceived need for extra-lessons. On a global scale, Bray (2011, p.27) suggests that:

[t]utoring which is seen as providing long-term support may be provided steadily throughout the year, but tutoring which is driven by high-stakes examinations is

likely to peak in intensity just before those examinations. (Bray 2011, p.27).

However, locally extra-lessons seem to be somewhat permanent and exist alongside the schooling process with increased emphasis in the lead up to examinations. Thus, at Excellence High, the scale of this extra-lessons practice is important to ascertain.

Bray (2007, p.23) proposes that:

[t]he scale of supplementary tutoring varies widely in different societies. Major factors underlying the variation include cultures, the nature of mainstream education systems, and the structures of economies. (Bray 2007, p.23).

T&T's multicultural context and colonial past do provide a range of educational influences and circumstances. Thus, for a prestige denominational setting like Excellence High, Lochan and Barrow (2012, p.419) talk of the elitist school culture and its connection to the large-scale practice of private tutoring. From a global perspective, Bray's (2007, p.23) comprehensive study described the large enterprise of supplementary tutoring:

[i]n Mauritius, for example, almost all senior secondary school students receive tutoring; in Japan about 70 per cent of pupils will have received private tutoring ... and in Malaysia about 83 per cent of pupils ... Nine juku firms are listed on Japanese stock exchanges. (Bray 2007, p.23).

It stands to reason that eleven years later with the economic incentives even higher and career qualifications being more challenging, shadow education participation would have increased tangibly. In South Korea, Megastudy, an online *hagwon*, is listed on the South Korean stock exchange (Ripley 2013, p.1) and notably highlights the economic and financial value placed on supplementary education. Thus, both in the local and global contexts, the supplementary tutoring practice seems to reflect a high level of participation in relation to educational and cultural beliefs, economic incentives and competitiveness. However, equally as important to determining extra-lessons participation is the reality of impending final examinations due to the schooling structure.

2.2.4 *Schooling Structure*

In the T&T secondary school context, Brunton's (2002) study which sampled 500 secondary school students by questionnaire, presented findings that showed that participation in the shadow education system in Trinidad increases as secondary school students face greater examination pressure. Stevenson and Baker (1992, p.1640), in their study on the characteristics that facilitate and encourage shadow education, noted that:

[f]irst, and most important, is the use of formal examinations-particularly centrally administered examinations. Second, shadow education flourishes if schooling uses "contest rules" instead of "sponsorship rules". And third, shadow education is prevalent when there are tight linkages between the outcomes of educational allocation in elementary and secondary schooling and future educational opportunities, occupations, or general social status. (Stevenson and Baker 1992, p.1640).

These characteristics are quite representative of both the primary and secondary schooling structure in T&T, particularly in the search for scholarships to tertiary level institutions.

These scholarships are based on students' performance at the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) at the end of form six. In examining this race for university scholarships, Lochan and Barrow (2008, p.51) point out that:

selection to a prestigious university almost guarantees students access to the good life. The extra-lessons industry is an institutional response to this social arrangement. (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.51).

Regarding supplementary tutoring, Bray (2011, p.35) also recognises that these high stakes examinations determine students' future paths. In recognising the prevalence of supplementary tutoring in search of post-secondary opportunities, Bray and Lykins (2012, p.24) instructively suggest that at the end of secondary education there is great pressure since '*few postsecondary places are available, and the gate is therefore narrow.*' Interestingly, this argument also holds for the primary school students who aim to get into the few secondary school spaces at the denominational schools and so characterises the high stakes academic environment in T&T's primary and secondary

school system. Furthermore, in T&T's education system, especially at prestige denominational schools like Excellence High, we seem to follow this type of high stakes examinations environment where university scholarships appear to be the measure of success. Hence, extra-lessons may be viewed as essential to compete, complete and master curricula at all levels.

To facilitate examination success, there is need for the successful and timely curricula completion in preparation for examinations. Also, of critical importance is the actual revision through past papers that may hone both the academic and time management skills of students in preparation for the examination setting. As a secondary school teacher, I can relate to the pressure that mounts in ensuring successful, effective and complete curricula delivery. In rationalising the role that private tutoring may play, Bray (2011, p.37) talks about curricula pressures in noting that:

[t]eachers feel that they must “finish the syllabus at all costs”, and that, since this does not permit the sort of individual attention and revisiting of weakly-covered concepts that they would like, supplementary tutoring may be desirable for some pupils. Many teachers in other countries would certainly recognise the problems of heavily loaded curricula. (Bray 2011, p.37).

Thus, if parents feel that the in-school teaching is insufficiently preparing students for the final examination and due to the exhaustive and overloaded nature of the curricula that they are less able to help their children, they may feel pressured, even justified, in seeking external help. Hence, in the secondary school context in T&T, extra-lessons may be viewed as a necessity for curriculum completion, particularly in the denominational prestige setting of Excellence High.

2.2.5 Prestige Orientation

Lee and Shouse (2011, p.213) suggest that prestige is ‘*an emotional, socially constructed reflection of value and desire beyond simple technical needs.*’ Excellence High is considered a prestige denominational school due to its educational history, excellent academic performance and external perception of its status. In T&T's denominational context Mustapha and Brunton (2002, p.158) assert that ‘*denominational schools have been empowered by how society perceives them.*’ Due to this status, Excellence High has consistently been a first-choice school for the girls who write the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) examination. Notably, to get

into this school in the 80% that are taken on merit as opposed to the 20% that the denominational board selects, a student needs to score at least 90% (ischooltt 2019) in the SEA examination. Clearly this is a narrow window of opportunity and so parents may see the need for extra-lessons in this prestige context. Lee and Shouse (2011, p.221) further posit that:

we find student prestige orientation prompts parents to spend more on shadow education, perhaps more than might be realistic or necessary given the student's likelihood of benefiting from it. (Lee and Shouse 2011, p.221).

Thus, students who come into Excellence High from a primary school system of extra-lessons may well seek to maintain this academic success by continuing in this regard, once they can afford it. Cross and Schwartzbaum (1976) notably indicated that socioeconomic variables are the most significant determinants of selective secondary school attendance in Trinidad and Tobago. Thus, schools may be seen as agencies of cultural and ideological transmission and the dominant socio-economic class tends to dominate culturally through the transmission of its cultural values.

Baksh (1986) alludes that prestige schools have a higher percentage of students from the middle-class to upper-class backgrounds who usually benefit from greater support systems at home. Therefore, in the denominational school context like Excellence High, the *'culture of the individual school seems to be the culture of a particular social class within the hierarchy'* (Mustapha and Brunton 2002, p.156). This resonates with the idea of 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu 1977), in the sense that the educational, social and cultural resource of a family shapes academic opportunities and successes. Hence, the collective cultural capital of the school may very well be a key factor in determining the role and importance of extra-lessons towards effective learning and educational success. It may be reasonable to suggest that if extra-lessons are characteristic of the type of school, then parents may be reasonably pressured into participating. Notably, if extra-lessons may improve students' performance, groups who cannot access it may eventually become socially disadvantaged. Mustapha and Brunton (2002, p.165) concur as they note that *'if extra-lessons do indeed pass on educational advantages to those who enrol in these sessions, then it may be seen as a mechanism for reproducing social inequalities.'* Consequently, it is reasonable to propose that prestige thinking may substantially influence parental spending on

supplementary tutoring and as such may present financial implications to stakeholders.

2.2.6 *Financial Implications*

The criteria that create demand for supplementary tutoring can be very subjective and my educational research aims to provide some evidence-based insight from the T&T denominational secondary school perspective. Bray and Lykins (2012, p.23) suggest that:

[t]he main driver of demand for supplementary tutoring is awareness that investment in education can generate strong returns from good performance in key examinations and entrance to high-status secondary schools and universities. (Bray and Lykins 2012, p.23).

From my own experience as a student, teacher and parent, there is an understood premise that educational success serves as the impetus to be financially comfortable in life. However, differing views of educational success and comfortable living can present quite varied concepts regarding educational investment. Bray (2013, p.26) recognises the range of influences that create subjectivity of educational success in noting that:

[t]he learning approaches imposed by the education system and/or chosen by the students themselves are strongly influenced by structural traditions in schooling, the motivations and personalities of the students, their family circumstances, and their relationships with teachers and peers. (Bray 2013, p.26).

Hence it is reasonable to propose that families will collectively decide based on their cultural, economic and educational circumstances their supplementary tutoring options, if any. If extra-lessons are indeed seen as necessary, then the financial cost factors must be considered.

In his research regarding the cost of supplementary tutoring Bray (2007, p.27) pointed out that:

[i]n most cases, the greatest components in these figures are the fees paid to tutors and their agencies. In most settings, charges increase at higher levels of the education system, and individual tutoring is more costly per person than group work. (Bray 2007, p.27).

Parents must contend with paying for these additional classes and competing to get their children into the perceived best extra-lessons classes. Thus, this brings into question issues of educational equality of opportunity. Specifically, in the T&T context, Lochan and Barrow (2008, p.49) recognised the inequality that arises due to the extra-lessons as they posit that extra-lessons do:

not equalize educational opportunity since only those who can afford to pay can access extra-lessons. Knowing the extent and costs of extra-lessons, therefore, will help us to better understand the true private costs of schooling in Trinidad and Tobago. (Lochan and Barrow 2008, p.49).

In assessing the real cost of schooling within the extra-lessons context, there must be recognition that the sought-after or valued private tutors may claim higher tuition (Hallak and Poisson 2007, p.263). To draw reference from the South Korean hagwons, Ripley (2013, p.1) surmises that the *'most radical difference between traditional schools and hagwons is that students sign up for specific teachers, so the most respected teachers get the most students.'* No doubt, the perception of best extra-lessons teachers will play a key role in the fee structure for their perceived premium classes. However, the ability of parents to afford these extra-lessons now comes into focus.

Choi and Park (2016, p.21) warn that *'families have to pay for this kind of supplementary education, which raises a concern for educational inequality associated with differential access by family background.'* Researchers argue that social and economic status directly influences a child's academic achievement and their performance at school seems to depend on: type and size of family unit, living conditions, living location, whether parents worked or not and if so their total income and level of their education (Baharudin and Luster, 1998, Jeynes 2002, Majoribanks 1996). Zhou and Wang (2015, p.363) also remind that lower socioeconomic status students perform academically worse than their higher socioeconomic counterparts. If this notion were to be realistically examined in the extra-lessons framework, then questions of how socioeconomic and cultural status affects students' access to and participation in extra-lessons arise.

Being able to access private tutoring will vary due to varying cultural, educational and social backgrounds. Choi and Park (2015, p.23) surmised that:

[d]ifferential access to shadow education among students who are from different educational and social backgrounds is critical in considering the implications of shadow education. (Choi and Park 2015, p.23).

As education plays a critical role in deciding one's educational, life and career choices and chances, families would tend to find the best means possible to help their children gain an advantage in the educational process. Thus, the real issue of affordability is significant. Bray (2011, p.33) in his report for the European Commission, citing the research in Ireland, noted that:

[f]amilies in higher socio-economic groups have more opportunity to invest in tutoring, and commonly use this opportunity ... Proportions of students receiving tutoring were greatest in the higher professional group. Participation was least among students from working-class backgrounds and especially among those from unskilled households. (Bray 2011, p.33).

Hence, socioeconomic factors are directly relevant in both the extra-lessons and schooling context, but equally as important are the ethical issues that may arise from the extra-lessons industry.

2.2.7 Extra-Lessons, Corruption and Ethics

To determine the ethical implications regarding private tutoring, the implementation and private tutor's mode of operations must be examined. Hallak and Poisson (2007, p.33) submit that '*what makes private tutoring unethical is the condition of its operation and its impact on mainstream education.*' Thus, an extra-lessons teacher who may also be the mainstream teacher may present an ethical dilemma and even cause undue stress and pressure on parents and their children. Rampersad (2002, p.2) talks about the importance of '*positive staff-student relationships towards healthy education.*' It follows that students must feel comfortable in the classroom and also be beneficiaries to complete and effective curricula delivery. However, Hallak and Poisson (2007, p.266) warn of possible illicit practices that may happen for teachers who may provide tutoring to their own charges by intentionally underperforming in the mainstream classroom. If the private tutor is the mainstream class teacher, then the student may have legitimate fears of victimisation, discrimination and intentionally incomplete curricula delivery should the student opt not to attend the

private classes. Hallak and Poisson (2007, p.60) further underscore this unhealthy relationship between extra-lessons and pressure for examination success in noting that:

pressure exerted by teachers on parents to send their children for private tutoring with them is more likely to take place in the last grades of secondary education. (Hallak and Poisson 2007, p.60).

While these ethical considerations are real, equally as important are the positives of supplementary tutoring.

Issues in students' learning may be attributed to factors like teacher absenteeism and ineffective teaching through unqualified and inexperienced teachers. Thus, in these circumstances private tutoring may help overcome these deficiencies and enable students to effectively learn. From a positive ethical standpoint Lochan and Barrow (2012, p.413) also note that some teachers at the primary level do supplementary tutoring for free as '*45.3 per cent reported that their teachers offered free supplementary tutoring.*' However, I must acknowledge that in the T&T secondary school context, extra-lessons give substantial non-taxable incomes to large numbers of teachers who are mainstream teachers from T&T's secondary schools. Since these extra-lessons are, in reality, a shadow activity, all of the earnings are tax-free with no accountability and opens the door towards corruption.

Once extra-lessons teachers have no supervision and monitoring of their work coupled with payments that are not taxed or recorded officially, then the environment is there which can facilitate corrupt practices. This monopoly can create the setting for exploitation, as Hallak and Poisson (2005, p.2) remind that:

corruption has connections with the existence of monopoly and discretionary power, poor governance and supervision at all levels. (Hallak and Poisson 2005, p.2).

In the T&T context, regarding possible corrupt practices involving extra-lessons, the T&T Express (2011) newspaper editorial cautioned that:

[h]aving private lessons as a source of additional income gives teachers an incentive to under-perform in the school classroom. They may not consciously be short-changing their students, but they may well reserve their energies to give their best in their lessons classes

since, unlike their Ministry-paid jobs, their earnings there depend on results. (T&T Express 2011).

This newspaper editorial takes a clear position on the matter to present to the population of the country. In reality, the daily newspaper appeals and communicates to all classes of the population and so sends a clear message that can potentially cause all stakeholders including policy makers to take notice. While there may be no government policy of control and implementation of extra-lessons, the apparent feature is that the private tutor's success rate and performance determines his/her continued demand and so provides inherent supervision. However, this may only be the case when the extra-lessons teacher is not the mainstream teacher and so raises an important issue of how governments may develop and implement policies regarding extra-lessons.

2.2.8 Government and Policy

In examining how to avoid corruption in mainstream education and in their message for policy planners and administrators, Hallak and Poisson (2007, p.270) advise that:

[g]overnments do not always address the causes and consequences of private tutoring. Some do not intervene, relying on market forces to regulate, while others take direct actions to control and monitor private tutoring with some success. (Hallak and Poisson 2007, p.270).

In T&T, extra-lessons are informal and run in parallel with formal schooling and the T&T governments have never explicitly drafted policy or practice regarding extra-lessons. While not making excuses for various GoRTT over the years, I can understand the challenge of a government trying to draft policy on a shadow system that the participants value immensely, and so they may even rebuke possible government intervention. The government may actually run the risk of upsetting their political support base.

In recognising the challenges to policy makers and by extension governments Bray (2011, p.14) notes that:

[s]hadow education has profound social and economic implications. It also shapes the ways that policy makers, families, teachers and others think about and experience public education. (Bray 2011, p.14).

In the T&T context, the short length of the secondary school day, established through government policy, was highlighted as a reason for teachers to have the free time to deliver extra-lessons. One of the daily newspapers, the T&T Express (2011), blamed government policy regarding the perceived short time frame of actual school hours, for extra-lessons through its' editorial in highlighting that:

[h]ow is it, for example, that teachers have enough time to do their normal schoolwork and then have additional classes after school? Part of the answer lies in school hours, which run from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for primary schools, and often an hour or two less for secondary schools. (T&T Express 2011).

While the editorial may appeal to the population and stakeholders at large, real change lies in the hands of the government. At least in the global context, the need for governments to intervene has been realised as the demand for supplementary tutoring has caused some governments to adopt and adapt. Bray (2013, p.19) points out that:

[i]n some locations, including Mainland China but not Hong Kong, Japan or South Korea, teachers are permitted to gain extra incomes from providing private tutoring to the students for whom those teachers are already responsible in regular classes. (Bray 2013, p.19).

This type of policy raises serious questions regarding ethics and corrupt practices, however the need to take this policy decision may be the result of the heavy pressure that demand has created in the thrust for high academic achievements. Notably, this drive towards extra-lessons does now create the situation of students having to prioritise academic opportunities and so they may face the reality of giving up other holistic type extra-curricular opportunities.

2.3 Extra-Lessons and Opportunity Costs

One of the areas that I am very concerned about regarding extra-lessons involves the opportunities that students, and their parents, may forego in the hope that extra-lessons is the key towards educational success. These opportunity costs can be effectively defined as '*what the students had to sacrifice when they received extra lessons*' Bray (2013, p.24). Bray (2007, p.28) initially noted that the '*opportunity cost arises from the time spent in lessons and from the time for preparation, administration and travel.*' Furthermore, in the global context Bray's (2013, p.24) research surmised that students who did not attend private tutoring had more time for

sports, shopping, computer games and socialising. At the onset, one of the major opportunity costs that I propose is that of extracurricular activities aimed at a student's holistic development.

2.3.1 *Extra-Curricular Activities*

Regarding the importance of a comprehensive and holistic approach to education, Bray and Lykins (2012, p.36) significantly note that:

[e]ducation, of course, is about more than just academic achievement. It includes physical development through sports; aesthetic development through music and arts; and social development through relationships with peers and other members of society at local, national, and even global levels. (Bray and Lykins 2012, p.36).

Thus, there needs to be a genuine need for extracurricular activities to develop the holistic student. Massoni (2011, p.84) defines extracurricular activities, as '*activities that students participate in that do not fall into the realm of normal curriculum of schools.*' Notably, if shadow education mimics the mainstream curricula, then it follows that shadow education or extra lessons do not include these extra-curricular offerings either. Furthermore, Bray and Lykins (2012, p.36) warn that '*[e]specially at the level of senior secondary education, students commonly drop sports, music, and arts altogether, and have little time for focused attention to interpersonal matters.*' Hence in the pursuit of examination type academic success through extra-lessons, holistic development through extra-curricular activities, may effectively suffer. This research at Excellence High, aims to investigate how extra-lessons affect students' opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

Extracurricular activities can be found at all levels of schools in varying forms such as: dance, drama, sports, clubs, debate, school publications, student council, and other social events. In researching extra-curricular activities and their importance in the schooling context, Massoni (2011, p.84) notes that:

[a] student's future can be determined in the things that they do in the hours after school and before their parents get home. (Massoni 2011, p.84).

Thus, in stakeholders choosing extra-lessons at the expense of extra-curricular activities, there is the risk of not creating the educational environment and practice that would allow '*students to achieve their full potential, and to leave school with the*

knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will enable them to become well-adjusted, economically productive, and socially responsible adults' (Rampersad 2002, p.2). Hence, I propose that extra-curricular activities must be part of a student's routine such that they can gainfully benefit from Massoni's (2011, pp. 85-86) suggested five positive effects of: good behaviour; higher grades and positive attitudes; school completion; positive aspects that students need to become productive students and adults; and the social aspect. Presently, universities and tertiary level institutions also request these extra-curricular activities in their applications, a further conundrum to the extra-lessons seekers.

This literature review has outlined relevant existing research regarding my proposed educational research into Excellence High's educational stakeholders' definitions of effective learning, student success and stakeholders' perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving effective learning and students' success, and the opportunity costs that are involved. Next is chapter 3, which discusses the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology should enable a clear and methodical understanding of the research process, as it should effectively describe what took place. Kaplan (1973, quoted in Wellington 2000, pp.22-23) points out that a methodology's aim is:

to describe and analyse methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying their suppositions and consequences, relating their potentialities to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge. (Kaplan 1973, quoted in Wellington 2000, pp.22-23).

Hence, selection of the appropriate research methodology is crucial to the ultimate successful undertaking of any research project and will also reflect the researcher's philosophical paradigm(s). I wished to carry out research aimed at investigating, understanding and using this understanding to possibly improve practice. As a teacher and educational researcher, this research was aimed at investigating the beliefs of stakeholders, in the form of students and their parents, teachers and administrators, at Excellence High regarding the concepts of effective learning and academic success and the role of extra-lessons in effective learning and achieving academic success at the secondary school examination levels together with the opportunity costs that may be involved. The answers that I sought may have educational, cultural and social implications and thus required inquiry that involved the collection of appropriately sourced data that was suitably analysed within the relevant context.

Regarding what constitutes a model for social inquiry, Greene (2006, p.93) proposes a four-domain justificatory framework for social inquiry Philosophical Assumptions and Stances; Inquiry Logics; Guidelines for Practice and Socio-political Commitments. Firstly, I will briefly discuss mixed methods research and clarify the definition, which guides my thinking. Next, I will use Greene's (*ibid*) four-domain model for social inquiry to guide the discussion regarding the suitability of the chosen mixed methods approach to my educational research.

3.1 Mixed Methods Research

Advocates of the strictly quantitative and qualitative approaches to educational research view these two approaches as being based upon incompatible premises and techniques, and argue that mixing methods is neither meaningful, nor practical to

pursue (Guba, 1990). This position seems logical given the varied axiological, ontological and epistemological positions of educational researchers. Essentially, a researcher's thinking, beliefs, motivations and life experiences are critical to his/her understanding of people, society and the world, and would influence how he/she may choose to undertake educational research. Some critics of the mixed methods approach to inquiry, argue that it mainly serves the quantitative community and places qualitative research as secondary since it does not focus enough on the interpretive foundation of qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Howe, 2004). However, Creswell *et al.* (2006, p.9) launched a detailed response to these criticisms and posited that:

[q]ualitative research plays an important role in explaining the social world, and it can enhance, even “drive” mixed methods research, extend experimental applications, and further emancipatory aims. (Creswell *et al.* 2006, p.9).

Some researchers support the view that mixed methods can overcome weaknesses of a single method whether qualitative or quantitative (Greene and Caracelli, 1997; Howe, 1988; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Greene and Caracelli (1997) further suggest three key benefits of mixed methods in the form of triangulation, compensation and expansion. Bergman (2011, p.100) has also placed some support for mixed methods research as a tool of practice that can produce usable results that transcend the limits of single method research.

I have chosen to adopt Johnson *et al.*'s (2007, p.129) definition as the starting point of the educational, cultural and social inquiry that I undertook. In their comprehensive discussion and analysis involving nineteen definitions of mixed methods research that were sourced from established mixed methods educational researchers, Johnson *et al.* (2007, p.129) concluded that:

[m]ixed methods research is an intellectual and practical synthesis based on qualitative and quantitative research; it is the third methodological or research paradigm (along with qualitative and quantitative research). (Johnson *et al.* 2007, p.129).

My rationale for using their definition stems from my own position in which I see the value of both the comparable quantitative data and the contextual interpretative qualitative data. The subsequent data analysis involving both has the potential to

show patterns, linkages, correlations and even newly generated constructions. Next, I will use Greene's (2006) four-domain model to guide my discussion. Domain 1 examines how philosophical assumptions and stances engage with my chosen definition of mixed methods research, beginning with the nature of inquiry.

3.2 Philosophical Assumptions and Stances

3.2.1 *Nature of Inquiry*

Greene (2006, p.93) explains that social inquiry is rooted in ontological and epistemological assumptions and brings to the fore objectivity, subjectivity and social constructions. Thus, in deciding the reason for, and the nature of, any proposed educational inquiry, the researcher may have some particular interest in that area that may be attributed to his/her ontology, epistemology or axiology and may reasonably be rooted in the researcher's paradigm or basic set of beliefs (Guba 1990, p.17 and Denzin and Lincoln 2000, p.19). In my own experience as a student at a prestigious girls' denominational secondary school, twenty odd years ago, academic work whether new, revision or remedial, was done during school time. After school time was devoted to fun and relaxing activities, which involved family, friends and the extended village community. These out of school activities, I thought and still think, were critical to my holistic development into the person I am today.

Presently, as a teacher at Excellence High, I observe that students of the examination classes of forms five and six go from their normal school day to extra-lessons as regularly as Monday to Saturday and sometimes Sundays. In my view, this seemingly non-stop schedule of academic work merits concern, as these students appear to lack the time for extra-curricular and holistic development opportunities. However, if Excellence High's stakeholders appear willing to prioritise extra-lessons as opposed to other extra-curricular activities, this may be an indicator of the perceived importance of extra-lessons towards achieving secondary school success. Therefore, the implications for my study are significant as stakeholders' determination of valuable learning experiences can greatly differ due to their ideology of education, effective learning and success. This situation now required that in examining mixed methods research design I must be cognizant of participants' contexts and realities together with that of my own.

3.2.2 *Mixed Methods Research Design*

In discussing mixed methods research design, Greene (2006, p.97) has acknowledged the importance of how issues of ontology, epistemology and different stances on reality and social knowledge can co-exist within the same study. However, in both theory and practice there can be much conflict due to varied ideologies that stem from differing ontological and epistemological positions. This leads to tensions that may influence the validity and veracity of any study. Through these differences it follows that there may be varied types of data required to represent the differing contexts. The rationale for a mixed methods approach was significant to my study as I collected relevant comparable data from the students and their parents in the examination classes, that is, quantitative data coupled with the contextual and variable nature of interview participants' ideologies, that is, qualitative data. In effect my research inquiry did not solely rest on one of the quantitative or qualitative methods. Bryman (2007, p.20) supports this need for understanding the fundamental reasons for conducting mixed methods research in noting that:

[i]f mixed methods researchers return to their grounds for conducting such research in the first place, they may be able to use their arguments as a platform for conducting an analysis that is integrative (Bryman 2007, p.20).

Mertens (2011, p.195) also views mixed methods as '*a tool for social change*' in situations where there are varying contexts. This was particularly significant to my research interest in which the beliefs and perceptions surrounding extra-lessons were indeed contextually, socially and culturally grounded. Next, the use of a '*single*' mixed methods inquiry as opposed to '*multiphase*' (Creswell *et al.* 2003, p.7) must be examined.

The key factor for this research is that of converging evidence that can be used to somewhat comprehensively describe the overall perceptions surrounding extra-lessons in Excellence High's context. Hence, quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were a methodologically appropriate design for this study. I used a single study focused at my school that followed Morse's (2003, p.190) mixed methods design of:

the incorporation of various qualitative or quantitative strategies within a single project that may have either a

qualitative or a quantitative theoretical drive. (Morse 2003, p.190).

However, although I chose this research design, I must examine the merit of the use of different methods with regards to the collection of the required contextual and comparative data within this single study. Yin (2006, p.41) supports mixing methods in a single study in noting that:

[t]he focus on a single study is critical to mixed methods research. Implicit in the prominent role played by a single study is the valuing of mixed methods in producing converging evidence, presumably more compelling than might have been produced by any single method alone. (Yin 2006, p.41).

This converging evidence was sought through the seeking of quantitative data from questionnaires and contextual data from interviews with the range of stakeholders. Furthermore, critical to any research methodology's suitability are the research objectives and ultimate research question(s) that must probe the issues that needed to be explored, that is, issues relating to domain 2 or '*inquiry logics*' (Greene 2006, p.93).

3.3 Inquiry Logics

Greene (*ibid*) states that domain 2 is essentially the methodology that identifies appropriate inquiry purposes and questions, broad inquiry strategies and designs and sampling. My general purpose has already been established since I investigated the beliefs of stakeholders at Excellence High regarding effective learning, academic success and the role of extra-lessons in effective learning, achieving success and the opportunity costs that may be involved at the secondary school examination levels. However, this was a very broad-based statement and needed to be further clarified in the form of the particular research questions, which were explored.

3.3.1 *The Research Questions*

Research questions are interrogative statements that essentially are '*an extension of the statement of the purpose of the study in that it specifies exactly the question that the researcher will attempt to answer*' (Johnson and Christensen, 2004, p.77). More specifically for mixed methods research, Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006, p.478) recognise the importance of research questions providing a framework that is clear and coherent to ensure that the researcher focuses on the study and the type of data

required. Consequently, the research questions needed to be clear, concise, direct and simple such that the overall aim of the research remained evident. This process of refining and rephrasing questions followed Clough and Nutbrown's (2002, p.56) Russian Doll Principle. This involved breaking down the research question from the original statement by phrasing and rephrasing the question so that each time its focus became sharpened and more defined. Equally as important, was that the research questions can reasonably be explored within the time limit to facilitate practical and effective research design and implementation. Thus, in developing my research question(s) I was mindful that how a question is phrased is crucial, since it forms a link to the type of investigation as well as data to be collected.

In the development of research questions, particularly in mixed methods research, Creswell *et al.* (2011, p.6) advise that one must:

[s]tate study aims and research questions that call for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, and incorporate your reasons for conducting a mixed methods study. (Creswell *et al.* 2011, p.6).

Significantly, for a mixed methods study the individual qualitative and quantitative aspects must also be considered since determining these will serve to ensure that the final question may become complete and comprehensive. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006, p.480) note that quantitative research questions are very specific in nature and fall into one of three categories: descriptive, comparative and relationship. Whereas, qualitative research questions tend to be '*open-ended, evolving, and non-directional*' (Creswell 1998, p.99) as they seek to discover, explore and describe experiences. Accordingly, it was critical to examine my research objectives while I developed the appropriate research question(s).

Firstly, it was necessary to establish stakeholders' understanding of effective learning, holistic development and success at secondary school and how they may be linked to each other. Secondly, it was essential to clearly understand their view of the role of formal school education towards learning, holistic development and achieving success at the secondary school examination levels. Thirdly, it was necessary to understand their view regarding the role of extra-lessons towards learning, holistic development and achieving success at the secondary school examination levels. Finally, it was necessary to investigate the opportunity costs that may be involved due to extra-

lessons. To effectively combine these objectives required that I clearly understand the nature of structuring research questions whether quantitative, qualitative and significantly for mixed methods research.

Generally, quantitative type descriptive questions simply seek to quantify responses on one or more variables and often begin with words like ‘What is...’ or ‘What are’, whereas qualitative research questions tend to address ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006). Particularly for mixed methods research Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006, p.483) recommend that ‘*mixed methods research questions combine or mix both the quantitative and qualitative research questions.*’ Consequently, for this study the following research question(s) were formulated and investigated:

- **What are Excellence High stakeholders’ definitions of effective learning and students’ success?**
- **What are the beliefs of Excellence High’s stakeholders regarding the role of extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students’ success at secondary school?**
- **What are Excellence High stakeholders’ perceptions regarding the opportunity costs of extra-lessons?**

Now, it was important to examine just how these research questions fitted into the mixed methods design.

3.3.2 Structure of the Research Question(s) and Mixed Methods Design

Established in the mixed methods research literature for single mixed methods studies are sequential and concurrent designs (Creswell *et al.* 2003; Greene *et al.*, 1989); conversion designs (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006) and component and integrated designs (Caracelli and Greene, 1997). However, these designs are really informed by the research question itself as the actual phrasing/wording may significantly depict the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the research. Morse (2003, p.189) underscores the relationship between the data collection method and the type of question in noting that:

[w]hile specific research methods enable us to describe, understand, and explain the complexity of living by providing us with various perspectives, different

methods are best designed for, and used to answer, particular types of questions (Morse 2003, p.189).

Additionally, the wording/phrasing of the research question can inform the logical sequence of the data collection.

In describing the relationship between research questions and the logical steps of data collection and analysis in mixed methods research, Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006, p.483) explain that:

a mixed methods research question necessitates that both quantitative data and qualitative data be collected and analyzed either concurrently, sequentially, or iteratively before the question is addressed. (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006, p.483).

In this research the quantitative research component through the questionnaires examined participants' understandings of effective learning and student success; the importance of extra-lessons to effective learning and student success and the opportunity costs regarding extra-curricular activities that are involved. The qualitative research component also examined these in a more detailed, involved and interactive way to facilitate participants to express their clear perceptions, ideologies, experiences and thinking, i.e. their '*knowing*' (Davis *et al.* 2015, p.81). Thus, the research did fit into the aforementioned description of a mixed methods research question and seems characteristic of a sequential, concurrent and iterative mixed method design. Next, to further examine this mixed methods design and rationale, I will discuss the data collection methods and the sampling strategies used.

3.3.3 Data Collection and Sampling

Piloting or pretesting research instruments is considered to be very important to the likelihood of success for the actual research. van Teijlingen and Hundley (2001, p.1) comment on the importance of pilot studies as they recognise that they can '*fulfil a range of important functions and can provide valuable insights.*' This '*trying out*' (Baker, 1994 p. 182) of a particular research instrument may identify potential practical problems in the respective instrument. For this research, prior to the actual fieldwork, the form five student questionnaires were piloted using twenty students from the form four, year group at Excellence High as these students were easily accessible and the Principal in being aware of all the details of my research, approved.

This piloting of the questionnaires was extremely beneficial as it provided me with important information regarding students' ability to understand the questionnaire, successfully fill it out and the time that it took. Also, some students actually explained that they were not too sure about the meaning of some of the wording and so it helped me to more critically analyse, review and reword the questions asked. From this questionnaire sample of twenty, two students volunteered to be interviewed and were used for the pilot student interview. After developing the teacher interview questions, I piloted them with six professional colleagues who teach in other secondary schools and the parent's questionnaire and interview, with five friends who have children in secondary schools. This piloting process was important to gauging time frames for interviews, the participant's understanding of the questions and how the wording and sequence of the questions affected participants' understandings and responses. After this pilot process, the interviews in Appendix 3 and questionnaires in Appendix 4 were the final versions. Resulting from the pilot process, I also added a section to the students' and parents' questionnaires to allow for an open-ended response. Cohen *et al.* (2007, p.321) support the value of open-ended questions in noting that they:

[e]nable participants to write a free account in their own terms, to explain and qualify their responses and avoid the limitations of pre-set categories of response. (Cohen *et al.* 2007, p.321).

Thus, the piloting process did help to identify possible problems with and improvements to the questionnaires to produce the final versions shown in Appendix 4.

For the quantitative research component, I conducted questionnaires in a sample of 107 students and their parents/guardians in the form five year group and a sample of 93 students and their parents from the form six year group. At this point the identities of the participants were not necessary. The questionnaire survey with closed type questions was used since:

[i]n general closed questions (dichotomous, multiple choice, constant sum, rating scales) are quick to complete and straightforward to code (eg. for computer analysis), and do not discriminate unduly on the basis of how articulate respondents are (Wilson and McLean 1994 p.21, quoted in Cohen *et al.* 2007, p.321).

Hence, in preparing the questionnaire I tried my best to ensure that it was appropriate, complete, fair and most importantly suitable for the students and their parents; and teachers to confidently fill out. Great attention was placed on the type, content and sequence of the questions since questions inadvertently placed in the wrong order will negatively affect data validity.

The questionnaire simply asked respondents to tick an appropriately labelled category of a five stage Likert Scale of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree (*e.g. My child has an all-round and holistic educational experience at school*); questions that required either yes or no, or specific values pertaining to the question (*e.g. Does your child attend paid academic extra-lessons? If YES, how many hours per week?*); and an additional comments sections that facilitates free response, should the respondent need to express further opinions. The structure of a questionnaire is directly related to its usability and effectiveness in gathering the required data. It follows that the sequence of questions, together with grouping questions together under a common heading, may reasonably help the respondent contextualize the subsequent questions. Notably, the order in which questions are presented together with the response scales can reasonably create bias in the minds of the respondents.

Of the questionnaires shown in Appendix 4, the first 11 questions sought information on the understanding of general school life, effective learning and student success from participants. For form five participants, questions 12–17 sought responses regarding extra-lessons and questions 18-20 sought data on the importance of extra-curricular activities to students' success. For the form six participants, questions 12 to 20 sought responses regarding extra-lessons and 21-23 sought data on the importance of extra-curricular activities to students' success. The questionnaire sought to collect easily quantifiable information regarding stakeholders' views on extra-lessons, effective learning and opportunity costs; learning and success in the context of formal school and extra-lessons; and views on holistic development. I distributed the individually packaged questionnaires and accompanying permission letters to the students in each of the three form 5 and two form 6 classes during their Home Room periods. The packages were uniquely coded, and I made sure to tell them that the coding is meant to facilitate anonymity, however I would know their identities. In

reality they needed to trust me at my word, and I asked that they return the completed questionnaires within the next two weeks. The respective form teachers agreed to collect the questionnaires that were returned and forward to me. In effect the questionnaire was aimed at generating variables such as attendance at extra-lessons, student performance together with statistically comparable data regarding perceptions of learning, holistic development, schooling and extra-lessons across the total population. Relationships were then found, analysed, compared and contrasted. Of note here is the importance of triangulating between the quantitative data from the questionnaires and the qualitative contextual data from the subsequent interviews. The final question of the questionnaire asked if participants would be willing to be interviewed and at this point would have become known to the researcher.

Based on the questionnaire data, that were returned within a three-week period, I then interviewed the students and parents who agreed to be interviewed. These interviews were done individually, that is each interview was conducted one on one, and students were interviewed separately from their parents. Students' interviews were on lunchtimes and parents' interviews were at a time, which the parent chose, in all cases immediately after the last school bell at approximately 2:30 pm. The students' interview times ranged from six minutes to fifteen minutes and were comparable with the parents' timing. This made my research design '*sequential instead of concurrent because the quantitative phase of the study would inform the qualitative phase*' (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006, p.484). Creswell *et al.* (2011, p.7) support the use of sequential designs in mixed methods research in noting that:

[f]or sequential designs (i.e., one phase of qualitative research builds on the quantitative phase or vice versa), the issues relate to deciding what results from the first phase to use in the follow-up phase. (Creswell *et al.* 2011, p.7).

Of the form five year group 38 out of 107 respondents returned the completed questionnaires, that is 35.51% of the sample. Of these 38, 6 students and their corresponding parents/guardians agreed to be interviewed. In the form six year group, 35 out of 93 returned completed questionnaires, that is 37.63% of the population. Of these 35 respondents, 5 students and their corresponding parents agreed to be interviewed. These interviews began two weeks after the questionnaire data was received, that is five weeks after the questionnaires were fielded. The period of time

that the interviews lasted for all respondents was approximately six months due to scheduling, school holidays and other commitments on the part of stakeholders. Moreover, my own medical issues would have caused interviews to be rescheduled at times.

In the case of the teachers, including senior teachers, I purposively selected (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990) the qualitative sample from teachers who agreed to be interviewed. Although, Cohen *et al.* (2003, p.104) describe purposive sampling as '*deliberately and unashamedly selective and biased,*' I felt that based on my internal knowledge of the teachers themselves, particularly those who do give extra-lessons, I think that purposive sampling was justifiable as they could provide the data required from the perspectives needed. Anonymity regarding the school is not really possible since in being an insider researcher, anyone who does a little checking will be able to easily identify the school. To keep some kind of anonymity regarding the easily identifiable administrators, the principal requested that I do not specify the Principal and Vice-Principal in the research, so they were categorised as Senior teachers in the group that comprised Deans, Heads of Departments, Vice-Principal and Principal. Additionally, the teachers were simply numbered, and the only discernible factor was their years' experience as a teacher. The interview sample for the research was 15 teachers and 5 senior teachers, notably two of which were the Principal and Vice Principal, a total of 20 teachers out of a total staff of 52 and represents 38% of the total teachers. Consequently, in quantitatively collecting data from the student and parent population of forms five and six through the use of the questionnaires and then seeking to refine the sample for the qualitative aspect of the research, the mixed method design is indeed sequential. Also, the teacher interviews ran concurrently with the fielding of the questionnaires and subsequent interviews of students and parents. The teachers' interviews ranged from six minutes to thirty-three minutes. However, the majority of teachers' timings were between fifteen minutes and twenty minutes.

The relevant permission letters for this research are in Appendix 2 and included in these letters is the request to audio record interviews. I later transcribed these audio recordings. Unlike in the administration of a questionnaire, in an interview the participants can become directly involved once an accommodating environment is

created. Thus, given the contextual nature of this study, as an interviewer I tried to be anticipatory, alert to establish rapport, analytical and patiently probed responses (Glesne and Peshkin 1992, pp.79-85). Although I had clearly defined interview questions, see Appendix 3, I used a somewhat semi-structured interview framework. This used a combination of the interview questions or guide and a standardised and open-ended interview (Patton 1980) to facilitate the participants to freely and comfortably answer questions and was intended to address possible weaknesses in both. Adams and Cox (2008, p.22) note that *'the more structured an interview is the less likely it is for a participant to feel at ease and reveal important and relevant issues.'* Hence my approach was aimed to facilitate some flexibility over the range and order of questions within the framework (Parsons 1984, p.80) as this arrangement allowed both participants and myself to refer to previous questions, or based on participants' answers link these to related questions whether before or after said question. Adams and Cox (2008, p.22) also recognise the importance of being *'flexible enough to allow jumping between questions that the participants have started to answer in a previous response.'* In so doing, these interviews then became ideal for the *'thick descriptions'* (Geertz 1973, in Cohen *et al.* 2007, p.167) regarding the perceptions of stakeholders that were required in this qualitative aspect of my mixed methods research design. I made sure the interview setting was welcoming and comfortable as I used a preparation classroom, which was made available by the Principal, that is smaller than standard classrooms and light refreshments were provided. Although the permission letter requested the use of the audio recording device, before the start of the interview I still asked I permission again, to which all interviewees agreed. I tried to ensure the natural, conversational nature of the interview in which the audio recorder, my smartphone, was essential as I could relax and listen to the participants share their invaluable thoughts. After collecting all this contextual data from the interviews, the task was now to transcribe, interpret, engage and interact with the data.

The use of the questionnaire and interview framework was aimed to comprehensively and systematically collect data, as logical gaps in the data could have been anticipated and closed. Furthermore, the transcription and analysis of the interviews represented a reflexive interaction between myself, and the interview data, as I singlehandedly did the transcriptions. Also, in being the insider researcher, my subjectivity and possible

bias might have unknowingly influenced data analysis and possibly my findings. However, in recognising these challenges and possible bias I undertook to be extremely rigorous during the data analysis. In analysing the data, I was also mindful of Wellington's (2000, pp.135-140) six-step process: Immersion; Analysis; Recombination/Synthesis of the data; Related and located data; and Presentation. During immersion my transcription and coding of data allowed me to really engage the material, which provided the ideal foundation to reflect, regurgitate and re-reflect while constructing links and patterns. Regarding the questionnaire data, I used the bar chart to show the measurements in discrete and comparable groups and so demonstrate relative change between these groups.

Notably, in the reality of educational research the time taken to conduct one on one interviews and also transcribe them, indeed became a deterrent to the successful completion of the research inquiry, and hence I had to implement some contingency planning. Additionally, in having gone through two problematic full-term pregnancies in the period 2015-2017, one unsuccessful and one successful, there were fundamental challenges to me completing the research in a reasonable time.

3.3.4 Contingency Planning

A key area in research design that normally requires contingency planning is in sampling due to overarching factors. In this research, my own personal medical complications, response rate and time were key factors that led to contingencies. Regarding the teachers, although I initially purposively selected my participants, the reality became a case of who agreed to be interviewed. Since some of my original selections, due to experience, position and being extra-lessons teachers themselves, did not agree to be interviewed or did not make themselves available even though they did agree to be interviewed; I was now required to interview who agreed.

Regarding the students and parents, originally in this research design, I had intended to further refine the respondents to who agreed to be interviewed. Firstly, I intended to categorise those who attend and those who do not attend extra-lessons. From these two categories, once the refined pool allowed, I aimed to choose 5 students from each year group, in each of the three in-class performance ranges: *top of the class (> 75%)*,

middle of the class (55% - 75%) and lower end of the class (< 55%). That is, for each examination year group of form 5 (107 students) and form 6 (93 students) in each of the three performance ranges, I aimed to interview 5 students (*and their parents*) who attend lessons (*i.e. 15 students*) and 5 students (*and their parents*) who do not attend lessons (*i.e. 15 students*). This will amount to 30 form 5 students and 30 form 6 students. In theory, this allowed for 60 out of 200 students (*and their respective parents*) to be interviewed, that is, 30% of the total population. These interviewees would then be asked about their perceptions regarding the role of extra-lessons in achieving success at the secondary school examination levels. The reality was however that the response rate to the questionnaire was 35% odd in each of the two examination year groups.

If every student in the population is surveyed but not all respond, this represents a non-random sample of the population. Thus, it is important to ascertain firstly whether the respondents differ systematically from the non-respondents and secondly could these differences cause them to respond differently to the questions asked. Nulty (2008, p.307) suggests that if the answer to both questions is ‘yes’, the sample is biased. In Excellence High’s context I posit that the answers are reasonably ‘no’ as the students are from the examination classes and have been exposed to the learning, teaching and culture at the school for at least five years and so non-respondents possible responses may not be that different from those who did respond. The questionnaire response rates do easily surpass Nulty’s (2008, p.310) liberal conditions range of 21% that is required for a class size of 100.

Although there is the apparent widespread attendance of extra-lessons in secondary schooling, I could not get the sample of students I originally wanted. Hence the iterative mixed methods design became a reality in which I revisited the sample size to be those who agreed to be interviewed whether they attend extra-lessons or not. For situations like these the notion of fixed and emergent mixed methods designs came to the fore. Creswell *et al.* (2011, p.7) state that:

[i]n a fixed design, the methods are predetermined at the start of the research process. In this design the investigators have a specific intent to mix qualitative and quantitative approaches at the start of the study. In an emergent (or cyclical) design, the methods emerge

during the process of the research rather than being predetermined at the outset of the study. (Creswell *et al.* 2011, p.7).

Once the samples and methods of data collection were decided for the research process, I then ensured that the '*guidelines for practice*' in domain 3 (Green 2006, p.94) were followed to collect the requisite data to be used for analysis.

3.4 Guidelines for Practice

3.4.1 Ethics, Insider Researcher and Access

Greene (*ibid*) explains that:

the philosophical assumptions and logics of inquiry that comprise domains one and two are translated into particular inquiry steps and procedures in Domain 3. (Green 2006, p.94).

Being a teacher at the school, I had easy access to students' information, and I taught students who were involved in this research. These two circumstances brought into focus pertinent matters of insider researcher and access. As a teacher, professional and insider researcher I had to be mindful of my foremost duties and responsibilities during the undertaking of this research, which raised issues surrounding my own values/morals as I have:

a past, current and expected future role in the organization, which brings aspects of organizational history, working relationships and personal alliances into play in the research process (Smyth and Holian 1999, p.4).

I agree with Wellington's (2000, p. 54) view that '*ethical considerations override all others*' since professional practice and ethics are paramount to my integrity. Hence for this research I ensured that I appropriately sought the permission of the '*gatekeeper (s)*' (Homan 2001, p. 332), i.e. Principal, teachers, parents and students, while I also established myself as a credible person doing a worthy project (Woods 1986, p. 23) that could be beneficial to the secondary school educational process T&T. In so doing, I ensured that the participants in the research study have the right to and were informed about the aims, purposes and publication of findings involved, potential consequences for themselves and the need to give their informed consent before participating in research (Wellington 2000, p.56).

As a teacher who is also the insider researcher, I had to be mindful that there were students whom I taught that may be part of the interview participants. In emphasising the importance of confidentiality and anonymity Davies (2005, p.3) talks about:

the researcher seeking information within their own institution and more so where a relationship between the researcher and participant is already established in some form or another. (Davies 2005, p.3).

Although my name is on the thesis, and the school may be easily identified from this regard, outside of this, the identification of participants is almost impossible. This is since I have used coding for each participant so that is not possible for the reader to easily decipher. Also, the data from the Principal and Vice Principal, who are the most easily identifiable participants, will be discussed under the grouping of senior teachers. While this may take a little away from the research in that I did not pinpoint their contribution, I do have their valuable ideologies that can be expressed.

Furthermore, there may have been students whom I may have taught and who also attend extra-lessons in my subject-area and may have felt uncomfortable about making themselves known for the interview sample for fear of possible negative consequences. Pryor (2004, p.40) supports this concern that respondents may have in noting that:

[a]n individual's responses to a particular question, if disclosed, might put the respondent at risk ... merely raising the question can in some instances raise concern with the respondent (Pryor 2004, p.40).

This situation was indeed problematic since one easy way out is for the students, and their parents, and teachers to volunteer to be interviewed, but knowingly say what they feel is suitable for me to hear, which could have seriously challenged the validity of this study. However, in reality through the comfortable interview environment that I worked to create, in my opinion and based on the data collected, I felt that students, parents and teachers in this position were honest and forthright in their contributions. Notably, the trust and ethical considerations do influence participants' motivation to be involved as well as even stop involvement if they feel intimidated in any way. Adams and Cox (2008, p.26) contend that trust and ethics involves informed consent, right to withdraw; and privacy and ethics should focus on confidentiality, anonymity and sensitive use of information. My effort to address all these in a professional,

ethical and practical manner saw the details of the research and issues of anonymity and confidentiality, clearly outlined in the permission letters, see Appendix 2.

3.4.2 Validity, Reliability and Triangulation

Validity in mixed methods research is a critical area as not only are there qualitative and quantitative validity issues, but mixed methods issues as well. Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006, p.48) recognise these validity concerns by highlighting that:

[w]e argue that because mixed research involves combining complementary strengths and nonoverlapping weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research, assessing the validity of findings is particularly complex; we call this the problem of integration. We recommend that validity in mixed research be termed legitimation in order to use a bilingual nomenclature. (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson 2006, p.48)

There are nine proposed types of legitimation: sample integration, insider-outsider, weakness, sequential, conversion, paradigmatic mixing, commensurability, multiple validities and political. They further contend that:

[t]he problem of legitimation refers to the difficulty in obtaining findings and/or making inferences that are credible, trustworthy, dependable, transferable, and/or confirmable (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson 2006, p.52).

Thus, a well-developed research design including the structure of the research instruments such as the questionnaires and interview do facilitate validity. This validity or legitimation is really achieved by establishing a trustworthy research process involving the key stage of data analysis. Zohrabi (2013, p.258) supports this position in stating that '*validity is a matter of trustworthiness, utility and dependability that the evaluator and the different stakeholders place into it.*' This dependability also brings into question issues of reliability, which primarily focuses on consistency, dependability and replicability of research findings. However, for any research that involves the contextual subjective experiences of the participants, reliability in this sense is not applicable nor practical. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 288) advise that in cases like these it is better to think about the dependability and consistency of the data. Essentially the purpose is not to attain replicability but to agree that based on the data collection processes the findings and results are consistent and dependable.

Cohen et al. (2007, p.141) define triangulation as *'the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour.'* However, triangulation, particularly in mixed methods research design brings quite a challenging discussion regarding the meaning of triangulation, its philosophical positioning in the mixed methods community and how to use triangulation in the design of mixed methods studies together with analysis and interpretation of data (Mertens and Hesse-Bieber 2012, p.75). However, I would like to consider here that the issues of validation and reliability regarding the research process and the data collection methods used, directly affect triangulation. In my approach both qualitative and quantitative data are given legitimacy as different stakeholders' perspectives are examined during the interpretation of each source of data. I would suggest that a key area that may provide for legitimacy, through triangulation, in mixed methods research is that of having a clear understanding of the intended data analysis methods. These data analysis methods can be linked to the actual structure of the research question and the data collection methods. Hence the challenge of linking my established mixed methods research type questions to the data analysis techniques is significant.

3.4.3 Data Analysis

Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) proposed that during the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data within a mixed methods research design, researchers may go through some of the following seven stages: data reduction; data display; data transformation; data correlation; data consolidation; data comparison and data integration. In this research study, because of the perceptions of extra-lessons that may emerge from participants across the forms five and six, the mixed methods data analysis approach may reasonably be data comparison, data display and data correlation. That being said the quantitative and qualitative parts of the research can also be individually analysed using some of these stages.

For the quantitative data analysis (i.e. analysing the questionnaire data) the nature of whether the question is descriptive, correlational or comparative/relationship (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006, p. 480) must be revisited as this will help inform the most appropriate statistical analysis choice. In the quantitative part of my research,

the information I sought regarding attendance at extra-lessons and students' performance together with some concise understanding of perceptions of the role of extra-lessons, learning and holistic education can be viewed as descriptive and comparative. For the qualitative data collection through the interviews and questionnaire with open-ended questions I considered Onwuegbuzie and Leech's (2006, p.490) proposed data analysis techniques which include: constant comparison; keywords-in-context; word count; classical content analysis; domain analysis; taxonomic analysis and componential analysis. Throughout the data analysis process, I tried to be mindful of the key challenge of mixed methods research regarding how the qualitative and quantitative data can be genuinely and effectively integrated, that is, the 7th stage of data integration (Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie, 2003).

3.4.4 Data Integration

To integrate different forms of data in mixed methods research, three approaches have been discussed: merging data, connecting data, and embedding data (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). From these approaches the first two of merging data and connecting data were significant to my research. In the case of merging the data I saw the value of:

reporting results together in a discussion section of a study, such as reporting first the quantitative statistical results followed by qualitative quotes or themes that support or refute the quantitative results (Creswell *et al.* 2011).

This type of data integration also revisits the notion of data display, data comparison and data correlation. Once the data analysis can be done in a manner that is defensible and grounded in the methodological context then Domain 3 seems complete. The focus now goes to Domain 4 where the location of the inquiry from a socio-political standpoint is examined.

3.5 Socio-political Commitments

3.5.1 Social

Greene (2006, p.94) proposes that in discussing socio-political commitments the '*location of the inquiry in society is articulated and defended.*' From this study's perspective, I anticipate that the information that I gathered can provide informed, comparable and grounded conclusions regarding perceptions of the role of extra-

lessons, which can be used to improve the formal secondary schooling experience and educational policy in T&T. In so doing, after school time can now, in theory, be devoted to more all-round development. In stating this, I must again revisit my ideology that values the role of holistic development based on my experiences, which may not necessarily characterize other's ideologies. I must be mindful of the possible cultural and traditional perceptions that may be unearthed in the data analysis process. These types of cultural beliefs may prove quite difficult to challenge, much less, change as one's ideology essentially guides one's thinking and resulting actions. However, given the perceived prevalence of extra-lessons in T&T denominational secondary school setting, this research study could reasonably form the basis of developing a research model across the range of our denominational secondary schools, with special focus on the denominational culture. Rinne and Fairweather (2011, p.3) explain that:

cultural models are those presupposed, taken-for-granted models of knowledge and thought that are used in the course of everyday life to guide a person's understanding of the world and his or her behavior. (Rinne and Fairweather 2011, p.3).

Hence, this type of research may be able to produce socially and culturally constructed representations to further inform our education process and practice.

3.5.2 Political

From the political aspect of educational research, I can envision some critique, as Bergman (2011, p.100-101) cautions that:

[i]f the qualitative part of a mixed methods research design is steeped in constructivism, while the quantitative part is steeped in (post) positivism, then, under most circumstances, the two components cannot be logically combined within one single, coherent, and consistent research design. (Bergman 2011, p.100-101).

However, to address this concern I would like to find support from my Domain 1 discussion together with thinkers like Harrits (2011) and Blakie (2009, p. 9) who posit that research paradigm, and by extension research design, can incorporate different ontological and epistemological assumptions. Thus, to achieve this varied contextual data the role of differing data collection methods as '*procedures and activities for selecting, collecting, organizing and analyzing data*' (Blakie 2010, p.8) becomes

much more clearly defined. In so doing, these data collection processes may better be able to withstand scrutiny from philosophical, theoretical and even political contexts.

This chapter was aimed at rationalising the mixed methods research design that I used in investigating the perceptions of stakeholders at Excellence High, of the role of extra-lessons in effective learning and achieving success and the opportunity costs that may be involved. Using Johnson *et al.*'s (2007, p.129) definition of mixed methods research together with Greene's (2006) four domains in social inquiry as a framework, I have used a research design that I feel is justified in the philosophical and theoretical foundations of mixed methods research. Although, this research design cannot claim to be exhaustive there is provision in Schwandt's (2000, p.210) acknowledgement that '*[a]ll research is interpretive, and we face a multiplicity of methods that are suitable for different kinds of understanding.*' Next is chapter four, which presents and discusses the findings from the data that were collected during this study.

CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents and analyses the findings of the data collected from questionnaires and interviews with stakeholders regarding the research questions:

- **RQ1 - What are Excellence High stakeholders' definitions of effective learning and students' success?**
- **RQ2 - What are the beliefs of Excellence High stakeholders' regarding the role of extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students' success at secondary school?**
- **RQ3 - What are the Excellence High stakeholders' perceptions regarding the opportunity costs of extra-lessons?**

In this research study, because of the perceptions of extra-lessons that may emerge from all stakeholders, the mixed methods data analysis approach were primarily data comparison, data display and data correlation. Furthermore, to integrate different forms of data in mixed methods research merging data and connecting data were significant to my research (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). I will report results together, firstly with the quantitative statistical results followed by the contextual qualitative quotes or themes that support or refute the quantitative results (Creswell *et al.* 2011). This type of data integration also revisits the notion of data display, data comparison and data correlation that will be used in the data analysis.

The findings will be presented under the heading of each research question, now referred to as RQ1, RQ2 and RQ3 respectively, and the corresponding questionnaire and interview responses from the respective participants. The analysis of the presented findings follows the respective questionnaire and interview findings. The questionnaires, as indicated in 3.3.3 titled Data Collection and sampling, contained: simply constructed statements that asked respondents to tick in a box under an appropriately labelled category of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree (*e.g. My child has an all-round and holistic educational experience at school*); questions that required either yes or no, or specific values pertaining to the question (*e.g. Does your child attend paid academic extra-lessons? If YES, how many hours per week?*); and an additional comments sections that facilitated free response, should the respondent need to express further opinions.

In the questionnaires, for both form five and form six, questions 1 to 11 gathered data regarding RQ1. Questions 12 to 17 in form five and 12 to 20 in form six then addressed RQ2. RQ3 was addressed by questions 18 and 19 in the form five questionnaires and question 20 asked if participants were willing to be interviewed. In form six, RQ3 was addressed by questions 21 and 22 and question 23 asked if participants were willing to be interviewed. In the form five's year group 38 out of 107 respondents returned the completed questionnaires that is 35.51% of the sample. In the form 6's year group, 35 out of 93 returned completed questionnaires; that is 37.63% of the population.

Response rate and representativeness of a sample are critical aspects to the validity and reliability of any research. Firstly, consideration must be given to whether respondents who complete questionnaires do so accurately, honestly and correctly; and secondly whether those who failed to return their questionnaires would have given the same distribution of answers as did the returnees (Cohen *et al.* 2007, p.157). Initially, I would have wanted a higher response rate, however I recognised that 100% of the returned questionnaires were useable and not in any way ad hoc. Moreover, as the insider researcher the reality of respondents being aware that I could identify them may have played a part in the lower response rate. Thus, to me, this response rate reasonably represented that respondents who were genuinely interested in being part of the research, regardless of being identified or not, returned these completed questionnaires.

Representativeness refers to *'how well the sample drawn for the questionnaire research compares with (eg, is representative of) the population of interest'* (Fincham 2008, p.1). Given that the respondents provided completely filled questionnaires with valid responses, I would like to suggest that my sample is indeed valid and reliable for the examination students at forms five and six at Excellence High. Furthermore, given the nature of this research in which I needed the detailed and valued descriptions, explanations and perceptions of stakeholders, those who volunteered to be interviewed, students, their parents and the twenty teachers, would have provided the in-depth data. This is reasonable to surmise as these stakeholders who participated in the research had no tangible benefits, and still chose to be part of the

research, which may indicate that they genuinely wanted to contribute to this area of research. Following is the presentation of findings and data analysis of this study.

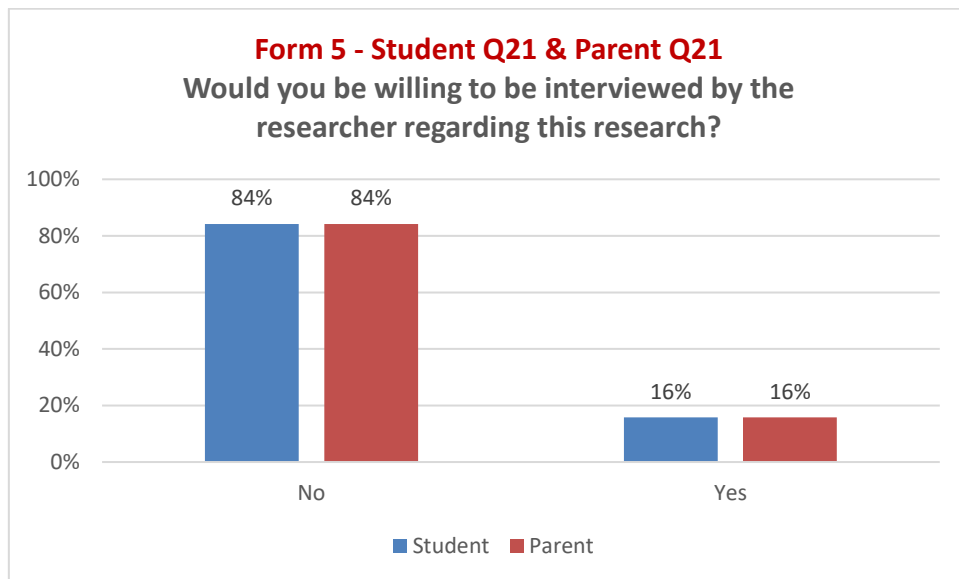


Figure 1

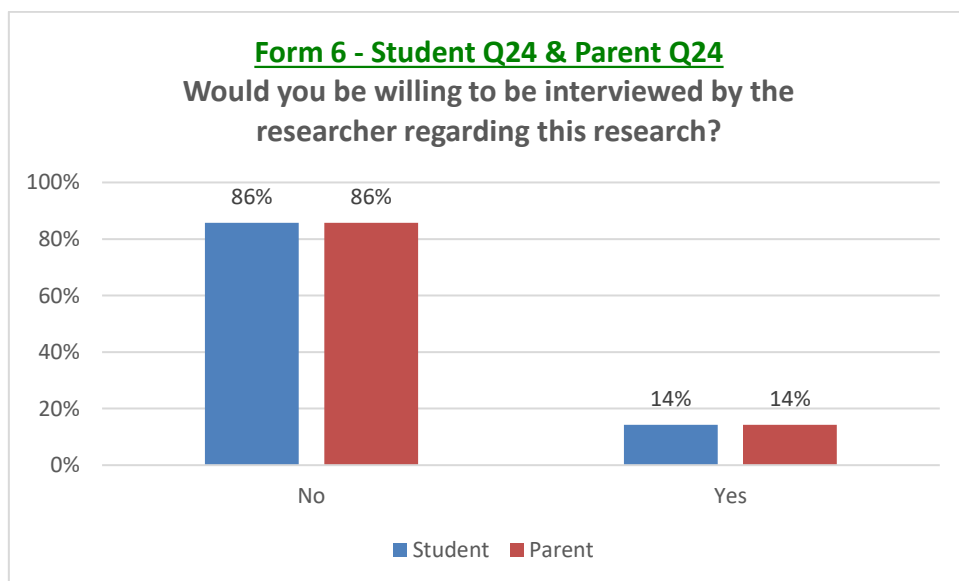


Figure 2

Of the 38 form five students, six respondents and their corresponding parents/guardians had agreed to be interviewed, approximately 16% as shown in figure 1. Of the 35 form six students, five respondents and their corresponding parents/guardians had agreed to be interviewed, approximately 14% as shown in figure 2. Of the five, form six interview participants, four won national scholarships.

Three won open scholarships after their final examinations, S6-776, S6-782 and S6-797, which meant that they could go to any university worldwide and the GoRTT will pay all their expenses. S6-728 won an additional scholarship and received part GoRTT funding. However, both their interview and questionnaire responses were done prior to the final examinations that resulted in their scholarships.

In terms of coding, students will be referred to by S+form-code for e.g. S5-345 or S6-899 and for parents the same pattern e.g. P5-345 and P6-899. Teachers are coded T-number e.g. T-10 and Senior teacher ST-number for e.g. ST-3. Senior teachers included Principal, Vice Principal, Heads of Departments and Deans.

4.1 Research Question 1 (RQ1)

This section presents and discusses the findings related to **RQ1 - “What are the Excellence High stakeholders’ definitions of effective learning and students’ success?”** First, the questionnaire data will be presented and discussed followed by the presentation and analysis of the interview data.

4.1.1 RQ1 Questionnaires

Following are the results presented in bar charts appropriately labelled. Forms five and six responses are presented following each other for matching questions to facilitate easy comparison and data analysis.

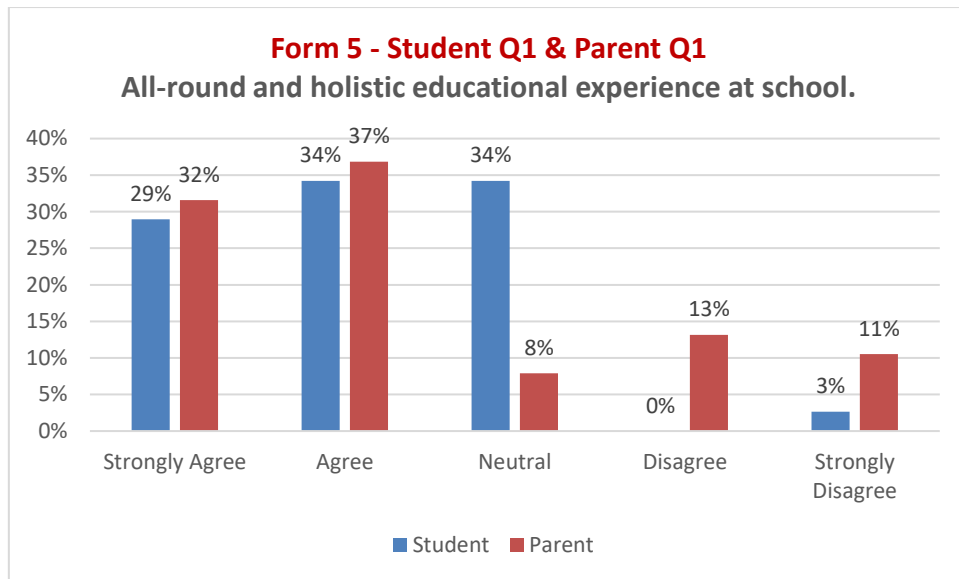


Figure 3

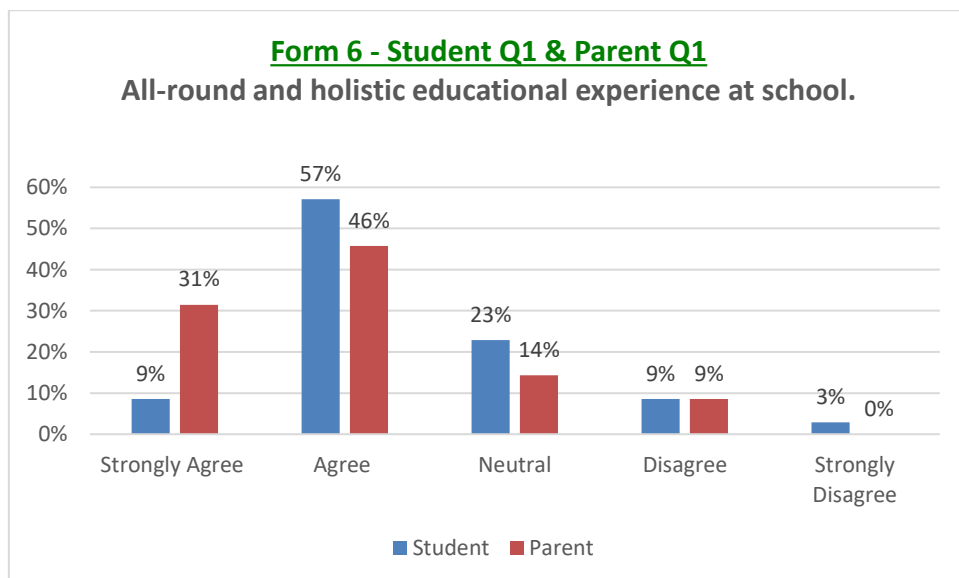


Figure 4

Figures 3 and 4 show the respondents' views regarding an all-round and holistic educational experience at Excellence High. From the students' perspective, 29% of students strongly agreed and 34% agreed at form five. At form six, the strongly agreed amounted to 9% but agreed was a considerable 57%. Of consequence, is that these form six students would have already written their first set of external examinations at the end of form five. Hence, their opinion would reflect the reality of the experiences of examination preparation and the opportunities for all-round and holistic development experiences after having completed five years at the institution.

Notably, the combination of strongly agreed and agreed responses represent 63% in form five and 66% in form six. These values do represent a reasonably clear affirmation from the students that there is recognition of the presence of an all-round and holistic educational experience both at the form five and six level.

The parents' views at form five for strongly agreed was 32% and for agreed, 37%, which represent a combined affirmative responsive of 69%. The form six parents were even more pronounced with 31% strongly agreeing and 46% agreeing, which represent a combined positive response of 77%. This is insightful, as both the form five and form six parents seem to be confident of the provision of an all-round and holistic educational experience at the school. The increased confidence at the form six level may also be reasonably attributed to the reason that these parents would have already experienced their daughters' first set of external examinations at the form five level. Moreover, in being part of the educational environment at Excellence High for almost five years these parents may have gained some confidence after assessing the overall educational environment that would have been in place at the school.

Of the form five students, 34% staying neutral does represent an unwillingness to commit to an opinion after having spent nearly five years at the institution. This, I believe is notable towards establishing that some students seem unsure of what the school provides and whether it is really holistic or all-round, especially in preparation for external examinations. Additionally, this may be indicative that students may very well be pre-occupied with the academic experiences and so not even think of exploring other non-academic opportunities within the school day. Notably, at the form six level the choice of neutral decreased by 11% which may support that they have a more experienced and informed view after having completed five years at the school and one set of external examinations. Overall, in the form five group 69% of parents and 63% of students and in form six, 77% of parents and 66% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with Excellence High's provision of an all-round and holistic educational experience. These responses do give a distinct indication that Excellence High does provide a fairly identifiable opportunity for all-round and holistic education. Thus, from this data set it can be reasonably proposed that the school's administration recognises the important role of a well-rounded and balanced student, towards achieving effective learning and educational success. Through this

type of all-round and holistic educational experience there may the environment to facilitate educational experiences that include physical development through sports; aesthetic development through music and arts; and social development through relationships with peers (Bray and Lykins 2012, p.36).

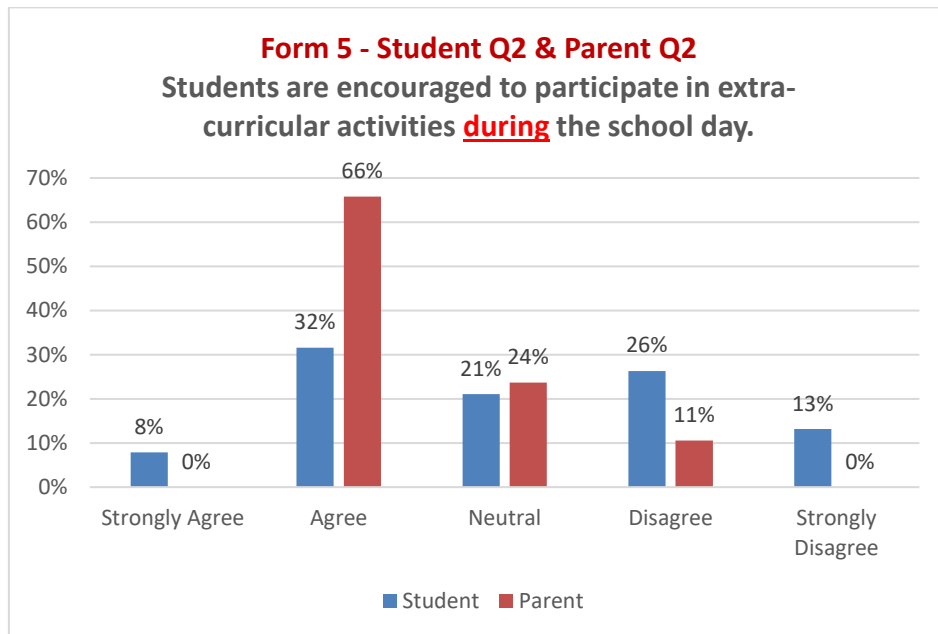


Figure 5

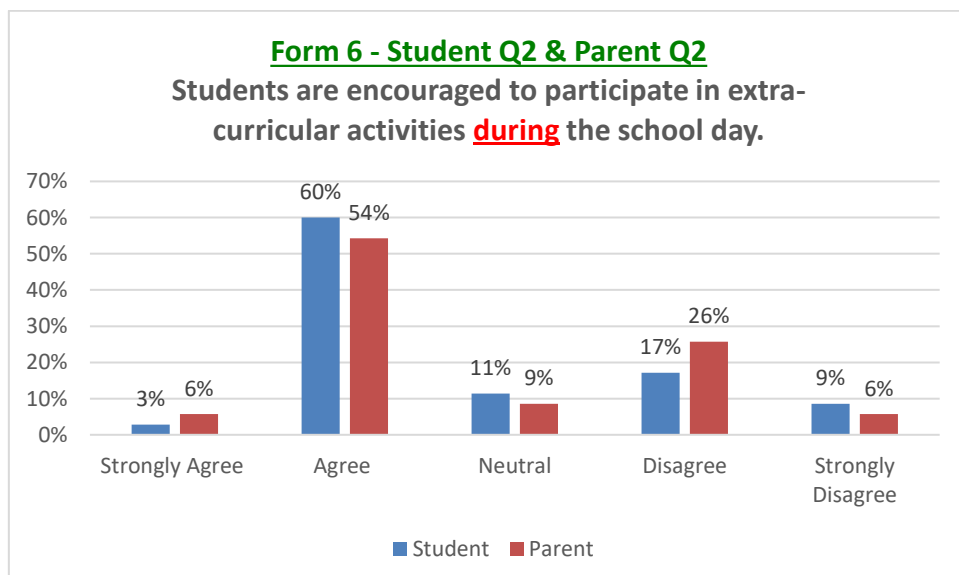


Figure 6

Figures 5 and 6 demonstrate the respondents' views regarding students being encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities during the school day at

Excellence High. At form five, the combined strongly agree and agree percentages are instructive as 66% of form 5 parents and 40% of children show that the students have a very different opinion from that of their parents. This is notable since the students are in the school system and experience first-hand, whereas parents are really second-hand experiencers based on the feedback of the students and other stakeholders, like teachers and administration. There is also a healthy 39% in the combined category of strongly disagree and disagree for form 5 students. Notably, of the form six respondents 3% of the students strongly agreed and 60% of the students agreed; and 6% of the parents strongly agreed and 54% of the parents agreed. This may be attributed to the situation that at Excellence High, the form six students are responsible for some management of the school through the prefect system, sports, religious and cultural activities. Hence, the form six students themselves are in a position to initiate, develop and implement activities within the school day towards holistic development. However, it must be noted that the 37% of those who ranged from neutral to strongly disagree may not actually be participants due to differing reasons, one of which may reasonably be the focus on academic work.

When figures 5 and 6 are taken in context with figures 3 and 4 there is some support for the provision of all round and holistic development opportunities during the school day at Excellence High. Barbieri (2009) advocates that these varied experiences form a third curriculum that parallels the required and the elective curriculums, and are well integrated into the daily school program. From the responses, it appears that Excellence High facilitates this all-round and holistic approach through their co-curricular offerings. This type of approach can allow for a balanced program by reinforcing learning, supplementing the required and elective curriculum, integrating knowledge, and carrying out the objectives of democratic life (Barbieri 2009; Hill 2008; Jones 2011). Most importantly, whatever opportunities Excellence High may provide is identifiably during the school day, as opposed to extra-curricular that is after school hours, and so is available to all students. In so doing, this approach may be beneficial to all students as during the school day they are provided with both academic skills and physical, psychological and social skills that can engender healthy development in their school life (Rampersad 2002, p.1).

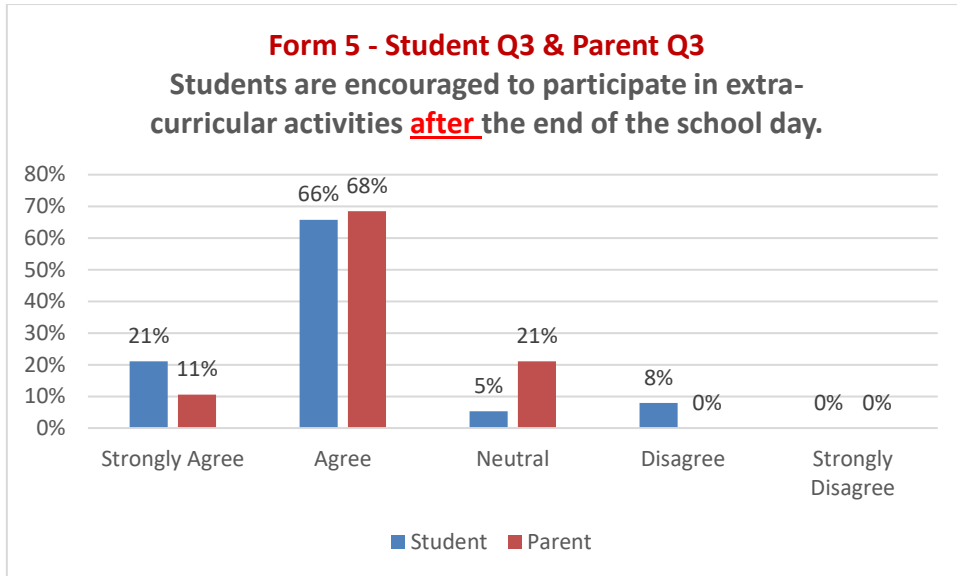


Figure 7

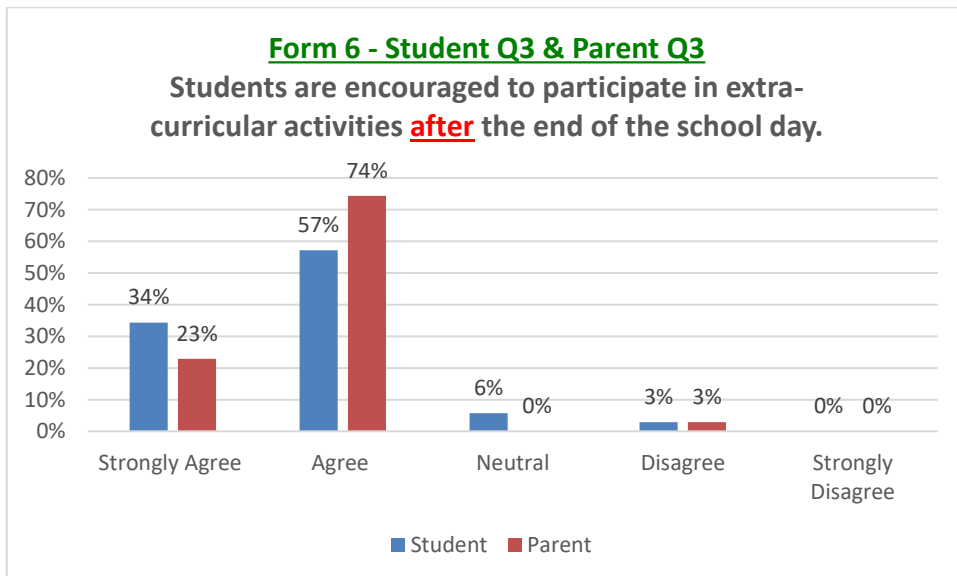


Figure 8

Figures 7 and 8 show the respondents' views regarding students being encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities after the school day at Excellence High. The findings here tell a definitive story that extra-curricular activities are encouraged after the school day. At form five, 87% of students and 89% of parents either agreed or strongly agreed. This pattern is even more pronounced at form six where 91% of students and 97% of parents either agreed or strongly agreed. Clearly, at Excellence High there is a push for extra-curricular after school hours, which interestingly clashes with the extra-lessons time slots. The Excellence High administration, through the Physical Education teacher, has facilitated a comprehensive extra-curricular programme after school from 2:15 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., however students do have to pay for these activities, and they must make private arrangements regarding transport.

Regarding this period after school and the crucial role of extra-curricular activities in discipline, focus and improved learning, Massoni (2011, p.85) significantly states that:

[b]etween the ages of nine and seventeen are when kids learn to make their own decisions and control their behavior. This is a crucial time for students to be in extracurricular activities because they are under supervision, guidance, and they are in engaged and enriched learning experiences. (Massoni 2011, p.85).

The findings show that these examination level students together with their parents clearly agree that they are encouraged by the school to participate in extra-curricular offerings at the school. This is notably positive, since at the level of senior secondary education, students tend to drop sports, music, and arts altogether, and have little time for focused attention to psychological and emotional issues (Bray and Lykins 2012, p.36). Although there may be tremendous positives to these extra-curricular options, the reality is that in the Excellence High environment, students and parents may have to choose which expense to undertake, based on how best it influences or affects students' success.

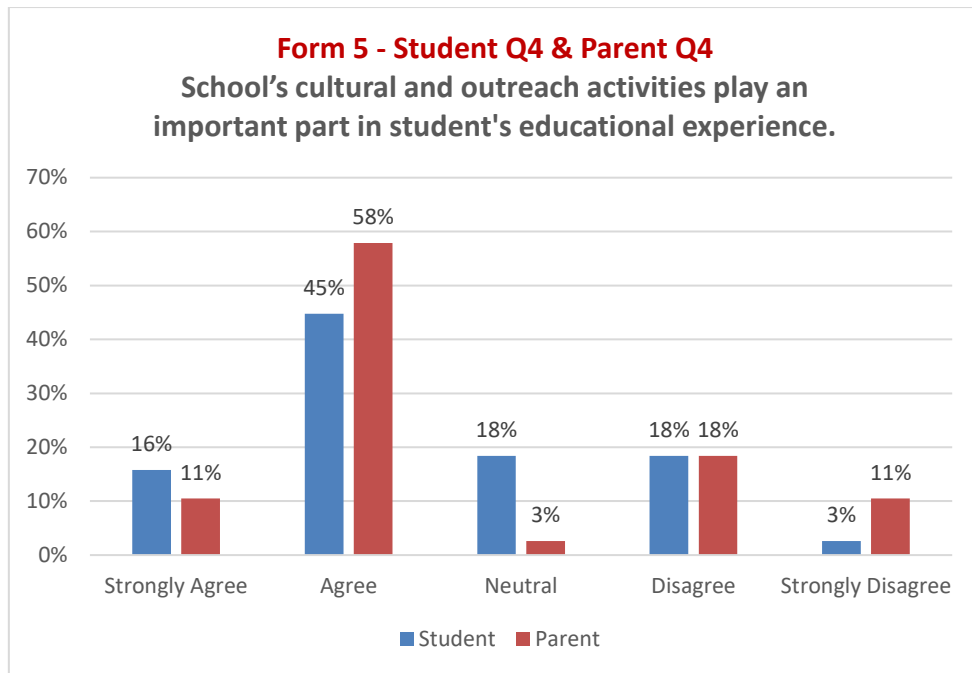


Figure 9

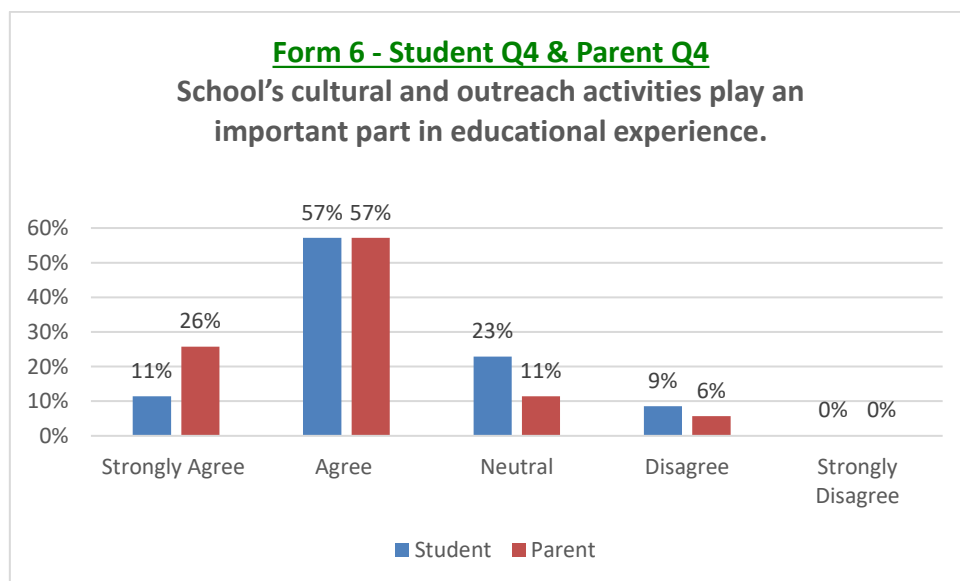


Figure 10

Figures 9 and 10 represent the respondents' views regarding whether Excellence High's cultural and outreach activities play an important part in students' educational experience. Both at the levels of forms five, 61% students and 69% parents, and form six, 68% students and 83% parents, there was clear agreement or strong agreement. This is not surprising as the denominational nature of the school will engender some form of positive cultural and outreach activities. Singh and James (nd, p.48), in their paper on the development of the education system of Trinidad and Tobago that

focused on the establishment of denominational schools, surmised that denominational schools are:

exemplars in instilling moral and ethical values and students display a high level of discipline within the school system and society. Denominational schools continue to strive for excellence in all aspects of the curriculum and the social welfare of both its students and society. (Singh and James nd, p.48).

The responses show that these types of cultural and outreach activities are valued in Excellence High's denominational school's educational process.

Furthermore, Excellence High is viewed, as a "prestige" school and so will have its accompanying prestige culture in addition to the denomination's influence. I would like to reiterate that these prestige denominational schools continue to be empowered by how society perceives them (Mustapha and Brunton 2002, p.158). Due to this status, Excellence High has consistently been a first-choice school for the girls who write the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) examination, regardless of the student's religious affiliation. It stands to reason that in vying for and then succeeding to get to Excellence High, students will be keen to participate and continue the school's culture and practices. In my view, school culture may be appropriately represented in the management of the school's structures, systems and physical and emotional environment; and the extent to which there is a learning focus for both students and teachers and very significantly the way stakeholders relate to and work together. The findings here do support the assertion that the school's cultural and outreach activities, which would be rooted in their denominational and prestige nature, are indeed significant to the educational experience of the students and their parents.

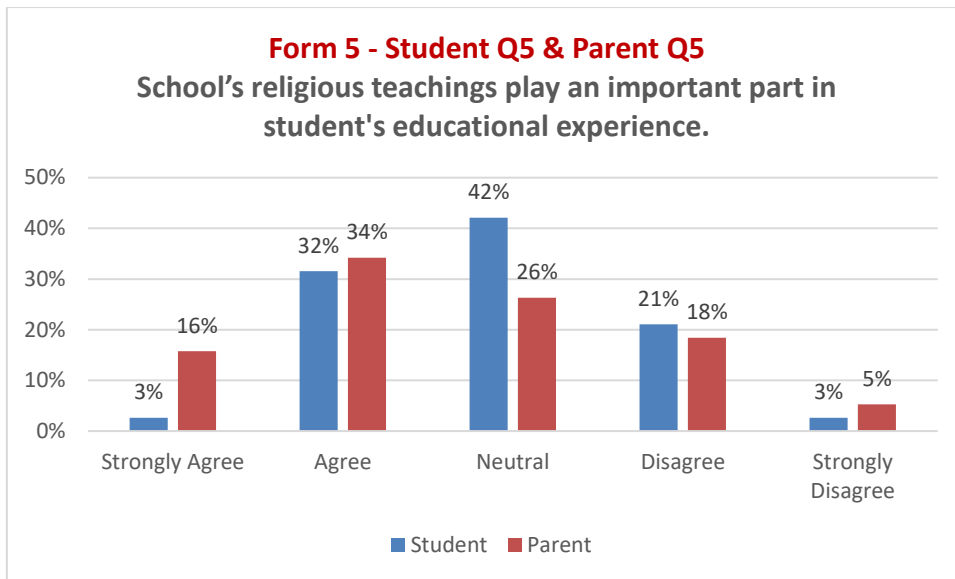


Figure 11

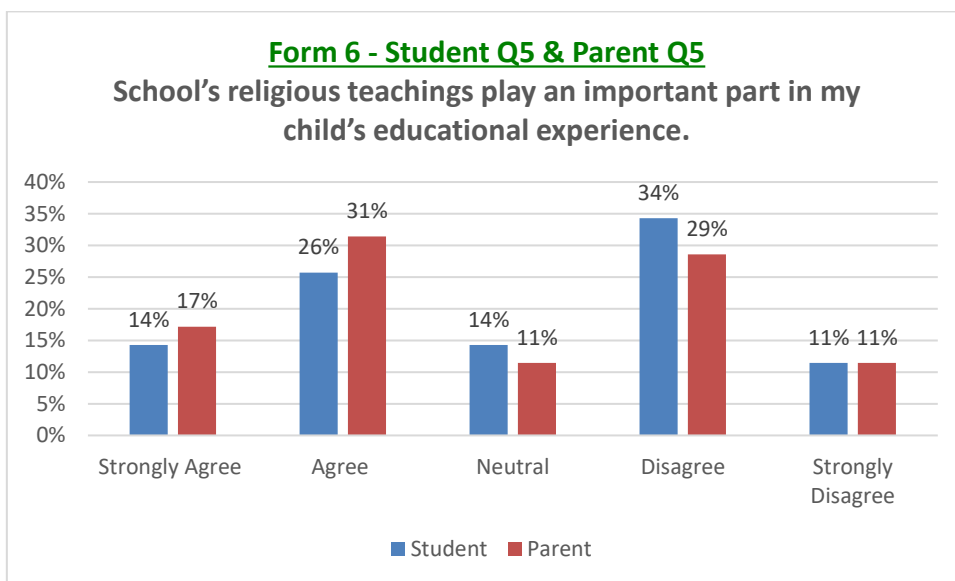


Figure 12

Figures 11 and 12 show respondents' views regarding whether Excellence High's religious teachings play an important part in students' educational experience. Interestingly, the percentages of neutral to strongly disagree weighs heavily as at form five 66% of students and 49% of parents fall into these categories, and at form six, 59% of students and 51% of parents. These data seem to represent that religious teachings are not of great significance regarding the school's educational experience. Of note here is that outside of the denominational board's 20% SEA selection, the

remaining 80% are placed on merit and as such may represent varied religions. Hence, the importance of the denomination's religion in the educational process may be stymied in this regard. This may be both positive and negative.

In T&T there is a legal document called the Concordat of 1960, which is an agreement between the government and the respective denominational boards that clearly details the guidelines for the operation of denominational schools. The Concordat of 1960, MOE (1960, p.1) states that:

[i]n denominational schools (unless the Denomination concerned otherwise gives its consent) the religion of the particular denomination which owns the school will be taught exclusively and by teachers professing to belong to that Denomination. (MOE 1960, p.1).

Although the Concordat protects the denominational nature of the school, denominational schools are government funded and are classified as public schools. Furthermore, in T&T, the Education Act (2015, p.24), the conscience clause clearly states that:

[no] child shall be required as a condition of admission into, or of continuing in, a public school ... (b) to attend any religious observance or any instruction in religious subjects in the school or elsewhere from which observance or instruction he may be withdrawn by his parent. (Education Act 2015, p.24).

Thus, if students feel comfortable to express themselves in their educational process without issues of religious encumbrances, they may well be in a position to learn effectively. The students' responses do indicate that the school's religious teachings seem not to be a great part of the students' educational experience and so may positively affect the educational process, as students who are not of the school's denomination may feel included and valued.

On the other hand, the students and teachers who are of the denomination of the school may feel that their religion should be taught and experienced in a more tangible way and so may improve their educational experience. Dronkers (1996, p.57), in examining denominational schooling in the Dutch education system, posits that in most denominational type schools, religious education has been reduced to '*cognitive information on various worldviews*', essentially as a school subject. Based

on the responses, the essence of the religion of Excellence High may be reduced since it may be treated as just another subject and may not be the ingrained culture and practice of the school operations. Therein lies the conundrum at Excellence High where 20% of the school population who realistically may be of the denomination of the school, together with some who would have passed on merit and also be of the denomination of the school, may feel that their educational experience lacks the religious meaning.

When these findings are taken in context with figures 9 and 10, which saw support for the cultural and outreach activities in the school experience, the findings point towards the administration of Excellence High having more of a worldview despite being a denominational school. This is in keeping with Wardekker *et al's* (2001, p.86) suggestion that:

the specific elements of religious education should be connected to everyday life, and schools should be open to the potential religious qualities of all kind of experiences. ... religious education should be open, non-dogmatic, non-compelling, and giving the pupils all the possible room for creative experimenting.

Hence, students, regardless of religious affiliation or otherwise, may be able to find their individual comfort space in the schooling environment and in so doing may be better able to learn effectively in the goal of achieving academic success. This can be very positive for the mainstream schooling environment.

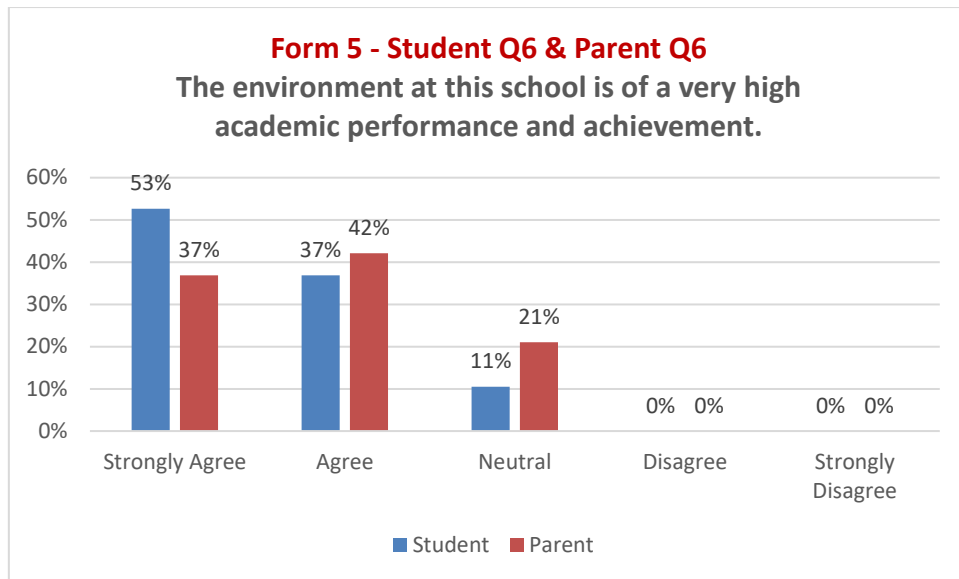


Figure 13

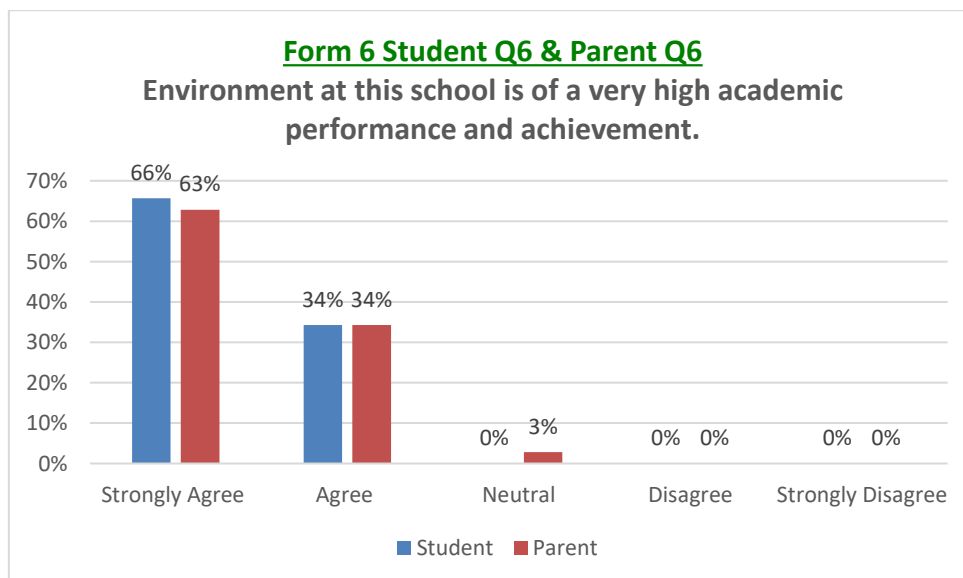


Figure 14

Figures 13 and 14 represent the respondents' views regarding whether Excellence High's environment is of a very high academic performance and achievement. The values clearly show the heavy bias towards strongly agree and agree with 90% of form five students and 79% of form five parents together with 100% of form six students and 97% of form six parents. Overwhelmingly, the data points to a very academically oriented and high achieving school environment. This particular data set clearly shows a firm opinion quite different from figures 1 to 12 previously where the data was shared in varying percentages across the range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The respondents' perceptions in this case seem very clear.

Notably, the high academic performance and achievement responses do outweigh the responses regarding those for cultural and outreach activities and religious teachings at the school; and so distinctly points to academic excellence being the priority at Excellence High.

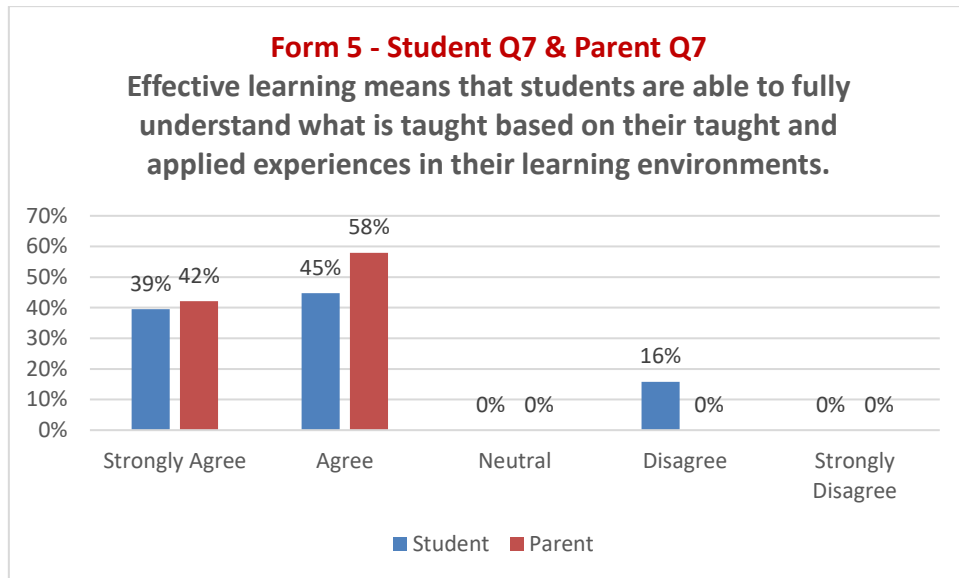


Figure 15

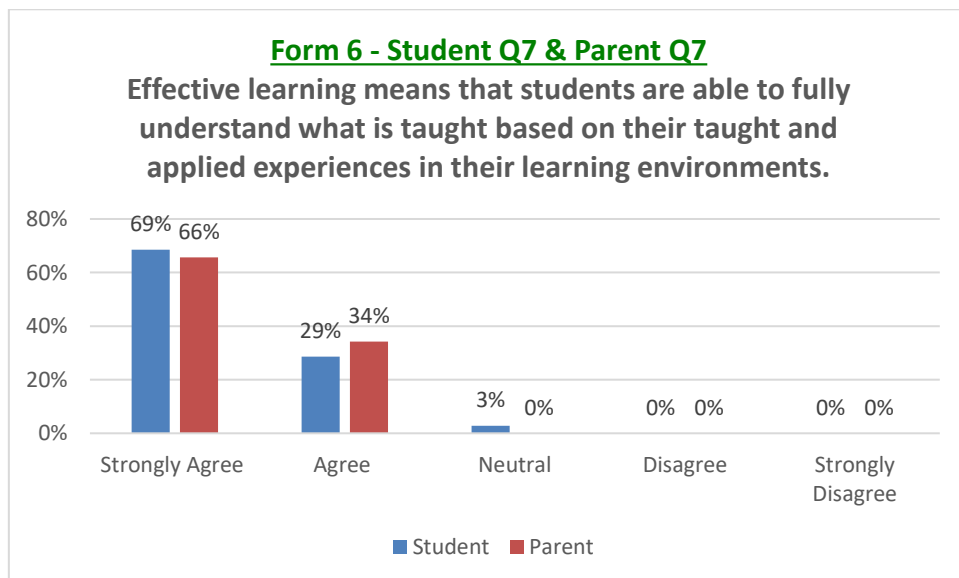


Figure 16

Figures 15 and 16 show the respondents' views regarding my proposed definition for effective learning, that is, whether effective learning means that students are able to fully understand what is taught based on taught and applied experiences in their

learning environments. I chose this definition as I felt that it encompasses all the areas needed to facilitate effective learning from a layperson's perspective. I must acknowledge that respondents may have varying understandings of the term effective learning, but given my proposed definition they may have simply chosen at that point to agree or disagree. The reality is that because effective learning is such a complex and subjective term, for the questionnaire, I chose to use a description that I felt could be understood or identified with, by the respondents and so provide a tangible means for comparison. Following in the interviews, the opportunity was there for respondents to question, discuss and offer their own understandings and perspectives regarding effective learning.

Of the form five students 39% strongly agreed and 45% agreed, which gives a combined value of 84% in agreement with the proposed definition. Their respective parents showed 42% strongly agreeing and 58% agreed, that is an overwhelming 100% showing agreement. The pattern continued in form six with a combined 98% of the students showing agreement together with 100% of the parents. This data set clearly demonstrates that the respondents agreed with the given definition of effective learning. This is noteworthy as both students and parents agree with this particular concept of effective learning and so, should reasonably be able to determine through students' experiences and performances in the teaching and learning process, whether this idea of effective learning is actually occurring in their children's educational experience.

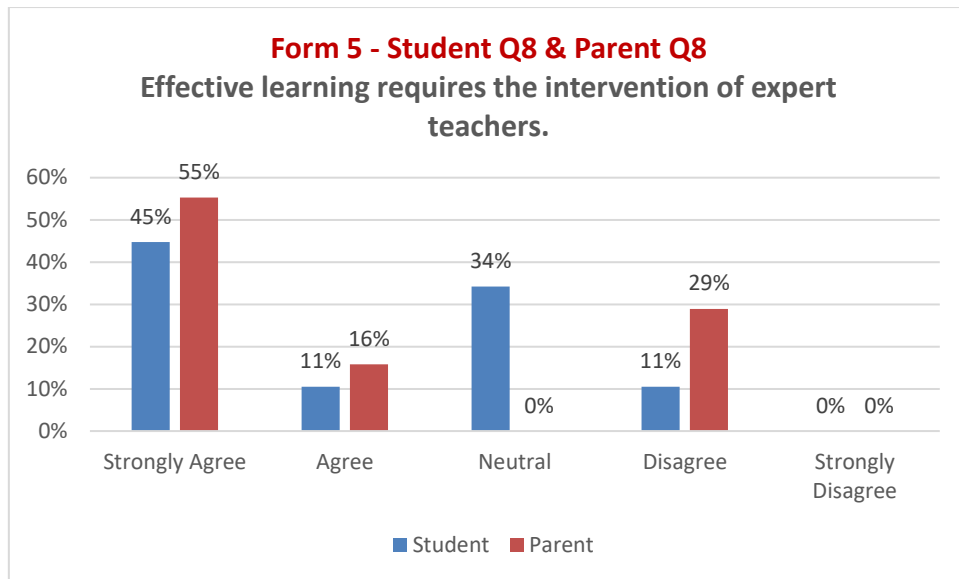


Figure 17

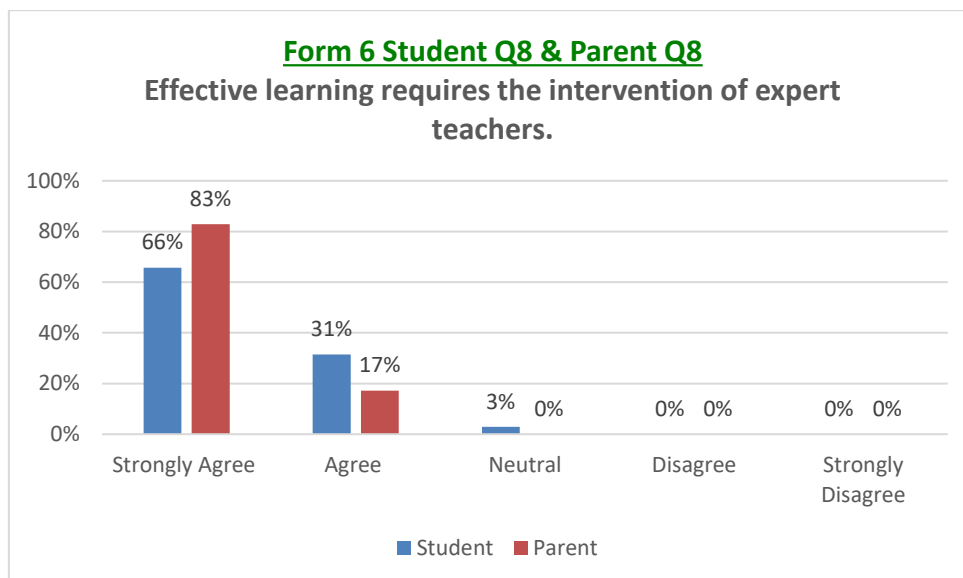


Figure 18

Following up on the data regarding effective learning, figures 17 and 18 further display whether effective learning requires the intervention of expert teachers. Interestingly, at form five the answers do not point to a firm or clearly defined position. While 56% of students strongly agree or agree, 34% are neutral. This to me is a red flag, as it connotes that students may not see the need for the expert teachers for effective learning since the possibility exists that they may not view their teachers as expert or effective. In so doing, they, themselves, must find a way to effectively learn the work required. Furthermore, in not having written any external examinations as yet the students have no tangible measure of whether they have

effectively learned for their impending examinations. Notably, 29% of the form five parents disagreed and this may also be representative of the reality that they recognise possible inefficiencies of the mainstream teachers and may well have to provide additional support to their daughters. Also, in not having gone through external examinations already, the parents may very well be hesitant to commit to the concept of the expert teacher for effective learning as the students' final examination results are not yet before them.

At form six, the data is much clearer as 97% of students strongly agree or agree as well 100% of the parents. Again, the reference must be drawn that these form six students would have gone through their external examinations at form five, so, from their experience they are able to give a confident and informed response through their own academic practices and successes. Moreover, their parents, already having gone through the examination experience with their daughters, are also ideally placed to give definitive responses. Interestingly, this question does not actually ask for the identification of whether the in-school teachers or extra-lessons teachers are the expert teachers. Thus, the students and parents may very well be speaking of either teacher. Notwithstanding, these form six stakeholders are of the view that effective teaching and learning requires an expert teacher who, in my view, should continuously increase his/her knowledge to enrich students' learning (Elliott *et al.* 2000, p.10).

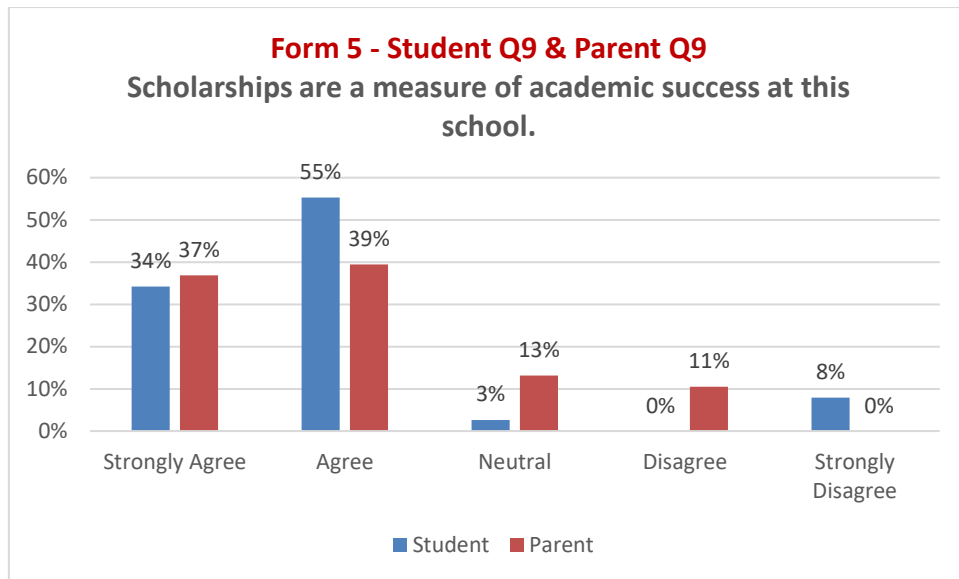


Figure 19

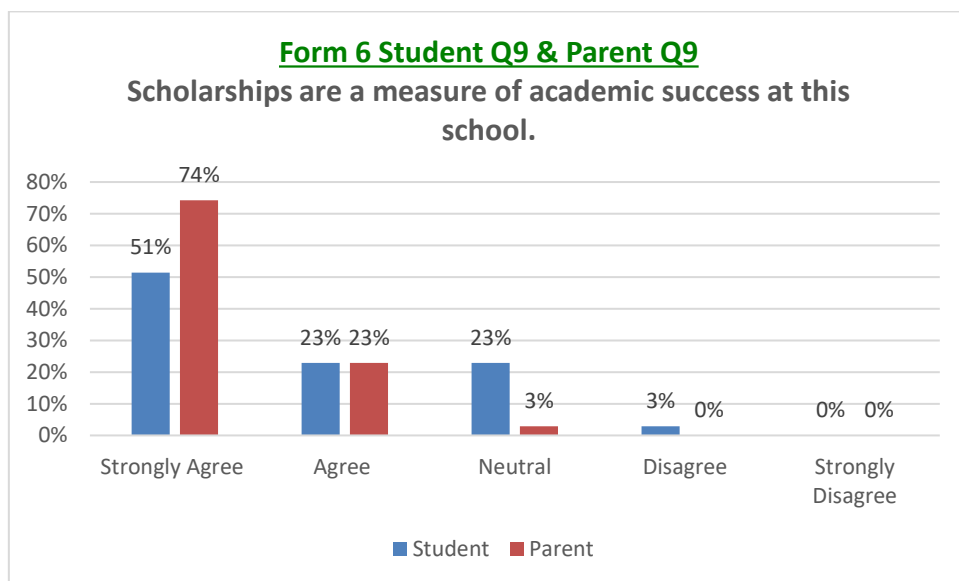


Figure 20

Figures 19 and 20 show the responses for whether scholarships are a measure of academic success at Excellence High. Among the form five, the students' responses are very instructive as 89% of students either strongly agreed or agreed whereas their parents' views amounted to 76%. This definitely shows how students view the scholarships as a real measure of academic success. Understandably, the parents may have lower expectations, as they may not want to add undue pressure to their children. Of note here is that in T&T there are approximately 400 scholarships on offer, 200 in the open category, in a total pool of 8000 odd students. For stakeholders to measure

academic success in terms of scholarship is really a high level of expectation. There are many students who may get all distinctions but may not be eligible for a scholarship as their overall mark may just be out of the cognate groupings merit list. Notably, a student's overall mark may be higher in one group when compared to the other but the number of scholarships for said group may have been exhausted. This measure of academic success to me is quite disturbing, as I have seen students at Excellence High who have gained all ones but just missed a scholarship and are heartbroken, even inconsolable. This really is an admonition of the prestige culture of academic excellence, where excellence is only recognised when scholarship is achieved.

At form six the strongly agree and agree combined represents overwhelmingly 97% from the parents and 74% from students. This is significant as these parents would have gone through the CXC CSEC examinations at form five and would have established their measure of success based on the previous performances of form six classes at Excellence High. These particular form six parents seem to be clear in their minds about the scholarships being the real measure of academic success. This type of finding is significant when placed against the backdrop of the prestige denominational culture of high academic excellence at Excellence High. Hence, it may realistically follow that these parents and students may seek out tangible and, in their minds, proven, and perceived, advantageous opportunities such as extra-lessons to ensure this scholarship success.

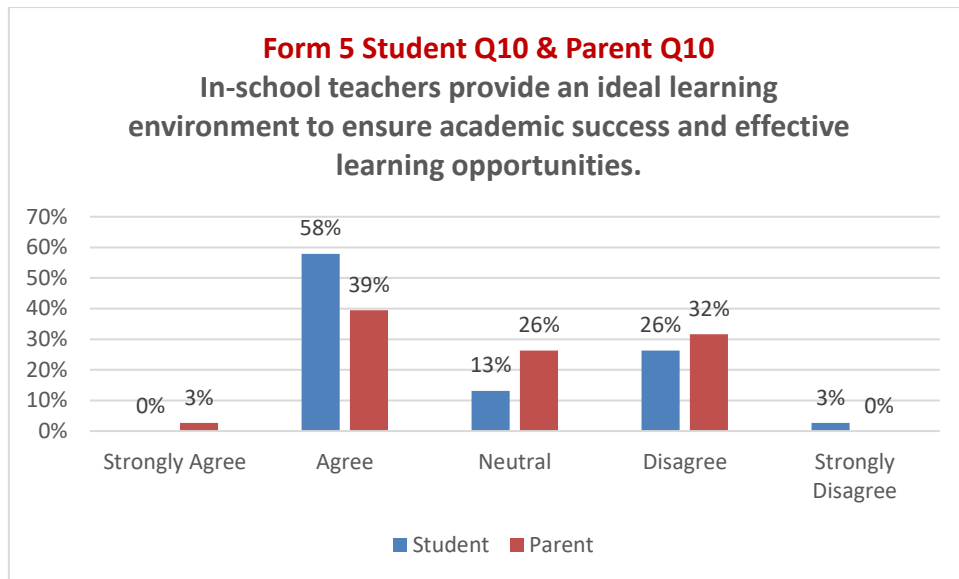


Figure 21

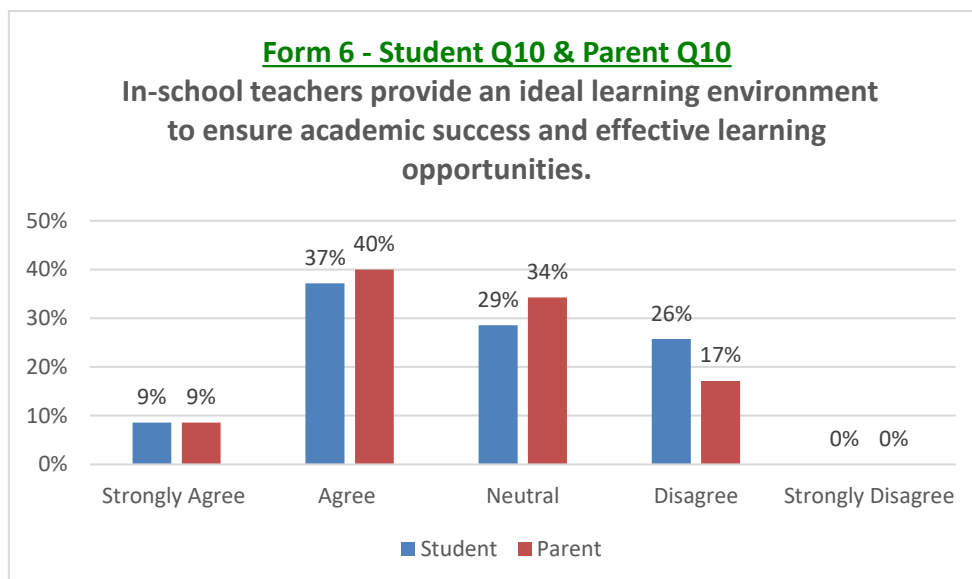


Figure 22

Figures 21 and 22 show the views regarding whether Excellence High’s in-school teachers provide an ideal learning environment to ensure academic success and effective learning. At form five, no student and 3% of parents strongly agreed whereas a healthy 58% of students and a reasonable 39% of parents agreed. These

data represent that there is some degree of confidence, but not complete or overwhelming confidence in the in-school teachers to be effective teachers. A similar pattern is observed in the form six responses. Hence, this particular data set seems to point to the recognition that the in-school teachers are not ideally seen as expert teachers. When taken in context with the data of figures 17 and 18, where parents, particularly at form six, clearly recognised the importance of an expert teacher for effective teaching and learning, the scenario does now point towards a possible private expert. If parents and students do not view the in-school teachers as fully equipped to deliver effective learning opportunities, then the avenue may be there to look externally to fill this gap.

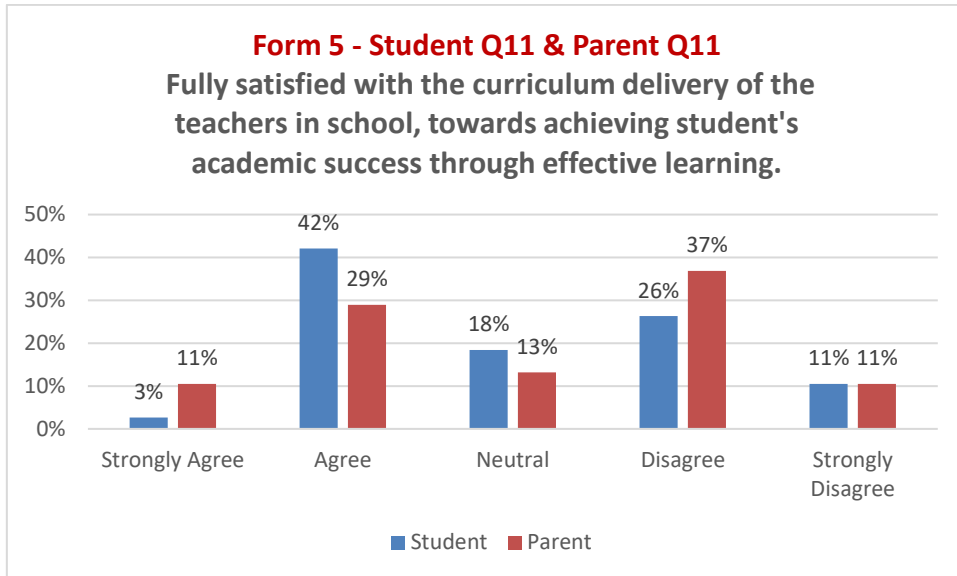


Figure 23

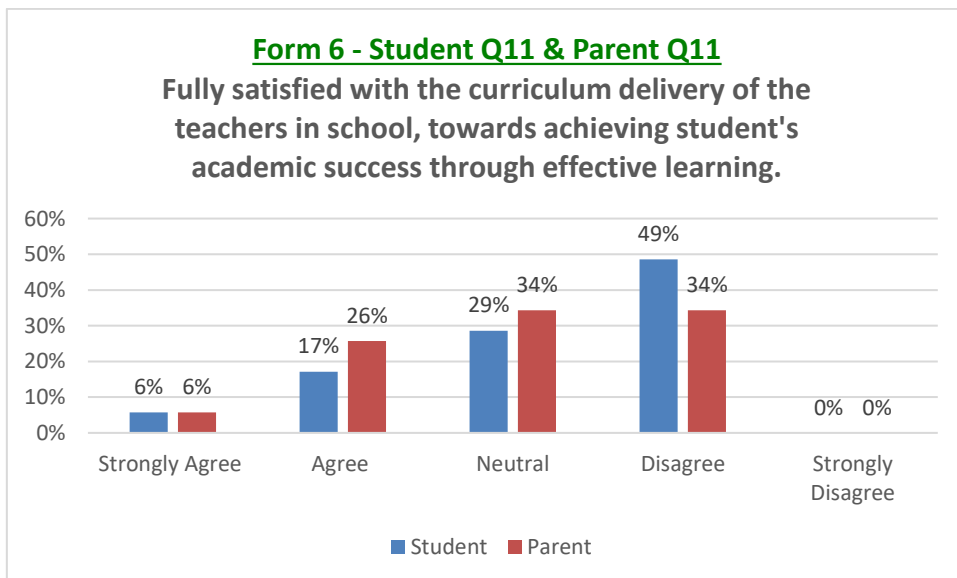


Figure 24

Figures 23 and 24 go further in displaying whether there was satisfaction with the curriculum delivery in school, towards achieving academic success through effective learning. Among the form fives, 48% of parents and 37% of students either strongly disagreed or disagreed. These negative views are informative as Excellence High is considered to be a premier prestige school in T&T and stakeholders in the form of students and parents appear dissatisfied. This speaks volumes when comparing the external perception of Excellence High as this exceptionally good school that is extremely competitive to get into from the SEA examinations and readily produces scholarship winners with this somewhat negative view from within.

At this point I think that it is important to analyse the influence of prestige orientation on respondents' apparent dissatisfaction. As established before, Excellence High is a premier prestige educational institution in T&T, and so for respondents to lack confidence in the teachers at the school is a bit of a paradox. Lee and Shouse (2011, p.221) came across this type of finding, in their research on the role of prestige orientation in shadow education, and surmised that:

prestige orientation prompts parents to spend more on shadow education, perhaps more than might be realistic or necessary. (Lee and Shouse 2011, p.221).

It may be reasonably inferred that the prestige nature of Excellence High may very well be part of the reason that respondents are not fully confident, even uneasy, and so they may take pre-emptive measures in the form of extra-lessons to allay their concerns and gain that '*positional advantage*' (Brown 2003, p.142) and '*competitive edge*' (Brunton 2002, p.167). Moreover, among the form six, who would have already written their first external examinations at form five, 68% of parents and 78% of students, were either neutral or disagreed. Again, this is significant since these are students who would have been prepared for their first external examinations at the form 5 level at Excellence High, and their responses express less confidence in their teachers to effectively deliver the curriculum.

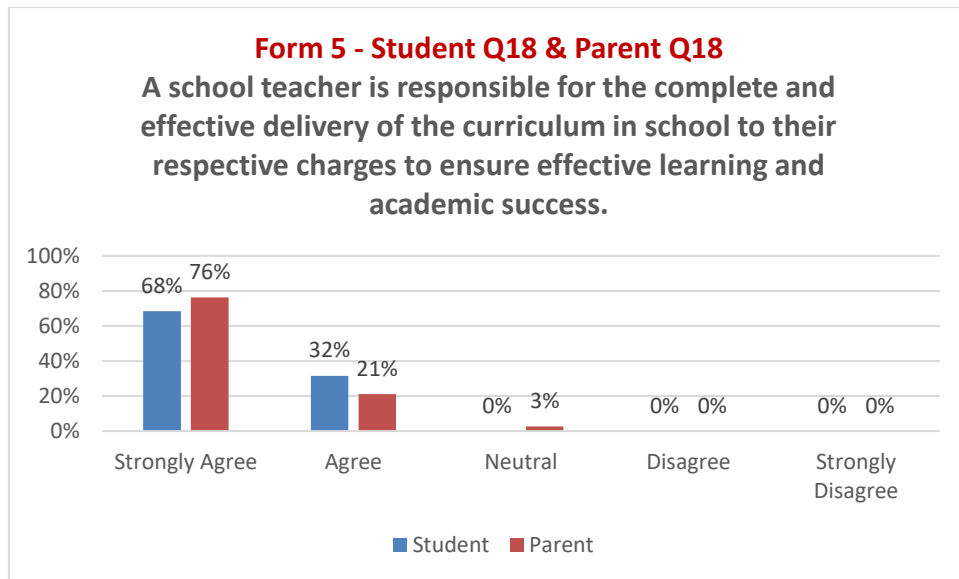


Figure 25

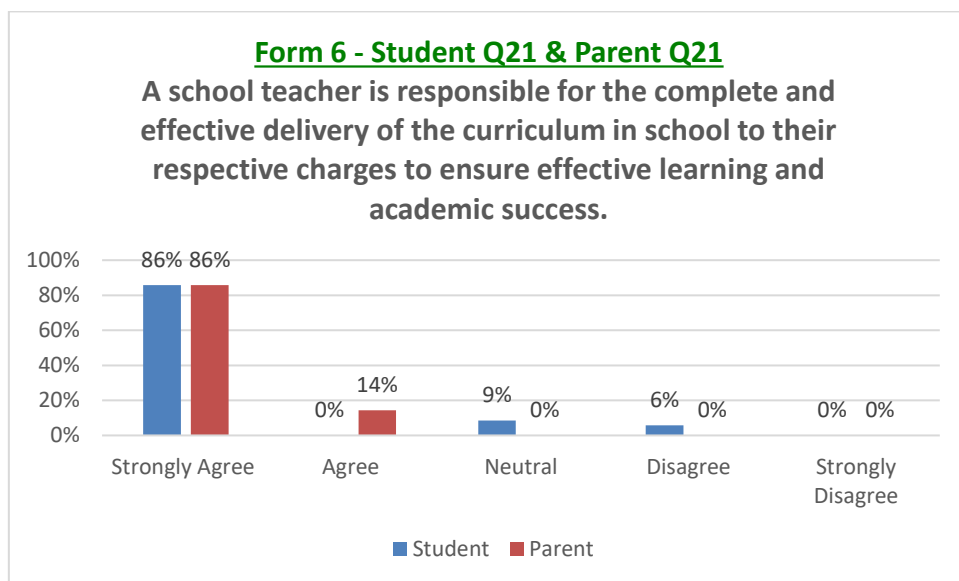


Figure 26

Figures 25 and 26 further show the results that explore whether a schoolteacher is responsible for the complete and effective delivery of the curriculum in school to ensure effective learning and success. The responses in both the forms five and six’s year groups show that both parent and students overwhelmingly agree that the schoolteacher is indeed responsible. When compared with the responses in figures 23 and 24 it seems apparent that the respondents are in agreement that a teacher should provide effective learning opportunities and ensure academic success, i.e. be an

effective teacher, however, there appears to be limited confidence in the in-school teachers as effective teachers. Thus, it may be reasonable to infer that stakeholders who may feel that the in-school teacher is not providing the best effective learning opportunities that may facilitate academic success, may very well seek the help of supplementary tutors once it's affordable.

4.1.2 RQ1 Interviews

Following are the analyses of findings for the interview questions that address RQ1.

4.1.2.1 Interview Question 1 (IQ1)

The first interview question was “**What is your understanding of effective learning?**” Firstly, I would like to address any concerns as to whether my proposed definition of effective learning used in the questionnaire may have influenced or skewed stakeholders' proposed definitions. These interviews started at least five weeks after the questionnaires were given, that is two weeks after they were returned. Moreover, the interviews lasted for a period of approximately six months due to many reasons, which involved time constraints, family commitments, on the part of stakeholders and myself, together with my own medical issues. Thus, reasonably, I really do not think that respondents would have had the time to remember such detail from the questionnaires that were fielded much long before.

The overarching view of all form five students came under the umbrella in which the teacher clearly explains the content in a manner in which the students could understand, internalise and then correctly apply it. S5-204 explained *'the teacher explains, and I can really comprehend and use the knowledge to do well not just in my studies but in real life too.'* Four form five parents concurred with the students' overall views of understanding and being able to apply the knowledge, however one notably stated that her child's ability to pass the tests is effective learning. P5-402 took a more somewhat altruistic view in which he views effective learning as that knowledge *'which can build a better society'*, quite analogous to Carr's (1998, p.19) *'good society.'*

Although each form six student respondent generally agreed with the students of form five regarding effective learning, S6-797 added the importance of healthy eating habits and sleep cycles coupled with extra-curricular activities which she emphasised were important to students' mental health and effective learning. S6-797 explained in detail about the importance of health, emotional well-being, extra-curricular activities and a comfortable learning environment in noting that:

effective learning requires focus, interest in the subject matter, and a comfortable and non-judgemental learning environment. In addition, healthy eating habits, sleeping cycles and extra-curricular activities are essential for a student's mental health and, by extension, effective learning.

What was also notable here is the similarity in views that her parent espoused. Clearly, they both had ideologies that were rooted in the same foundation. Her parent, P6-797 echoed similar views as she explained that:

[e]ffective learning requires a child to be focused and interested in what she's learning. Most importantly the child must be healthy from an emotional, mental and physical standpoint. Only then will she be able to really understand the knowledge and then effectively apply it. (P6-797).

Their contributions are particularly noteworthy as there is a clear synchronism in the way the mother and daughter view effective learning and the conditions that best facilitate this type of learning. Significantly, the recognition of healthy eating habits, sleep cycles and extra-curricular activities demonstrate the awareness of the importance of physical, mental and emotional health together with holistic development opportunities, towards being an effective learner. Healthy eating habits and proper sleep cycles are critical to being physically, psychologically and emotionally healthy and it follows that the health status of a child impacts on that child's ability to learn (Rampersad 2002, p.2). Moreover, extra-curricular activities are beneficial towards all-round development in a physical, emotional and psychological sense (Massoni 2011, p.84). These extra-curricular offerings may be sports, arts, culture and a range of many opportunities outside of the classroom setting, which may provide opportunities for team-building, growth and development, and significantly, to acquire concepts of democratic life (Lunenburg 2010, p.2).

S6-782 highlighted that effective learning also occurs when the learner is able to successfully teach what was taught to him/her. From the parents' perspective, all concurred with the general ideologies and definitions established by the form five parents. However, P6-776 went more in depth in her contribution as she emphasised the vital role of teachers to be effective teachers who practise lifelong learning. P6-776 gave a much-detailed explanation, and echoed similar sentiments to P6-797, with relevant examples in explaining that:

[w]here teaching is student-centred so learning truly takes place, rather than mere teaching especially the chalk and talk variety. Teachers may lecture, teach and impart info but it is futile if student does not learn. Teacher must create environment conducive to learning so that student is interested, curious, interactive and motivated to learn. Teachers must also use a variety of teaching methods to reach the entire spectrum of students since each child learns differently. For me, effective learning is totally dependent on the teacher's ability and willingness to go the distance.

Evidently the concept of effective learning from these parent and student stakeholders place supreme emphasis on the role of the teacher in successfully imparting knowledge and learning experiences while being in a comfortable and conducive learning and teaching environment. This environment should ideally cater to the needs of the students and their varying levels of intelligences. These expectations of the teacher are extremely high and may even place undue, even unfair, pressure on the mainstream teacher. This is significant, particularly when in the mainstream schooling experience there may be a lack of technological facilities, professional development opportunities and appropriate teacher mentoring techniques. Nevertheless, the teacher has an instructive role to play in ensuring effective learning and this, in my view, raises the importance of the teacher as a professional who constructively re-engineers, improves and broadens his/her knowledgebase to the benefit of all involved in the educational process.

Teachers' responses to this question were very similar, regardless of the range of years' experience. They all emphasised: critical thinking, effective communication, critical engagement of the material, holistic learning, cooperation skills, time management, application of concepts taught and life skills. From the academic perspective, ST-1 ideally posit that:

[e]ffective learning is learning that allows you to process things in a critical way more than regurgitation and comprehension. Being able to handle everything on a Bloom's taxonomy scale going up to levels up to where you can evaluate, synthesise you could do things critically.

Furthermore, ST-5 brought in the key roles of learning values, behaviour, etiquette and the hidden curriculum. This hidden curriculum is actually part of a school's culture and represents an unwritten curriculum of social norms, that is rules, ceremonies, rituals and routines, that are representative of the school's society (Wren 1999, p.594). Again, the importance of school culture towards facilitating effective learning appears in the findings of the prestige denominational secondary school, Excellence High. In effect, there seems to be consensus from the teachers that effective learning is necessary to develop successful students who are encouraged to generate knowledge through a process of effective curricula delivery and experiences, both didactic and hidden. This teaching and learning should be done in a conducive environment where students are encouraged to be critical thinkers who can generate informed, reflective and critical decisions regarding academics and life's skills. In my view, this type of effective learning process may then be a true '*process of conscientization*' (Freire 1985, p.106) and requires teachers to be involved in on-going professional development and learning opportunities.

Continuous professional development, particularly for educators, is a key strategy that school systems have to strengthen educators' performance so that they are able to improve their performance and raise student achievement (Mizell 2010, p.3). Interestingly, the interview responses from teachers did not mention anything about on-going professional development and its important role and function in facilitating effective learning. Definitely, this I believe to be significant as teachers themselves must recognise their importance to the learning process by continuously preparing themselves. In having no mention of this I do believe that the teachers need to re-examine their critical role in effective learning and how they must continuously improve themselves to be successful in the teaching and learning process. Very importantly, Heads of Departments, Principal and Vice Principal, essentially the school's leadership, of Excellence High are key to initiating, facilitating and encouraging these professional development opportunities so that teachers are better

prepared to provide effective learning opportunities. I would also like to suggest that mentoring be another key area of focus that teacher respondents did not acknowledge in their responses, particularly from the senior teachers, which included Heads of Departments. Mentoring can be a positive contributor to professional development of teachers as mentoring techniques may be must be linked to a vision of good teaching, guided by an understanding of teacher learning, and supported by a professional culture that favours collaboration and inquiry (Feiman-Nemser 1996, p.1). Through these types of professional development opportunities for teachers, there will be the fertile ground for the cognitive, emotional and social dimensions of learning that facilitates the external interaction process between the learner and his or her social, cultural or material environment, and an internal psychological process of elaboration and acquisition through interaction with these well prepared teacher professionals (Illeris 2009, p.20).

4.1.2.2 Interview Question 2 (IQ2)

The second interview question, IQ2, was “**What are your views regarding a successful student?**” Five out of the six form five respondents named academic achievement through gaining a scholarship as the measure of a successful student. Interestingly, so did each of their parents, although P5-332 and P5-386 mentioned that there must be extracurricular activities that create teamwork and leadership roles, however, they were clear that academics were the priority. P-226 was candid to admit that the scholarship as a measure of success, because they could not afford university education otherwise. P5-402 maintained his stance on community and country building as his measure of a successful student is *‘a student that will become a model citizen. A student that is willing to contribute to the whole of her country.’*

Quite instructively, none of the form six parents or students mentioned the word scholarship in their responses. They all genuinely talked of the importance of academics together with a balance of extra-curricular that creates an all-round individual with excellent mental, emotional and physical health. I do think that this is particularly significant because their responses were mature, logical and practical. These form six students also had the benefit of writing the form five external

examinations before, so the drive to succeed may have been strengthened by their real-life experiences that would have provided excellent learning opportunities for growth, development and improvement. Coincidentally, four of these girls later gained scholarships. Three gained scholarships in the open category, which is fully paid by the GoRTT and one gained an additional scholarship, which is part funded.

The teachers' views regarding a successful student were quite broad based as issues of respect of fellow human beings regardless of position in society; not just academically successful but all-round; and holistic individuals with high standing morals, ethics and values. Many teachers were straightforward to admit that at Excellence High's academic success was the only measure of success that they have seen been adopted by the school's administration over the years. T-8, with 6 years' experience, notably described that:

[a] successful student leaving this school for me is one that is mentally, spiritually and academically capable of handling whatever job they are given whether small or big. A successful student outside of this school is one that is more holistically developed than what we do at this school. They have more interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills, they are better at stress management.

This response clearly shows the need for that type of holistic development of the student in order to be viewed as a successful student. Refreshingly, this is quite different from the academic and scholarship success that have been dominating the answers, but this is also an indicator that T-8's responses are not as prized or prioritized as the academic success.

T-12 brought in the perspective of the former student who is now a teacher at Excellence High and significantly noted that:

[i]t's based on the students' parent's income to access these extra-curricular activities. It's offered after school and really depends on your financial situation. At this school it's primarily scholarships and grades.

Although T-13 attempted to talk of holistic learning she admitted that there is heavy promotion of academic success when referring to a successful student. Notably, T-15 who has taught for 17 years lamented that '*we don't teach them how to be happy*' as the students are very results oriented and continuously compare themselves to their

counterparts. This observation by T-15 is really significant as schools are primary agencies when it comes to ensuring the mental, emotional and even physical wellbeing of its students and also its staff. Realistically, students and staff may spend more waking hours at school than at their respective homes, a case that is true for myself as a teacher at Excellence High. Hence, it follows that a school's culture and ethos, the quality of its physical and social environment, its curricula and the nature of the teaching/learning processes, and the interactions with its stakeholders, all have a direct effect on the health of its students and staff (Rampersad 2002, p.3). In my view, schools, therefore, have a responsibility to become healthy organisations first, so that the environment can then be conducive to effective learning and academic success.

Senior teachers, which included administration, also conveyed the importance of scholarship success. ST-1, with 30 odd years' experience, notes that:

[t]he students, the public, particularly the parents...there is a lot of pressure for students to do well. They send their children to this school because they feel that every one of them could get a scholarship, and not just any scholarship, an open scholarship.

This comment further demonstrates that there is the view that Excellence High has that reputation for academic excellence through scholarship success, which highlights the importance of stakeholders' perception and the prestige nature of the school. While scholarship and academic success seemed overriding from the responses, teachers also valued the following characteristics of a successful student: importance of being a 'good citizen', 'independent thinking', 'civic mindedness', 'social responsibility' and 'honesty'. Interestingly, while both teachers and senior teachers acknowledge and embraced the importance of all round and holistic development, the main criteria of a successful student appears to be that of academic success through achieving scholarships, particularly open scholarships. These open scholarships are fully paid by the GoRTT and students may go anywhere in the world to study for an undergraduate degree.

4.1.2.3 Interview Question 3 (IQ3)

The third interview question, IQ3, was “**How do you view the role of school teachers regarding achieving effective learning and students’ success?**” Among the form five respondents, five out of the six students agreed and acknowledged the important role of the teacher towards facilitating effective learning and students’ success, and that they actually had hard working teachers who were willing to help. However, S5-332 admitted that some of her teachers do not explain properly and failed to complete the curricula on time, which leaves her feeling upset and somewhat hopeless as she dejectedly noted ‘*there is nothing I can do.*’ This is instructive as it represents a reality that students may be powerless to address complacency regarding their teachers’ performance. Following this type of setting, depending on the emotional and mental state of the student, he/she may seek external or alternative help or even more worryingly become demotivated and may even choose to give up. Their parents corroborated the vital role of the teacher to ensuring effective learning, through their knowledge base, teaching style and curricula delivery. Some parents were sure to recognise the key role of the teacher being an exemplar, technologically proficient, good time manager and avail themselves to courses in psychology to help in understanding students’ personalities. This aspect of being an exemplar is important especially when taken in context with S5-332 comments. If a teacher does not complete curricula and fails to effectively explain concepts, the example being set is not a positive one and will be a definite deterrent to effective learning and academic success.

The form six respondents agreed that the teacher is key to effective learning by being knowledgeable in the content, providing interactive learning opportunities, making students feel comfortable, and having a teaching style and caring attitude to which students can respond positively. However, they significantly acknowledged that at their level, students must take initiative in their learning to really underscore the opportunity for effective learning and success. Their parents corroborated these views and P6-776 underscored the general views of all the parents by stating that:

the teacher plays a major role, teacher can make or break a student ... Duty of teacher to create perfect learning environment for learning, duty of the child to take advantage of all learning opportunities.

From the teaching perspective all of the teachers agreed that the teacher was key to effective learning through their competence, preparation and delivery of the curricula to suit the needs of each learner.

ST-5, with 17 years' experience, importantly recognised the critical fact that Excellence High is a denominational school and there are cultural and religious implications that must not be overlooked. Interestingly ST-5 is not of the school's denomination but she clearly respects and highly regards the denominational nature of the school. She emphasised that:

we have to be cognizant of what our views are, what the school's views are in terms of the religious stances. For e.g. religious autonomy and being able to speak your mind is one thing, but in a different environment could be considered rudeness. The role of the teacher is to assess the culture of the school first, the needs of the students, the teacher's own competence to mesh all of this to create an effective learning environment for the student. (ST-5).

Her views are particularly noteworthy because, of all the teachers, she is the only one who made mention of the denominational nature of the school and of teacher assessment by the students. Interestingly, ST-5 was not the Principal but her response shows how vested she is in Excellence High and how much value she places on the culture of the institution, particularly as she is not of the school's religion. This is notable, when taken in context with the findings regarding the questionnaire responses shown in figures 9, 10 11 and 12, which supported that school culture seemed more important than the religious teachings of the denomination. School culture essentially defines reality for those within a social organisation, gives them support and identity, and creates a framework for occupational learning (Stoll 1998, p.9). These data do support the importance of school culture and environment to the educational process and success at Excellence High. Thus, in my view, regardless of religion or spirituality, pupils' learning, non-academic and academic achievements, and discipline may be constructively built upon in assemblies, workshops and the day-to-day experiences of the Excellence High's schooling processes and culture.

Due to T&T's denominational schools being classified as public/government assisted schools, denominational boards have little control over the educational content taught

as this is determined by the MOE. However, they do have a large autonomy over the values that are imparted in their institutions, hence school culture can be critical to effective learning and educational success. In so doing teachers are well placed to structure content while remembering that the aim is to complete students' knowledge, add meaning to learning and systematically engage in strategies which will help them to learn for themselves (Marchesi 1998, p.28). Consequently, an appropriately unified, trained and cultured staff may be instrumental in the creation of a motivated, creative and flexible teaching environment that is representative of the denomination's culture and values at the foundation.

ST-5 crucially notes that students '*must also have a role to play in assessing the teaching and learning.*' Regarding teachers being considered professional, they must realise the importance of student review of their practice, such that there can be genuine reflective processes in the teaching and learning process. Marsh and Roche (1993, p.218) proposed four objectives of student evaluations of teaching effectiveness: diagnostic feedback to faculty that will be useful for the improvement of teaching; a measure of teaching effectiveness to be used in^[SEP] personnel and administrative decision making; information for students to^[SEP] use in the selection of courses and teachers; and an outcome or a process description for research on teaching. However, these four objectives are heavily dependent on the student as an evaluator in conjunction with the teachers' supervisors in the forms of Heads of Department, Principal and Vice Principal. While the school's leadership may be relevantly trained for such measures, the reality may be that students do not have the background and experience to make an objective and adequately informed decision, especially if the evaluation instrument is not well constructed (Theall and Franklin 2000, p. 95). Hence, fitting research must be undertaken regarding the construction of these teacher evaluation instruments such that the data gathered could facilitate the type of reflection that may be important to ensuring effective learning and ultimately student success. Also, critical to note, is that some of the teacher sample included Heads of Departments, however their responses made no mention of modes of supervision or methods and strategies used to ensure that teachers under their purview actually deliver effectively in the classroom.

4.2 Research Question 2 (RQ2)

This section presents the findings and analysis related to “**What are the beliefs of Excellence High’s stakeholders regarding the role of extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students’ success at secondary school?**” that is RQ2. First the questionnaire findings and analysis will be presented followed by the interview findings and analysis.

4.2.1 RQ2 Questionnaires

For the questionnaires, questions 12 to 17 in form five and 12 to 20 in form six, addressed RQ2. Following are the results presented in bar charts appropriately labelled. Form five and form six responses are presented following each other for questions where applicable, and labelled appropriately to facilitate easy comparison and analysis.

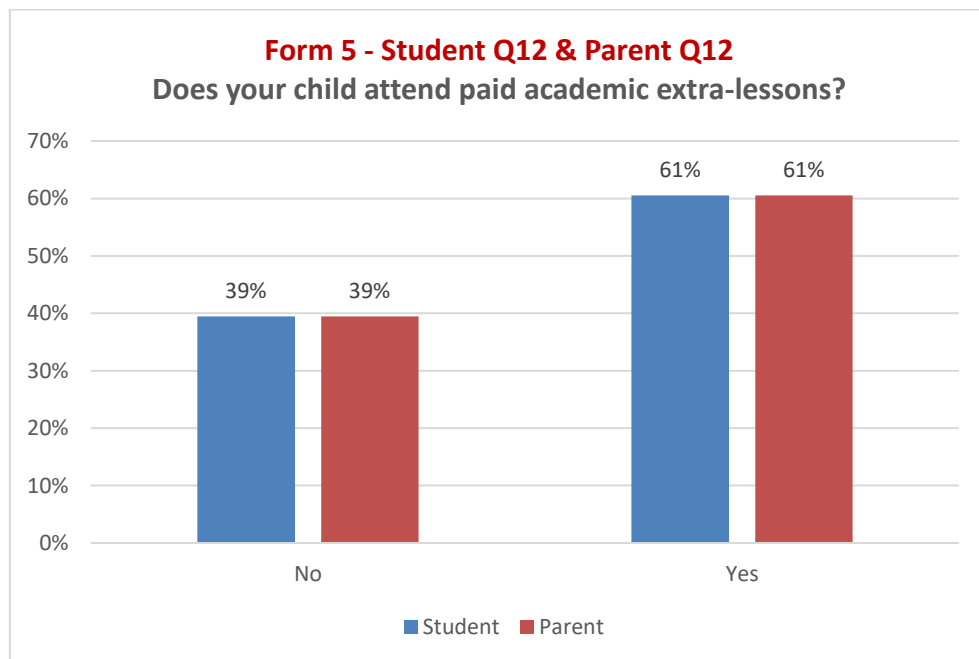


Figure 27

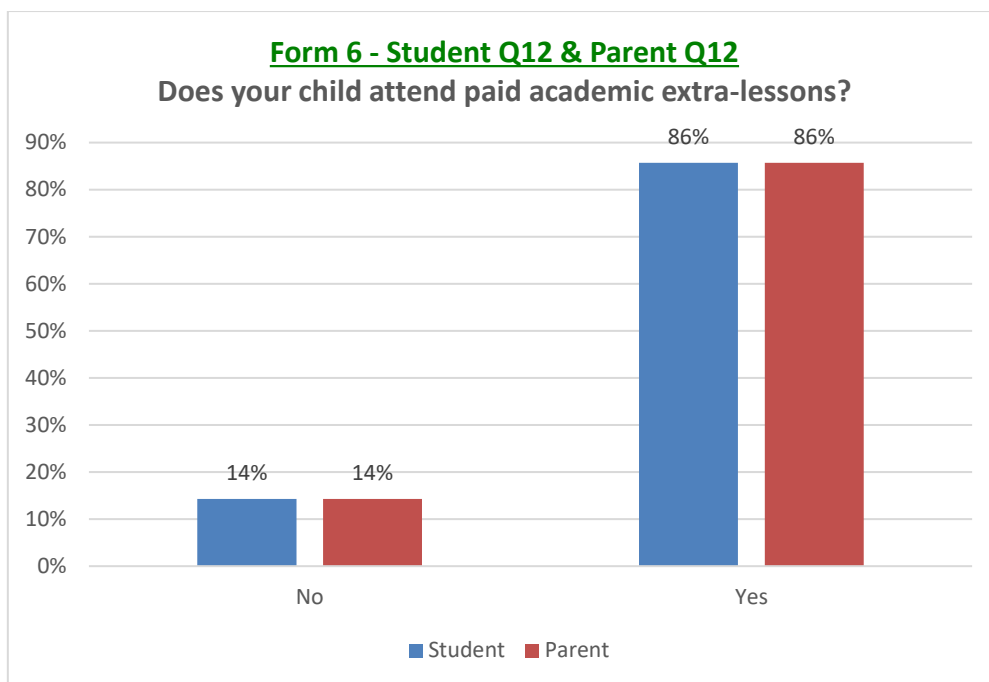


Figure 28

Figures 27 and 28 directly address whether students attended paid academic extra-lessons. 61% of form fives and 86% of form sixes answered in the affirmative, which really underscores how prevalent extra-lessons is at Excellence High in these examination classes. Figures 29 and 30 show that 61% of form fives spent 7.22 hours on average per week after school, and 86% of form six spent 8.5 hours weekly. In the T&T context, these figures far surpass Brunton's (2002, p.174) figures of 4.9 hours per week and demonstrate a large increase for a similar type school fifteen years later. In my opinion, this prevalent attendance of extra-lessons may reasonably lead to the mental and physical fatigue that I see from students on a daily basis, since after a normal school day, students are spending further time in school like settings. Furthermore, the time that it would take to get to and from these extra-lessons all adds up. Moreover, after having focused on the in-school classes the student is now expected to focus on these extra-lessons with the same drive and motivation. In my view, these all seem to ideally contribute to students' physical and mental exhaustion, which may very well be counterproductive to effective learning and academic success.

Bray (2007, p.54) talks about this issue of fatigue in the extra-lessons setting for both students and teachers in noting that:

[f]or many participants, supplementary tutoring also leads to fatigue. Most obviously affected are the pupils who go straight from mainstream school to supplementary class; but also affected are the tutors, especially when they are also mainstream teachers.

In T&T, many of these extra-lessons teachers are themselves mainstream teachers, as is the case at Excellence High as well, and do go from their normal workday to extra-lessons classes. Reasonably, they will be tired as well and so the situation is there where both student and teacher may not be at their most attentive and focused in these after school classes. That being said, the reality that this is extra income for teachers may be a tangible motivating factor towards ensuring that teachers are at their best as their income, marketability and reputation are drivers of their own success. de Silva (1994, p.5) further suggests that in addition to the all-round fatigue, extra-lessons makes both students and teachers *'relax'* when at school, thereby reducing the productivity of that part of each day. This is in keeping with my daily observations regarding the students who appear mentally and physically tired and even disinterested.

The average cost per hour at form five was \$55.30, which represents an average of \$400 per week and \$1600 per month. At the form six level \$91.82 per hour on average, \$780 per week and \$3100 per month. Indeed, these sums do add up and issues such as socioeconomic status become significant, as certainly only those who can afford will be able to access this external help as household wealth is strongly related to educational attainment of children (Filmer and Pritchett 1999). In the year 2015 the minimum wage in T&T was \$15.00 per hour, for an average eight-hour workday \$120 and a five-day workweek, \$600. A parent on this salary, even a couple, would definitely not be able to afford extra-lessons. Thus, socio-economic status is a definitive threat to students being able to access extra-lessons should they really do need it.

From a more global perspective, regarding shadow education and equality of educational access, some studies have shown that the demand for tutoring is lowest among students from lower socioeconomic status families and highest among students from high socioeconomic status families: in African countries (Paviot *et al.* 2008), in Korea (Kim and Lee 2010), in Japan (Stevenson and Baker 1992), in Turkey (Bray *et*

al. 2013; Tansel and Bircan 2006), and in China (Bray and Kwok 2003). Right here in T&T, Brunton (2002, p.165), especially in the secondary school context, recognised that extra-lessons could be seen as a mechanism for reproducing social inequalities for children who cannot afford. Therefore, this data points to the vital role of the actual mainstream schooling system to providing educational equality for all students. If extra-lessons do provide an advantage, the student who cannot afford it must not be at a disadvantage as the mainstream schooling process should completely and effectively prepare the student. Thus, a key aspect of this research is establishing Excellence High's stakeholders' views regarding the role of extra-lessons in achieving academic success when taken in context the mainstream schooling experience. Notably, the attendance at extra-lessons is much higher at form six with 86% whereas at form five it is 61%. This may reasonably represent a conscious choice based on the experience of these form six students, and their parents, after having written their form five external examinations. Based on their examination experience and their own perceptions, they would be in a better position to determine what is necessary to ensure their own effective learning and academic success.

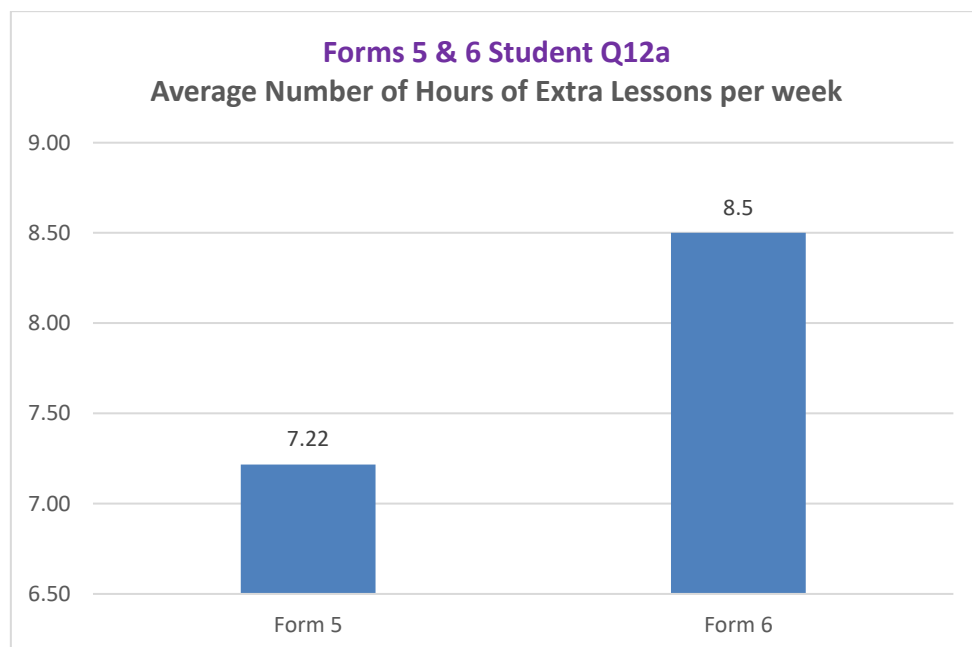


Figure 29

Form five students spent an average of 7.22 hours in extra lessons weekly and form six students spent an average of 8.5 hours weekly.

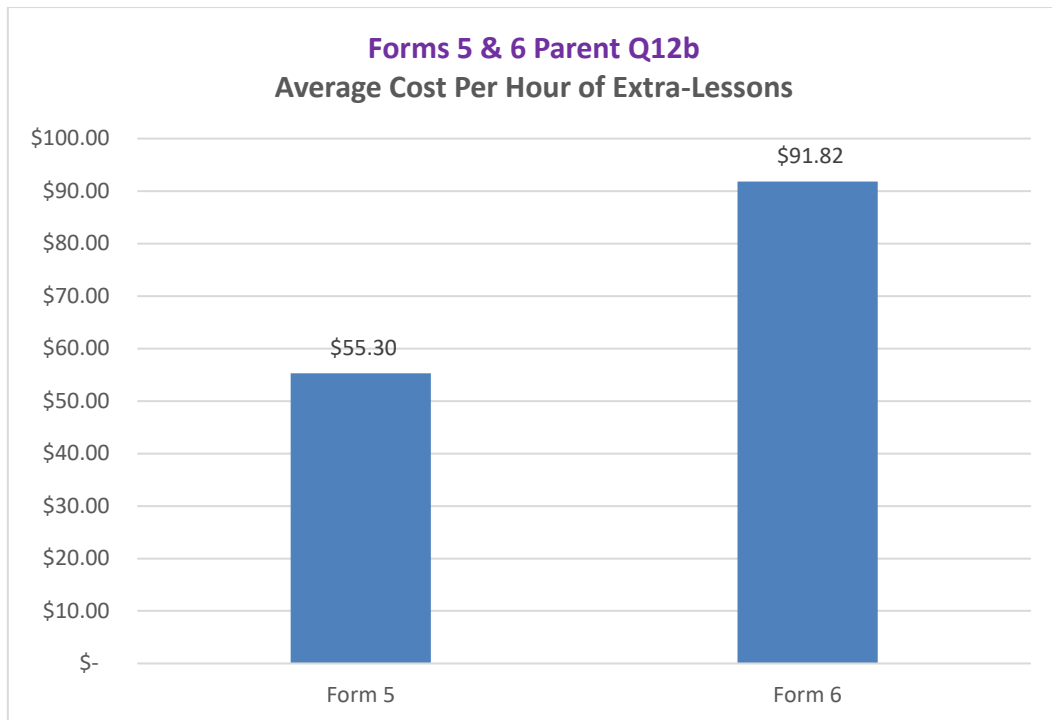


Figure 30

The average cost per hour of extra-lessons in form five was \$55.30 and \$91.82 in form six.

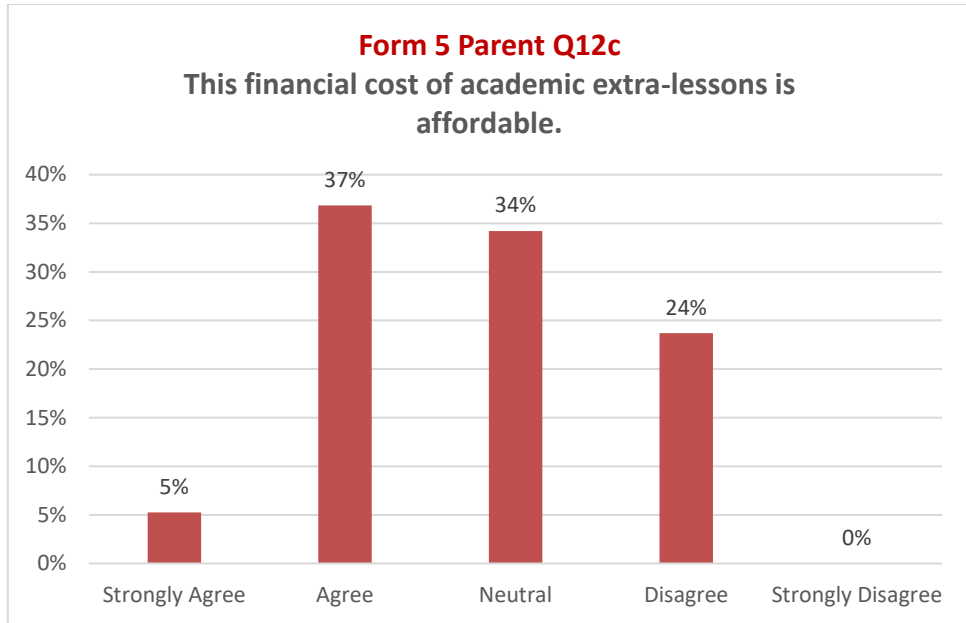


Figure 31

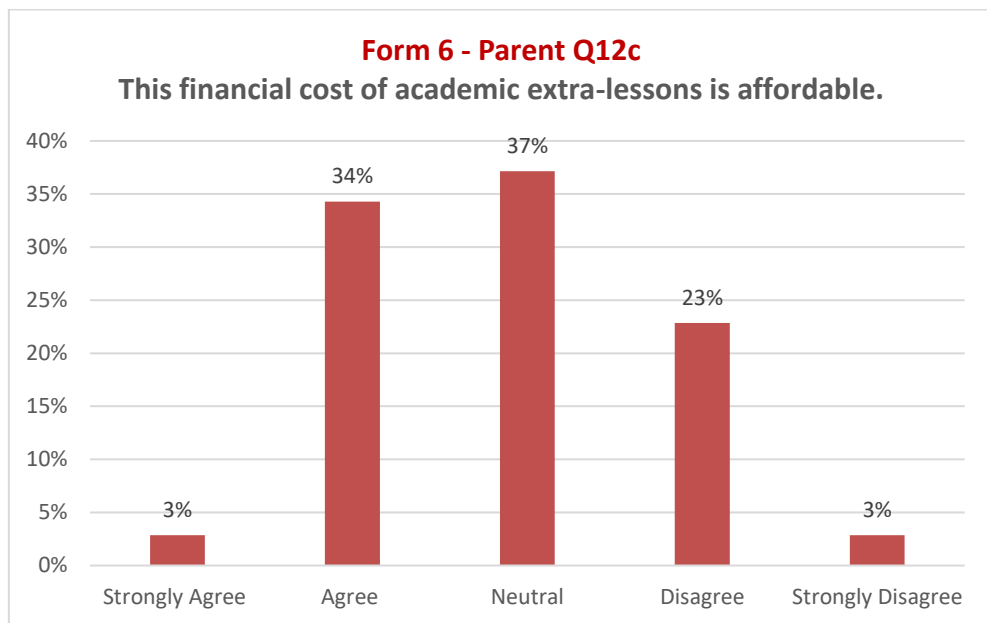


Figure 32

The data displayed in figures 31 and 32 display parents' response to whether the financial cost of extra-lessons was affordable. Of the form five parents, 58% were either neutral or disagreed and 63% of form six parents were neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed. Their responses seem to represent that they are not in full agreement that extra-lessons is affordable, but they seem to seek it nonetheless. The strongly agree and agree percentages are fairly low with 42% in form five and 37% in form six and points to the reality that parents feel that the cost of these extra-lessons is

not really affordable. These findings highlight the reality of socio-economic status and financial implications, and in effect show that extra-lessons may not be, and in my view will continue to not be, affordable by some students. Zhou and Wang (2014, p.373), in their study of the family socio-economic on extra-lessons effect in greater China, concluded similarly that '*that family SES is positively associated with the probability of extra lessons participation in general.*' Again, this raises the question of equality and equity in the educational process and in my view, warrants significant GoRTT policy development to address this type of inequity. Bray (2011, p.64) corroborates this need for equity in the educational process by proposing that governments provide adequate financial and human resources to allow school systems to cater fully for all students and thus avoiding the need for supplementary tutoring.

Notably, when these findings in figures 31 and 32 are correlated with figures 27 and 28, which asked the respondents if they attended paid extra-lessons, 61% of the form five and 86% of the form six answered in the affirmative. Thus, despite affordability being a real concern, students still attend extra-lessons. I would like to suggest that given the prestige orientation of Excellence High with a distinctive culture of high academic achievement that is also influenced by how society views and values them (Mustapha and Brunton 2002, p.158), parents and students may feel reasonably pressured to pay for these extra-lessons. Indeed, this may be representative of the pressure that both parents and students feel in search of educational success, scholarship and their interpretation of effective learning opportunities.

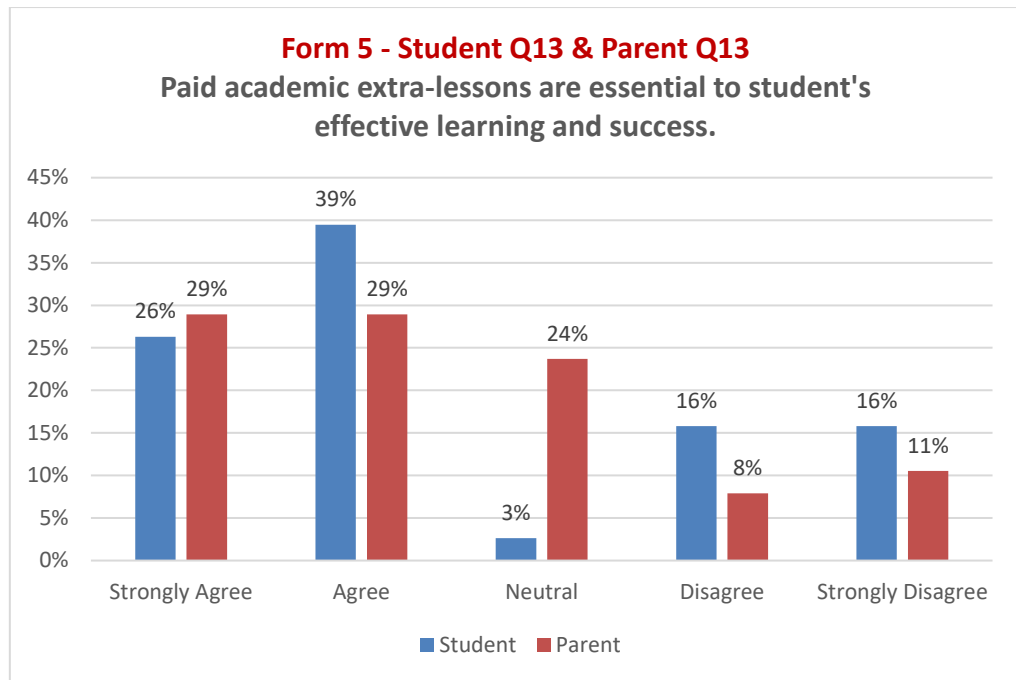


Figure 33

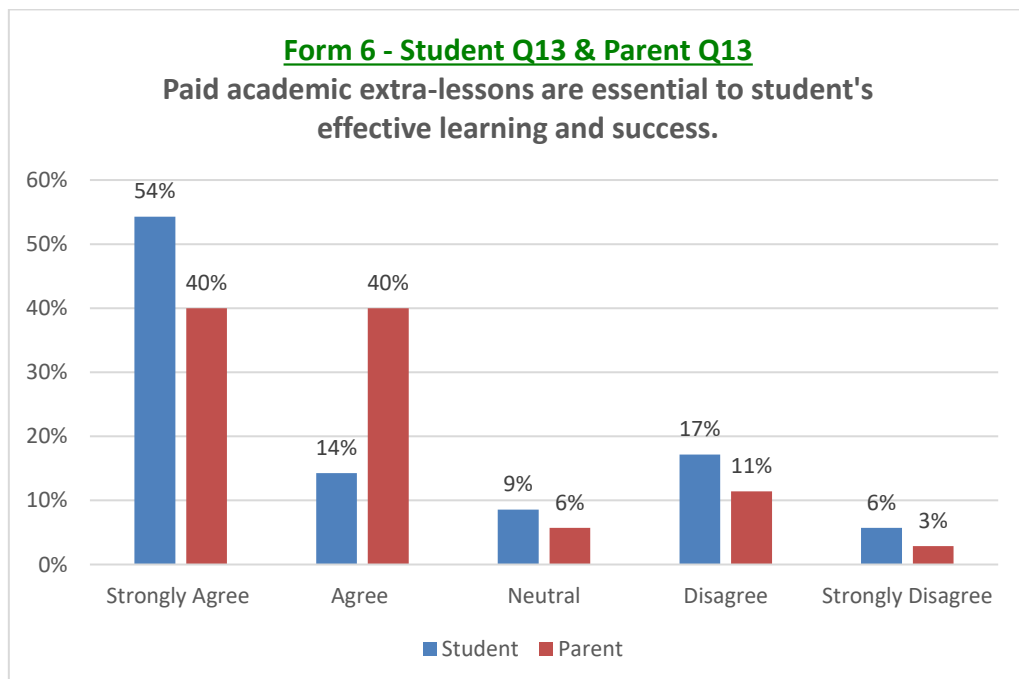


Figure 34

Figures 33 and 34 show respondents' views on whether paid academic extra-lessons are essential towards effective learning and success. 65% form five students either strongly agreed or agreed, as did 58% of their parents. At the form six level 68% of students either strongly agreed or agreed as well as a notable 80% of their parents. These data represent a fairly evident view from their perspectives, that extra-lessons are seen as important to effective learning and ultimately educational success,

particularly, from the standpoint of the form six parents who would have seen their children already write an external exam before. However, the data does not overwhelmingly support that extra-lessons are primarily responsible towards effective learning and success.

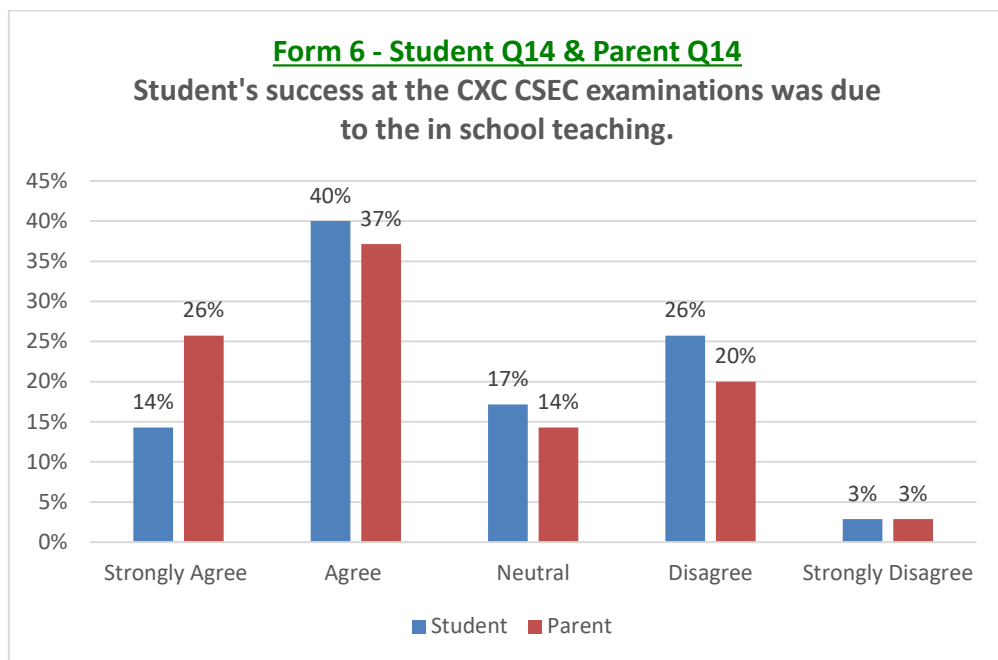


Figure 35

Figure 35 shows how these form six students viewed the in-school teaching regarding their prior examination success and 54% of students and 63% of parents either strongly agreed or agreed. These figures represent some confidence in the in-school teaching but do not display complete confidence in these teachers. Of note here is the consideration that respondents' could have considered the role of independent effort in their success, but there was no question of that nature and the free response section was not used by any respondent to indicate such. Furthermore, the data could also be indicative of other factors, maybe even extra-lessons. However, given that the letters of consent in Appendix 2 clearly outlined the purpose of the research, together with the respondent's ability to look at all the questions in the questionnaire, I would like to suggest that respondents' were aware that the focus of this question was on the role of the mainstream teacher.

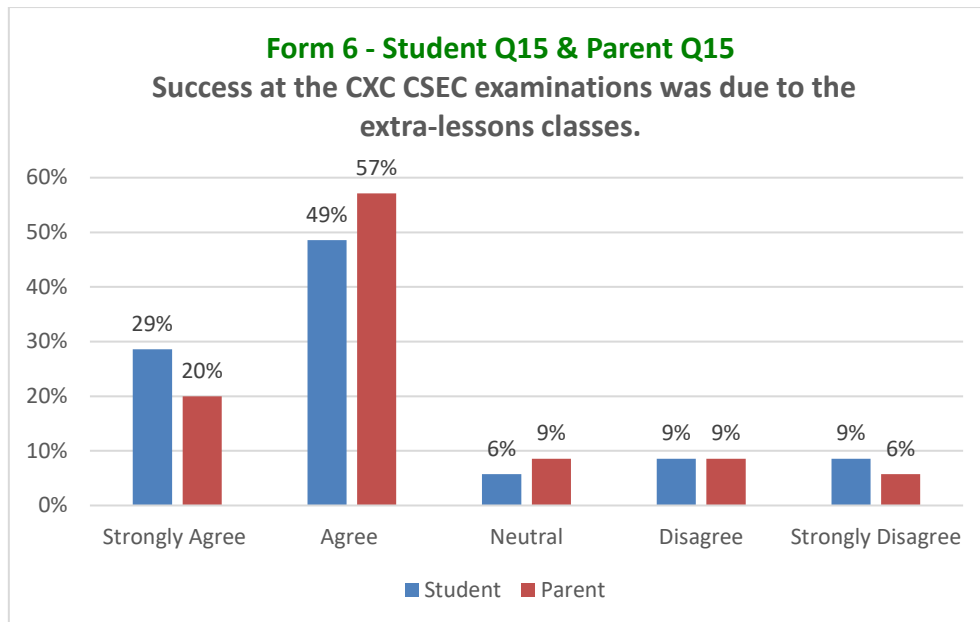


Figure 36

Figure 36 then shows the form six students' and parents' responses to whether success at their prior form five CSEC examinations was due to extra-lessons classes. 78% of the students and 77% of the parents either agreed or strongly agreed. This is instructive as clearly there is greater confidence in the role of the extra-lessons towards students' success. When taken in context with figure 35, 54% versus 78% for students and 63% versus 77% for parents, the respondents evidently feel more strongly that the success at the examinations was due to extra-lessons. Again, these results point to the experiences of these parents and students in having gone through examinations in which they had the in-school and extra-lessons experience and so they can make a fairly informed judgment based on their own experiences. It does appear from the responses that extra-lessons are viewed as an opportunity for a competitive edge towards success. In the T&T context, Brunton (2002, p.167) corroborates this competitive edge in noting that:

students, parents and even teachers view extra-lessons as providing a competitive edge in the battle for educational qualifications. (Brunton 2002, p.167).

This competitive advantage may represent stakeholders' view of effective learning towards students' success and allow for the increased prominence of extra-lessons, especially in the in preparation for external examinations.

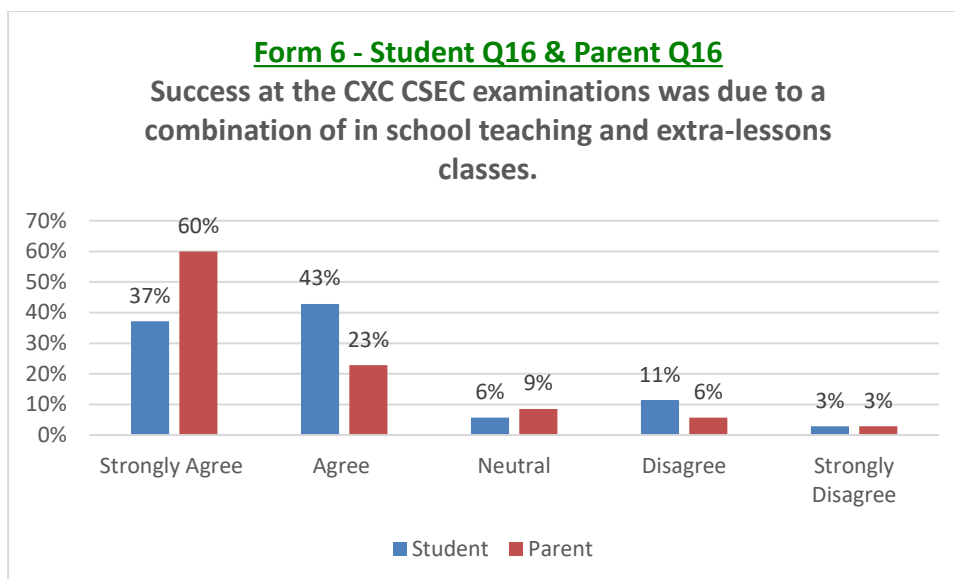


Figure 37

Figure 37 shows the responses to whether success may have been due to a combination of in school teaching and extra-lessons. The combined figures for strongly agreed and agreed of 80% students and 83% parents definitively show that there is significant support for the combined or hybrid learning environment, where it appears that school together with extra-lessons is seen as beneficial for the effective learning process and educational success. Hence, although Bray (2007, p.17) posits that private tutoring exists because of the mainstream school, at Excellence High it appears that the combination of mainstream schooling and extra-lessons seems to be the successful option for these respondents. Interestingly, the issue of whether this preferred hybrid learning environment may be a characteristic of prestige type schools in T&T is worth considering and, in my view, should be a starting point for subsequent research. Alternatively, the possibility exists that students may not want to undertake private tutoring unless they have the safety net of the schooling system. At this point it is notable to recognise that, in my view, the shadow system of extra-lessons is directly dependent on the mainstream, or more particularly the shortcomings of the mainstream. Hence, I believe that if the mainstream schooling experiences were to be strengthened in planning, preparation, supervision, remediation and curricula delivery then the lure of extra-lessons may be reasonably reduced. In so doing, issues of inequity in educational opportunities may be substantially addressed.

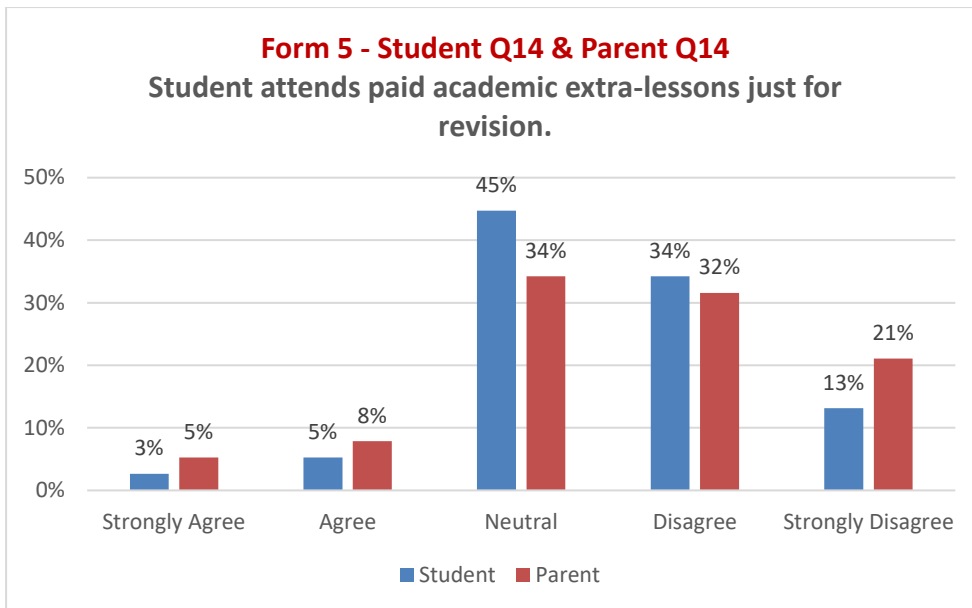


Figure 38

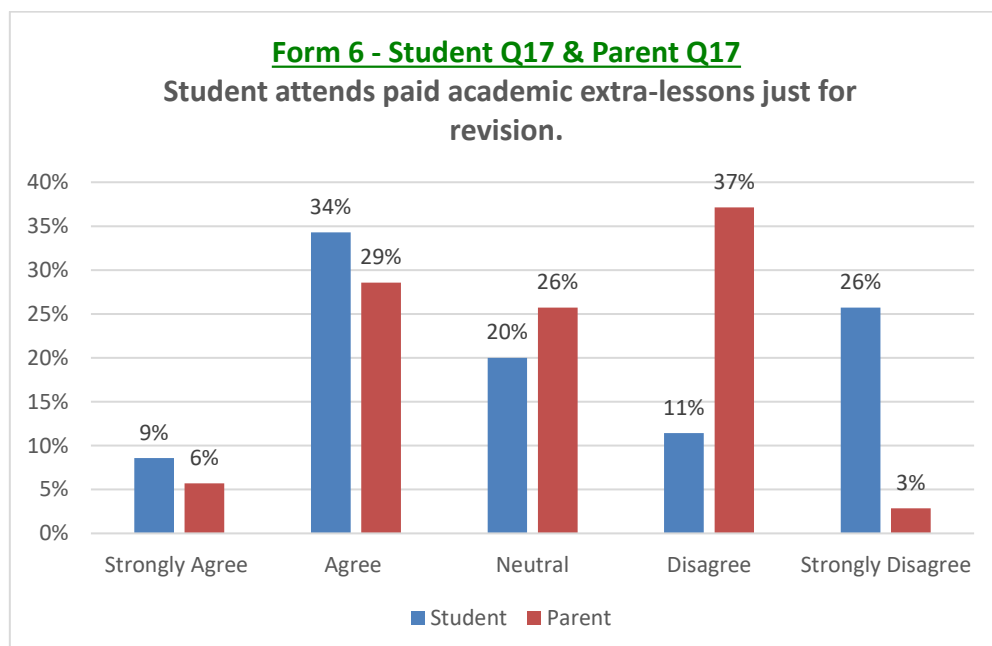


Figure 39

Figures 38 and 39 show the response on whether students attend paid academic extra-lessons just for revision. Among the form fives, an overwhelming 92% of students and 87% parents ranged from neutral to strongly disagree. This can reasonably represent that curriculum delivery is sought after in extra-lessons, not just revision. At form six, there is a wider distribution of the responses, but a healthy 43% of students and 35% of parents agreed or strongly agreed. Again, this I feel is representative of the experience of the form six students where they understand the need to do guided work and review outside of school due to their prior examinations experience. The extra-lessons may reasonably provide the environment for guided and self-directed learning.

The results in figures 38 and 39 do point to the need for curriculum delivery in the extra-lessons setting, which opens the door to possibly corrupt practices especially if the extra-lessons teacher is the mainstream teacher as well. Situations, in which teachers deliberately reduce the coverage of in school curricula delivery in order to increase the demand for private classes, are a form of corruption and unethical practice (Hallak and Poisson 2007; Sweeney *et al.* 2013). Apart from the obvious negative repercussions of exploitation of students and parents, the poor example that is being set in situations like these have potentially far reaching negative consequences, since these teachers are essentially role models or exemplars that may shape the values of their students. A direct result of this is the continuation of the cycle of exploitation as students, who in future may be teachers, may very well feel that this type of behaviour is acceptable. The reality is that the students of today become the professionals of tomorrow and they will be the ones developing and implementing policy and practice. Notably, in this research, some of the teacher respondents attended extra-lessons themselves as students and are now also providing extra-lessons. Hence, in the public educational process there must be consideration of long-term implications of forms of unethical behaviour and/or potential unethical practices due to lack of appropriate policy and codes of conduct and significantly, a focus on the development and implementation of policy to address such scenarios.

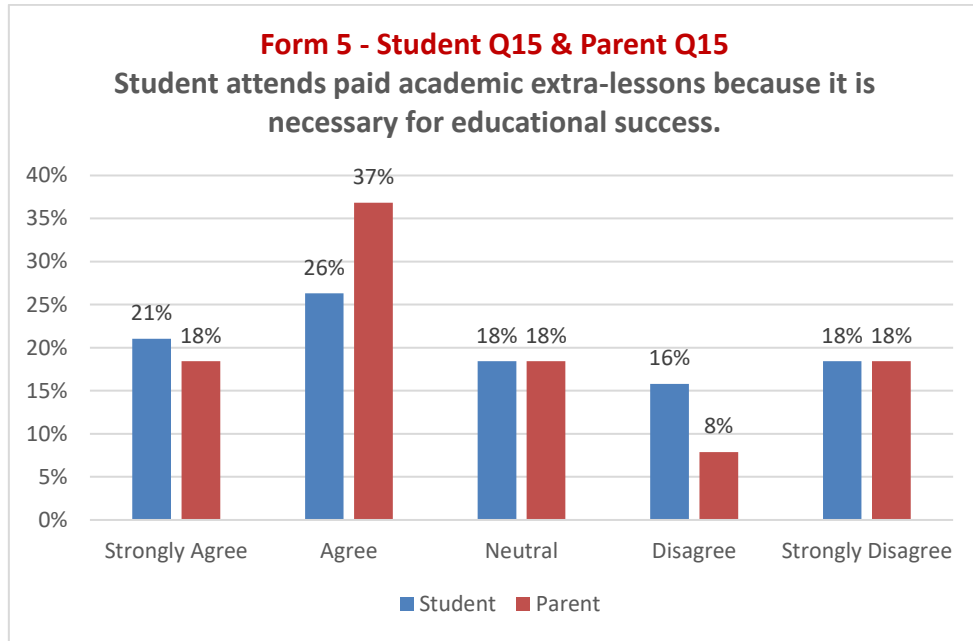


Figure 40

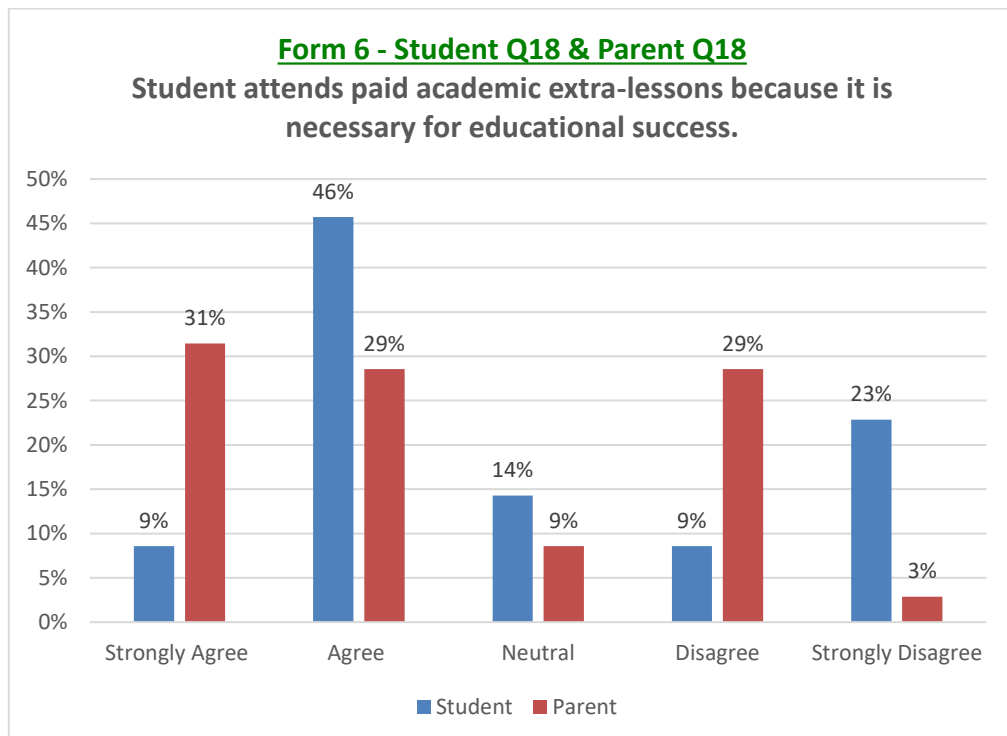


Figure 41

In figures 40 and 41, the question of attending extra-lessons because it is necessary for educational success arises. Among the form fives, 47% of students and 55% of parents either strongly agree or agree. At the form 6 level 55% of students and 60%

of parents either strongly agree or agree. These results convey an important role for extra-lessons however the results do not support it to be the primary role in educational success. Thus, it can be reasonably inferred, particularly in conjunction with data presented in figure 37, that the combination of extra-lessons and in-school teaching seems to be the ideal. Either one on its own does not seem to suffice for Excellence High’s stakeholders in the form of students and their parents. However, the subsequent interviews will shed more light on findings regarding students who opted out of extra-lessons.

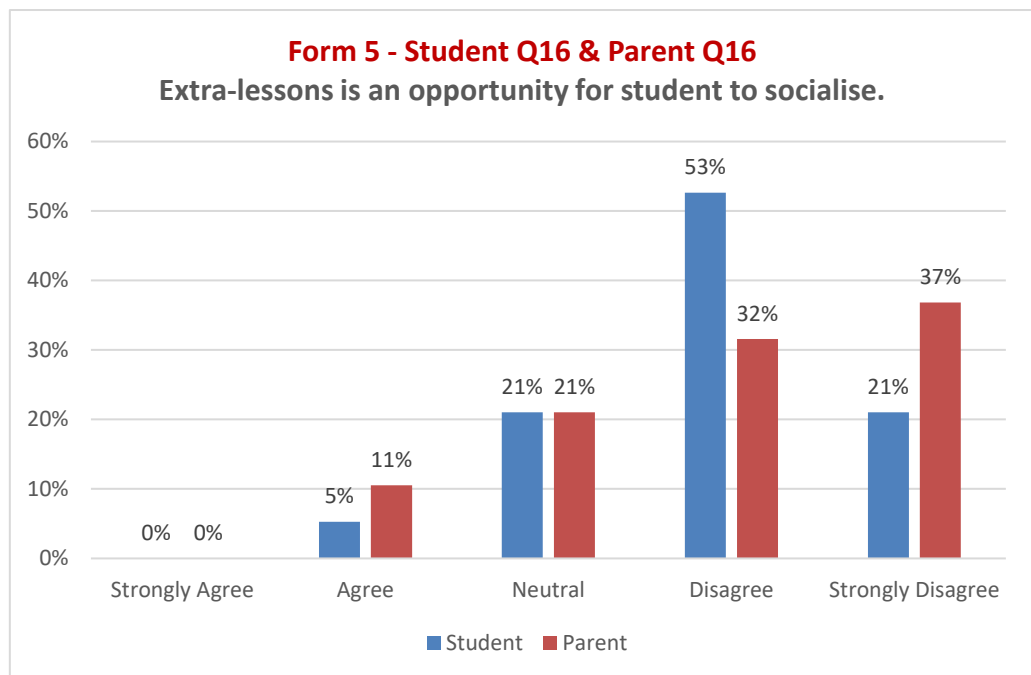


Figure 42

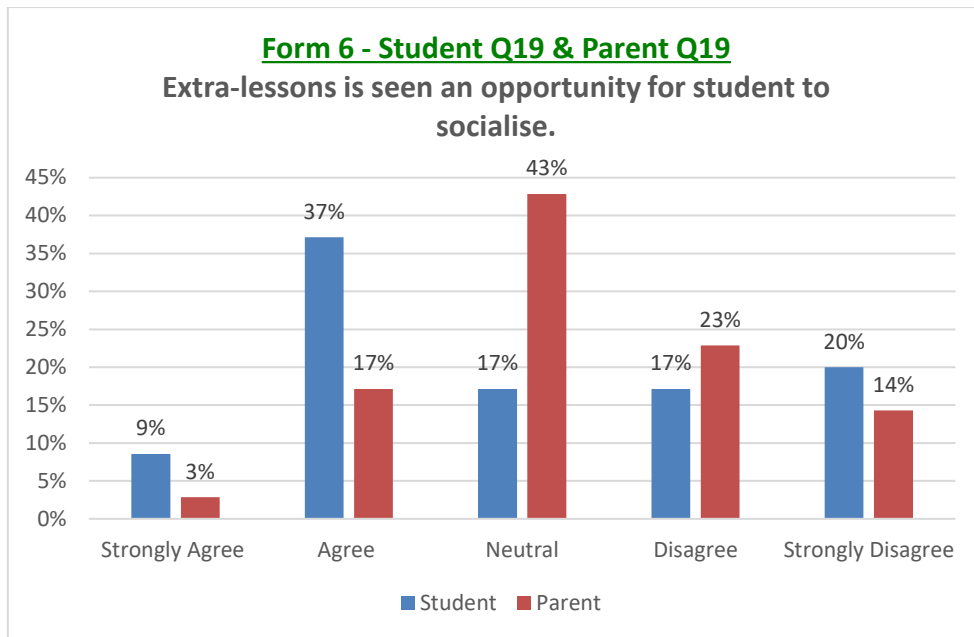


Figure 43

Figures 42 and 43 display the responses of respondents when asked about extra-lessons being an opportunity to socialise. Respondents at form five seem to disagree as 74% of students and 69% of parents either disagreed or strongly disagreed. However, at form six 46% of the students either agreed or strongly agreed as opposed to 20% of parents. This is noteworthy because the form six students range in age from 18-21 years and so may seek that extra socialising opportunity outside of the all-girl setting at Excellence High, apparently regardless of their parents' thinking. Bray (2011, p.37) also supports that reasons for attending extra-lessons 'could include a desire to meet friends and fit into peer groups.' Additionally, as these students are in the teenage to young adult range of age the possibility of tutoring as a means of beneficial 'child-minding' is not so farfetched. (Glasman 2010, p.59) notes that especially for teenagers, tutoring, may be seen by parents and stakeholders, as a means of keeping youth constructively occupied. In this setting, both academic as well as socializing opportunities may be provided without the strict rules that may govern mainstream schooling. In so doing, Oller and Glasman's (2013, p.7) 'intermediary spaces' may be created in which students have the chance to admit gaps in their knowledge, improve tasks they did not perform well and in so doing take a more invested approach in their own learning all in a comfortable and facilitative learning environment.

This type of learning environment may well be conducive towards improved and effective learning opportunities as students can make mistakes and learn from them without having to worry about official records and transcripts being affected. Choi and Park (2016, p.23) support the learning advantage of the supplementary classroom in noting that:

[s]ince shadow education does not award certificates or credentials but is a learning process that is largely enacted by the students themselves, students' educational motivations and aspirations seem to be another important factor affecting participation in shadow education.

This particular observation is an important way in which the shadow is indeed different from the mainstream and, in my opinion, represents a positive feature in the learning process of the students. The GoRTT may do well to investigate this characteristic of the shadow environment and see how this can be used positively in the mainstream setting.

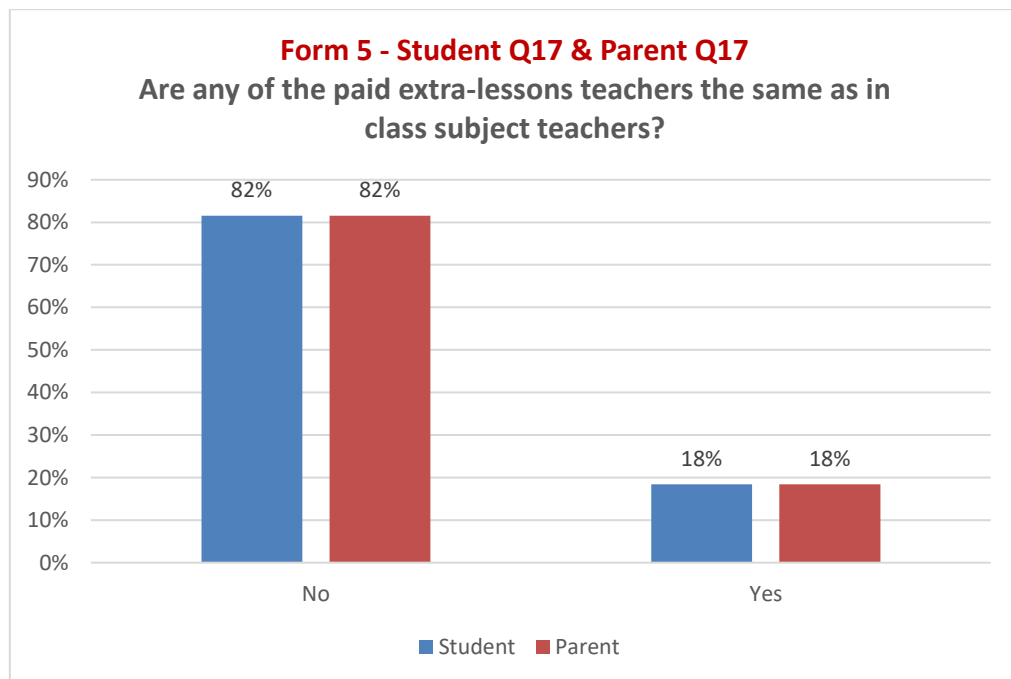


Figure 44

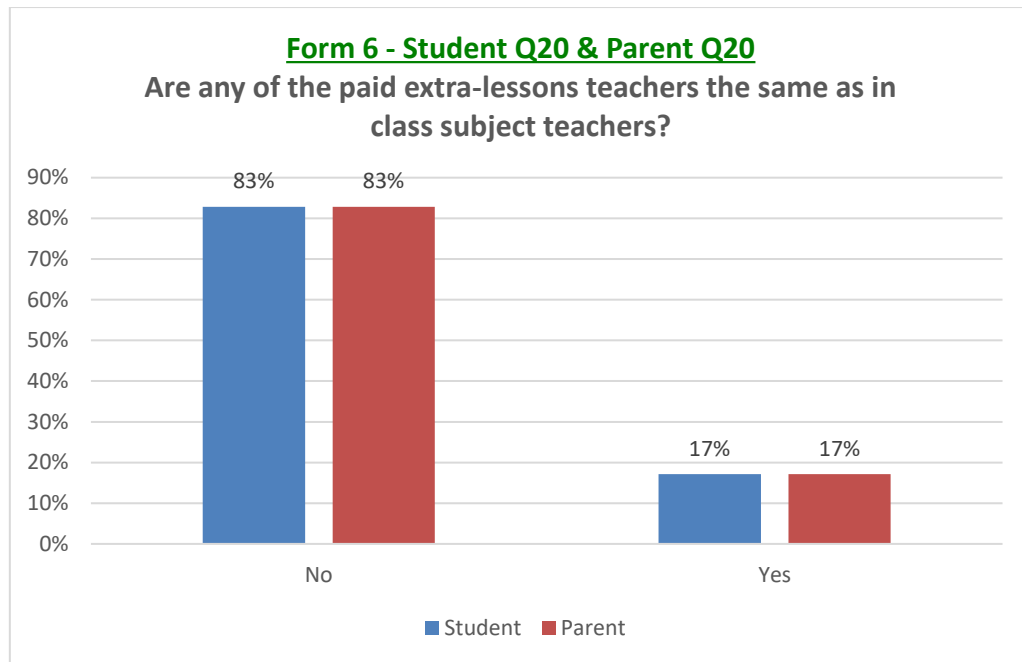


Figure 45

Figures 44 and 45 identify responses to whether the paid extra-lessons teachers are the same as the in-class teacher. Although 82% of form fives and 83% of form sixes said no, there is the small percentage of students that are taught by the same teacher in extra-lessons and in the mainstream, which raises issues of ethical implications and possible corrupt practices. Hallak and Poisson (2005, p.11), in their overview of ethics and corruption in education, concluded from their study of teacher management that supplementary tutoring:

has become a source of distortions, which adversely affects mainstream education (curriculum taught, schooling hours, behaviour of both students and teachers, etc.). (Hallak and Poisson 2005, p.11).

These ethical concerns are underscored particularly when the extra-lessons teacher is also the in-class teacher and, as the findings showed, this situation is present at Excellence High. Notably, teachers may reasonably argue that that, since they already know the students and the materials that have been covered during normal hours, they are able to work more efficiently and effectively than other tutors (Bray 2013, p.83). This kind of thinking may even find support from parents who may prefer their children receive extra lessons from the in-school teacher.

Another significant issue that may arise is that the extra-lessons teacher's successful reputation may be as a result of his/her mainstream schooling successes, particularly if those schools are prestigious. Again, this scenario highlights the significant role of stakeholders' perspective and perceptions, as parents and students may reasonably believe that such teachers know the syllabuses particularly well and are tuned into the demands of the education authorities (Bray and Kwo 2014, p.32). This may be a reality at Excellence High due to its prestigious nature and scholarship success. Interestingly, this may cause both the mainstream students of the teacher and external students to want to attend the teacher's extra-lessons. Again, issues of ethics will apply as the teacher really has control of his/her classroom, both in the mainstream and the shadow.

Notably, teachers who do not tutor their own students privately may not be inclined to deliberately reduce the in school curricula delivery. However, if they are supplementary teachers, there is the possibility that they may place a better effort into their private classes, in which revenue is directly linked to performance, than into their regular work which has a guaranteed monthly salary. Another possible concern is that if in-school teachers do work as supplementary teachers, there may be the subconscious, and conscious, assumption that their in-school students may also have access to supplementary classes, and so these teachers may not place the kind of diligence and application that is required to ensure effective learning and curricula completion in the mainstream classroom setting. All these concerns are directly related to teacher professionalism and ethical conduct, and in my view requires a GoRTT mandated supervisory policy and process to ensure that teachers are made accountable to ensuring effective teaching and learning in their mainstream classes.

4.2.2 RQ2 Interviews

Following are the responses and analysis from the interview questions that address RQ2.

4.2.2.1 IQ5 - “What are your views regarding the role of paid extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and your child’s/student’s success?”

Of the form five respondents, four out of six did not attend extra lessons: S5-206, S5-226, S5-386 and S-402. S5-206 noted that she focuses on her in-school work and approaches her teachers for any other help. Her parent, P5-206, remarked that this prestige type school should be able to completely help students and also that financially it was difficult to afford extra-lessons. This is in keeping with the view of Excellence High as a prestige school that is synonymous with academic excellence and so this parent is fair in assessing that the school should be able to help completely. Notably, the reality that she could not afford extra-lessons is also significant and represents the socio-economic challenges that parents face. Families in higher socio-economic groups have more opportunity to invest in tutoring, and commonly use this opportunity (Bray 2011, p.33). Interestingly, in the T&T context, at prestige denominational schools like Excellence High there is the perception that these schools have higher percentage of students from the middle-class to upper class backgrounds, who usually benefit from greater support systems at home (Baksh 1986). If this is the case, P5-206 may be in the minority, but nonetheless represents the reality of socio-economic inequalities that parents and students face in the education system. Bourdieu’s (1977) ‘cultural capital’ is underscored here, as the educational, social and cultural resource of a family will shape academic opportunities and successes.

S5-226 seemed interested to attend if given the opportunity to socialise. S5-386 also was curious to see what it’s like but her parent, P5-386, was clear that extra-lessons had no role in her child’s learning due to possible mental and physical stress as well as, the teachers at school were doing a great job and were always willing to help. This positive view of the teachers at Excellence High could also be a reason as to why the school is so academically successful and is viewed in such high esteem from

stakeholders as well as the public. P5-402 does not send his daughter for lessons but admitted to doing so at the primary level and was shocked at the unethical behaviour of the teacher since the in-class teacher was the extra-lessons teacher. Although they felt pressured to attend extra-lessons that time, the experience has taught him and his daughter to make the in-school teachers more accountable. However, in closing he did admit that he would recant if his daughter asks to attend once more.

The two form five students who did attend extra lessons, were clear in their belief that it was beneficial as it ensured revision, better understanding and past paper practice. S5-204 stated that:

[f]or me it's a really good experience since I get to do over work and also more revision. The lessons teachers seem to move faster as well, and we get more interaction with past papers than in school.

Her parent P5-204 highlighted the revision aspect and the ability to fill gaps that may occur in school. Both students, together with their parents, were convinced that it was critical to their effective learning and success. Interestingly, extra-lessons were viewed as critical to revision, which reasonably suggests that the content may have been initially covered in the in-school setting. This revision aspect may be perceived as an advantage of extra-lessons, but may actually be directly as a result of the mainstream schooling, which respondents may not take into consideration when assessing the success of learning in the extra-lessons environment. The revision factor and the ability to 'move faster' (S5-204) are really only possible if the content was taught before, most likely in the in-school setting, so the students may have the advantage of doing the work a second time. When taken in context with the findings of figure 36, which showed the form six students' and parents' responses to whether success at their prior form five CSEC examinations was due to extra-lessons classes, 78% of the students and 77% of the parents either agreed or strongly agreed. This greater confidence in the role of the extra-lessons towards students' success could reasonably be due to the revision opportunity of extra-lessons that may have been facilitated by doing the topics first in the mainstream. Notably, the in-school teaching was not recognised as a pertinent reason for the fast pace of lessons and the all-important revision opportunities.

At form six, two out of the five respondents, S-6-782 and S6-797, did not attend extra-lessons and these two girls ended up gaining open scholarships after their final examinations, long after these interviews. S6-782 was clear that paid extra-lessons were not necessary as:

[t]hey are time-consuming and energy-consuming ...
They also have less time and energy afterwards to devote to assignments or study. In a school like mine, where the teachers go above and beyond to make themselves available, I do not see the need for lessons.

Significantly, S6-782 praised her teachers and commended their work ethic. Evidently her confidence was well founded as she later gained an open scholarship and so in her context, her rationale for not attending extra-lessons was fully justified. P6-782 was also of the same kind of thinking as her daughter and significantly showed support and agreement with her daughter's choice of not attending extra-lessons.

S6-797, the other open scholarship winner who did not attend extra-lessons, in her response noted that:

I was able to select subjects that I enjoyed, and teachers who cared about helping their students learn in a comfortable environment, I was able to achieve success without extra lessons. I did, however, use an extensive range of extra material (books, study guides, websites etc.) on my own when studying for exams.

Although S6-797 was so confident, her parent, P6-797, admitted that maybe her daughter should consider attending as a safety guarantee, but her daughter was very confident in her own ability and that of her teachers, and so she did not pursue extra-lessons. Notably, both P6-782 and P6-797 contradict Gauci and Wetz's (2009, p.8) suggestion that parents may opt for extra-lessons regardless of the student's needs as they recognised their children's ability and shared their children's confidence in themselves and their teachers. Out of the remaining three who attended extra-lessons, one got an open scholarship and one got an additional scholarship. At the time of these interviews which were prior to their examinations, these three felt that extra-lessons were critical towards reinforcement and effective learning through conducive teaching styles that may not be possible in the in-school environment due to time constraints and, or, conflicting teaching and learning styles.

The student and parent interview responses generally showed that those who chose to attend extra-lessons felt strongly that it was necessary for success, whereas those who did not, particularly in form six, were clear in their minds about the disadvantages in the form of extra-lessons being time consuming and exhausting together with the recognition of dedicated and diligent in-school teachers. Notably, these form six respondents had the benefit of their first external examinations in form five, and so their decisions to or not to attend extra-lessons would reasonably hinge on their previous experiences, that is their own context and perceptions. Interestingly P6-827 in acknowledging the reality of life noted that:

[w]hatever it takes to get the students prepared for exams. Life happens with teacher and students should not be compromised. They need to spend as much time to get prepared.

This situation is really important to note as, at Excellence High the staff is predominantly female and maternity leave is a regular occurrence. Thus, parents and students may need to make private arrangements if they realise that the replacement teacher, assuming there is one, is not what they may view as ideal. Regarding the successful learning that may occur in extra-lessons, respondents were clear that a great deal depends on the motivations of both private tutors and student coupled with the learning environment inclusive of the types and scale of tutoring and the pedagogic approaches.

The teachers' responses were far ranging. There was the recognition of the societal perception that *'only things that are paid for are good'* (T-1), hence the high value placed on extra-lessons. In T&T culture a high monetary value is placed on things that are perceived as valuable. I think that T-1 conveys this as students may not view the mainstream teacher as effective simply because they have not paid for his/her service. Interestingly the GoRTT pays all teachers in public schools, whether in government or denominational schools, so that citizens will have access to free primary and secondary education. However, the culturing of some in society may dictate that only if they pay will the teacher deliver effectively. Interestingly, the concept of the stakeholders' perceptions and culturing is significant in this finding as

this type of preconceived idea from stakeholders can be a deterrent to effective learning in the mainstream setting.

There was also the acknowledgement of different teaching and learning styles that may benefit the children. T-4 admitted to attending extra-lessons herself, when she was a student, to ensure a guarantee of success, but further stated that she had no time for extra-curricular activities. T-5, with 17 years' experience, noted that:

[i]n a school like ours which is so competitive academically parents see the need for that extra push. In order for students to get the scholarships they have to make that mark higher than the other person. Tertiary education is very expensive and parents want to get every advantage. There are no laws preventing extra-lessons. The extra-lessons exist because of the school system. It goes hand in hand.

This response alone represents some findings in research mentioned before where the extra-lessons system seems an indispensable part of the school-system, parallel but dependent (Hartmann 2013, p.3). Furthermore, the prestige and academically excellent nature of the school is highlighted and even suggested as the reason for the extra-push. This finding is in line with the assertion that prestige orientation prompts parents to spend more on shadow education whether it is beneficial or not (Lee and Shouse 2011, p.221). Significantly, the absence of policy and legal implications for teachers are mentioned to point out that there are no prohibitions regarding this extra-lessons practice. In my view, this may even be seen as a facilitator of extra-lessons.

Many teachers agreed though, that some students may need the remedial help as well as extra practice, and students should avail themselves once it is a positive contributor towards effective learning and success. Notably, T-8, with six years' experience, was categorical in voicing that lessons do not contribute to effective learning, but it does help gain academic success. This distinguishing factor is in keeping with the ideology of effective learning as Freire's (1985, p.106) '*process of conscientization*' in which students can become active in transforming their understandings by using the critical nature of their consciousness in their thinking, learning experiences, interactions and actions. Thus, learning can be broad based from the social, cultural, emotional, physical and psychological aspects and not only academic success.

T-10, with 15 years' experience, also reminded of the possible negative impact of extra-lessons to the classroom setting in noting that '*[s]ome of them because of extra-lessons they do not pay as good attention as they should in class.*' Whether it's is due to fatigue or inattentive approach, extra-lessons can facilitate both students and teachers to '*relax*' (de Silva 1994, p.5) and so may present real challenges to effective learning in the mainstream setting. However, the possibility exists that the mainstream curriculum may not be taught in the same order of the extra-lessons curriculum for corresponding subjects and so may prove difficult for the students to keep up. Furthermore, the mainstream teacher is now challenged to deal with this situation. These disparities and challenges in the mainstream classroom setting that may be experienced by both teacher and students, due to the extra-lessons influence, may now present real teaching and learning challenges, and so negatively affect effective teaching and learning.

T-12, the once former Excellence High student, also brought in the notion of fear of being bullied by in-school classmates, and so the extra-lessons may provide that comfortable one on one comfort with a teacher of the student's choice and liking and so facilitate positive staff-student relationships towards healthy education (Rampersad 2002, p.2). Oller and Glasman (2013, p.7) made mention of this type '*intemmediary space*' that benefits children's learning. Furthermore, in these supplementary classes, teachers can limit their class size, which may positively affect teaching and learning (Bray 2013, p.18). This type of smaller class size that facilitates tutoring rather than a repetition of the school experience is supported by T-14, of 14 years' teaching experience, which she thinks is more beneficial than the large class extra-lessons practice.

ST-1, with 30 odd years' experience, in recognising the excellent quality of teaching of Excellence High, cogently posited that:

[e]verybody takes extra lessons so why is it that our girls will still get a lot more scholarships. It means that there is a foundation here that maybe a lot of parents and students do not recognise.

This is really a notable contribution, from a quite experienced teacher of 30 years at Excellence High, as over its long history the reality of scholarships success is

synonymous with Excellence High. Evidently, this research also shows open scholarship winners who never attended extra-lessons and, in their responses, lauded the work ethic of their teachers. Thus, there is support for the teaching expertise at the school especially when taken in conjunction with the findings of figure 35. Figure 35 showed students' views regarding the in-school teaching and their prior examination success and 54% of students and 63% of parents either strongly agreed or agreed. These figures do represent a good measure of confidence in the in-school teaching and while ST-1 may think that parents and students do not recognise the valuable foundation, I think that the prestige nature and academic successes of the school speak volumes in terms of parents' perception. However, in wanting to have that competitive advantage, they may seek out extra-lessons opportunities (Brunton 2002, p.167).

ST-2, with 30 years' experience, in her managerial role at the school also noted that although she personally does not promote extra-lessons, it really depends on what happens in the classroom as if students feel they are being short-changed; they may choose to go externally. ST-4, who is also a mother, acknowledges that her position on extra-lessons has changed as her own children have benefitted due to consolidation of the work undertaken in extra-lessons classes. Again, this raises the issue of extra-lessons affording the opportunity for consolidation and revision, which may reasonably be possible due to the work that would have been done in the mainstream schooling. Furthermore, I would like to suggest that ST-4's experiences, as a senior teacher at Excellence High, positions her in an educationally advantageous position when it comes to determining how extra-lessons can be beneficial for her own children. As I discussed in chapter 1, in highlighting my own circumstance, this type of scenario is again characteristic of the advantageous opportunities of the educationally privileged, a benefit that the average parent does not have when it comes to determining the benefits of educationally advantageous opportunities. ST-4, with 17 years' experience, also recognised the benefit of that rigid structure continuing after school, socialisation opportunities and the possible scholarship advantage. In effect the desire for the students, and their parents, to achieve effective learning and success, heavily influences Excellence High's stakeholders' rationale to or not to seek extra-lessons, a clear point also highlighted in Brunton's (2002, p.167) research.

4.2.2.2 IQ6 Analysis - “What are your views on a teacher giving paid extra-lessons to students whom the teacher may teach in school?” and “Would you feel pressure to enrol?”

Among the form fives, all the parents’ responses included the recognition that this would be an unethical practice, as teachers should deliver 100% in the classroom setting. One of the students, S5-204, actually attends extra-lessons from two in-class teachers and she clearly stated that:

[b]eing in the school class I know that they do more at lessons. Especially pastpaper work. Yes. That’s why I am in the classes.

Her parent, P5-204, although advocating that it was unethical, disturbingly pointed out that:

the lessons is much better organised than the school class. Yes, definitely to make sure my daughter doesn’t miss out anything that the teacher may do in lessons.

The contributions of S5-204 and her parent P5-204, really underscore the possibility of unethical and corrupt practice. It seems as though the delivery of the mainstream curricula is intentionally undermined to ensure that the students feel pressured to attend the said teacher’s extra-lessons. Notably, it is apparent that the preparation and delivery for the supplementary class seems more organised and complete. In effect this is a situation of the teacher using the public mainstream classroom to ensure that his/her private classroom is successful, that is the systematic use of public office for private benefit (Hallak and Poisson 2002, p.33), which describes corruption in education. Interestingly, although P5-204 agreed that it was unethical, she still sends her child to the extra-lessons so that she would not ‘miss out on anything that the teacher may do in lessons’. This shows evidence of her feeling pressured to attend the supplementary classes, for fear of not completing the curriculum. P5-402, although agreeing that the practice would be unethical, he would leave it up to his daughter to decide since it may be a safety net that he can provide. The other form five students were also of the view that the teacher should teach completely in the classroom. Of serious concern here are issues of unethical practices and corruption;

even possible exploitation, which have been examined locally by Trinidad Express Newspapers (2011) and on a global scale by van Nuland and Khandelwal (2006, p.126-135); Hallak and Poisson (2002, 2005) and Sweeney *et al.* (2013).

At the form six level, parents acknowledged that there may be a conflict of interest, that it was not acceptable and '*not just a conflict of interest but unethical*'. P6-776 indicated that there would be no problem as long as there is no pressure to sign up and he/she fulfils her duty in the classroom. She further stated that if she were to enrol her child in extra-lessons then she would prefer to expose her to another teacher with different teaching styles and methods to ensure all bases are covered, whether exam preparedness or remedial help. This finding is opposed to the thinking that the mainstream teacher may be in a good position to deliver the extra-lessons as they know the student and would have taught the content already, a position that I do not support as I feel that it legitimates exploitative and corrupt practices. However, while I do believe the mainstream is responsible for the effective education of the student, I think that P6-776 makes some valid points that relate to different teaching and learning styles and the need for the supplementary classes to be remedial or to hone skills.

All the form six students were clear that they would find it unethical if the in-school teacher gave extra-lessons to his/her own students. S6-782 said that:

[i]f an in-school teacher is giving lessons to their students of the same school, I would view their lessons as solely a money-making venture and their dedication to their classroom would be in question.

S6-797 noted that '*[i]t would be slightly concerning if a teacher held extra classes for students that he/she should already be teaching in school.*' S6-827 indicated that this situation happened to her peers and the syllabus was actually finished in lessons and not in-school. All students and parent stakeholders agreed that the mainstream teacher being the extra-lessons teacher for students is an unethical practice. However, S5-204's contribution clearly shows that it happens at Excellence High. These teachers might have an incentive to describe the curriculum as too much to complete in the mainstream class, and might deliberately slow down their teaching in order to ensure that they have a market for the after-school supplementary classes (Bray 2007,

p.55). Hence, I reiterate the need for government policy aimed at preventing this type of exploitation.

Teachers were overwhelmingly clear that they must deliver their best in the classroom and all, but three of the 15 teachers agreed that it was an unethical practice and a conflict of interest. T-13, with 6 years' experience, made the case for doing your best in class but if those students still sought your help outside of class then there is a case for extra-lessons. T-14 indicated that based on the context she may tutor the child and T-15 indicated that she may consider extra-classes but emphasised that her approach is exactly what is done in the school setting. This type of thinking, while some may try to justify, to me is a red flag, as I believe that a teacher must effectively deliver in the classroom using proper planning, technology, reflection and feedback processes. Surely, if the teacher realises that the student is still not understanding in the mainstream experience, he/she must improve the said mainstream experience, not charge the student for after school classes.

However, these findings may point to the type of rationale that makes teachers think that it's perfectly ethical to charge their in-school students for extra-lessons classes. If these teachers were willing to tutor these students free of charge then ethically, I would support them, however this is not the case. I would assert even further that this type of thinking unfortunately plays with the meaning of being a professional teacher, trying to justify charging your own students for extra-classes while arguing that it's your personal time, but not recognising that a professional teacher must effectively and fairly teach his/her charges in the mainstream setting. Thus, teaching must not only be viewed in the one dimensional aspect of mechanical or instrumental measures that are reflected in the learning achievements of pupils, but very significantly, the pedagogical aspect, which includes ethical and moral characteristics (Beijaard, Verloop, and Vermunt 2000, p. 751).

Among the senior teachers and administrators, three were clear that it was unethical to charge one's own mainstream students for supplemental classes and must not be done. ST-4 admitted a change in viewpoint where if a student, who repeats a subject that she would have taught them before, asks for her to give extra-lessons, she would. ST-5 recognised extra-lessons as supplementary however not at a charge, as she made

sure to recognise that the teacher is responsible to deliver the complete curricula to his/her students and if not in the normal school day, make provisions to complete it at no financial charge to all students. Of significance here is teachers' recognition of their roles and responsibilities. I believe that once there is the combination of pedagogical expertise, emotional and psychological intelligence coupled with appropriate ethics and values, the professional mainstream teacher will effectively understand and successfully undertake his/her role and responsibility towards his/her charges. Makovec (2018, p.43), in her research, adds that teachers define their professional identity and consequently, their role through their personality traits, thus the beliefs and characteristics of the person are also important to be an effective teacher who operates in an ethical manner. At Excellence High the respective denominational board has full say over the hiring, and removal, of teachers in their institutions. Thus, to preserve and continue their school's culture of academic excellence and the denominational nature of the school they have the autonomy to hire whom they view as ideal teachers for their school environment. It follows that this type of autonomy may positively affect the professionalism and effectiveness of the educational process and, in my view, has positively affected the continued success and academic excellence that Excellence High enjoys.

4.2.2.3 IQ7 - Analysis "What are your views on attending another teacher's paid extra lessons?" and "What if the teacher is also from the school?"

Among the form five, all students agreed that this may create problems among teaching colleagues and may even cause problems for the child in the classroom setting. The parents were of the same views and P5-402 warned that:

[i]t sets a bad example. The message being sent is that the teacher's not good enough whether subliminally or otherwise. Could leave a bad taste in the mouth of the teacher who is doing the full-time class in school. If they are mature enough, they may not take it to heart. But I can see some resentment being developed, especially if either teacher is unprofessional.

Among the form six, there was still concern about conflict of interest and possible problematic situations of the students involved. S6-776 noted that '*[t]his may prove to be a delicate situation if your schoolteacher finds out, depending on the circumstances.*' P6-776 was decisive in her detailed response in explaining that:

[s]ome teachers may feel threatened by another teacher getting an insight into their teaching methods and where they have reached in the syllabus as revealed by the child to the extra lessons teacher.

Hence a reasonable level of maturity and professionalism is required for this kind of setting to be beneficial to the student.

Among the teachers, it was clear that there were varied views. T-1 was particularly vocal about the capitalistic mentality overriding professionalism as he noted:

a few years ago, one of the other teachers in my department came to my class without me present and told the children you better come to my lessons because you will not get through in his class. I did not learn about it first-hand but from my other colleagues. That's ethically wrong and no paragon of morality can change this. But this capitalistic tendency is the cause.

Although many of the teachers acknowledged that it may be a sensitive situation that can potentially undermine one's colleagues, they may choose to give the student help based on the student's needs, context and, based on T-1's experience, for monetary gain as well. The question arose that if a teacher advertises extra-lessons then why refuse a student who wants to subscribe if a colleague is teaching her, as this may even be discriminatory to the student and this raises the issue of teacher professionalism.

Teachers are key to enhancing learning in schools and in my view effective teachers must actively seek to continuously combine knowledge of their discipline with their pedagogical practices together with practising fair and ethical behaviour. Essentially teachers should lead by example and significantly remember that they are there to help the students learn in the best way possible. It follows, that teachers may require substantially more knowledge and evolving skills if they are to prepare diverse students for the challenges of framing problems; finding, integrating and synthesizing information; creating new solutions; learning on their own; and working cooperatively

(Darling-Hammond 1997, p.154). Thus, mainstream teachers need to adopt this type of professionalism regardless of whether their students are in supplementary classes. These in-school teachers must have clearly defined objectives, keep their students actively involved and continuously check their student's progress (Elliott *et al.* 2000, p.5). This entails recognising the individual abilities of students and matching them with appropriate pedagogical technique. However, with large classes of thirty-five odd this may very well prove difficult and so there is value in recognising that students may need to pursue help that may be pedagogically beneficial to them. Thus, the overarching agreement is that professionalism must be foremost such that issues of conflict and undermining do not arise. Of course, this is all theoretical; in practice if the said student gains a scholarship, and the student praises one teacher more than, or at the expense of, the other, can the teachers still be professional?

4.2.2.4 IQ9 - Analysis "Do you attend paid extra lessons?"

The two form five students, and their parents, who attended extra-lessons, admitted that the price was costly, and the hours were long and tiring. This student fatigue and exhaustion is characteristic of students who attend supplementary tutoring especially when they go straight from mainstream classes to extra-lessons (Bray 2003, p.34). Additionally, they pointed out that they were sometimes late with school deadlines but noted that the in-school teachers would accept with no penalty. Interestingly, neither of these two students mentioned benefits of the extra-lessons at this point. Thus, it appears that students may feel pressured into accepting that extra-lessons provides an advantage regardless of the possible negative effects in the form of exhaustion and missing in-school deadlines. They may be realistically looking at the future "big picture" of educational success. Luk (2003, p.26), in the Chinese context, supports this finding in noting that '*most parents and teachers still believe that winning in examinations is the destination of education.*' Education does play a crucial role in deciding students' career opportunities and life possibilities; thus parents and students may reasonably consolidate all means possible to help their children gain an edge in the learning process, particularly in the form of extra-lessons. Both sets of parents were clear that although the cost was high it was a necessary

expenditure to ensure their child's success. Of the four that did not attend, two parents were clear that they could not afford it, a reality that Brunton (2002, p.174) identified with economic status being a strong variable determining extra-lessons attendance. The other two parents acknowledged that their child has always been performing well academically, even better than those who attend extra-lessons. Again, this is another example from the data that supports the excellent work ethic of the teachers at Excellence High, as these students sought no supplementary classes and so their success could be attributed to the mainstream environment at Excellence High.

At the form six level two students were clear that they did not need extra-lessons and performed well in school and ultimately, they both ended up attaining open scholarships. Of the three that attended, two parents found it costly. Zhou and Wang (2015, p.365) talks about the consequences of the cost of private tutoring in noting that:

[s]tudents' access to tutoring and the intensity of their participation are determined by the purchasing power of their families. Thus, the gap between rich and poor families is likely to be exacerbated by the differential access to and use of profit-driven private tutoring.

Thus, the two parents who found the extra-lessons costly but still chose to pay for them may have succumbed to the pressure of wanting to make sure that they provided the best opportunities within, maybe even a little out of, their means to help their children attain educational success. Realistically, there will be many other parents who may want to provide supplementary help for their children but could not afford, a real admonition of the shadow education system. However, this really places the emphasis on the effectiveness of the mainstream schooling processes to ensure that they are of the highest quality for all students.

P6-776 instructively said that:

[c]ost was reasonable on an individual basis but when you calculate the tax-free earnings of the lessons teacher it is mind-blowing.

These tax-free earnings represent the capitalistic effect in the form of market control that the extra-lessons teacher has where he/she is in charge of the entire process to

determine how successful his/her classes are. Thus, the perceived most valued extra-lessons teacher may not only claim higher tuition (Hallak and Poisson 2007, p.263) but also be expected to have the highest cost. This finding is in keeping with T-1, with 8 years' experience, in stating that:

[w]hen you're getting money for a service that you are in control over when you become your own boss suddenly you place more value on that. I am in control I am in charge. But when you are in school you have a supervisor also a head of department and the principal. When I give lessons I am in charge I devote all of my time to this. And this stems from the capitalism again.

Of course, this is directly linked to issues of exploitation and corruption as the extra-lessons teacher has full market control and really there are no checks and balances. All the earnings are tax-free and in no way measured against value for money. Another caveat regarding the perceived successful extra-lessons teachers is that the mainstream teachers who may not presently be providing extra-lessons may very well be motivated to start when they calculate the potential '*mind-blowing*' (P6-776) tax-free income that he/she could have full autonomy over in planning, preparation, delivery and practice. Really this is worrisome, particularly when remembering the issues of socio-economic status and differential access to education, when one analyses how much power and authority is in the hands of the extra-lessons teachers especially in light of GoRTT's (Strategic Plan 2011, p.xi) pledge of equality in education for all.

P6-776 further described how in her daughter's case, extra-lessons was time well spent due to the competence and experience of the extra-lessons teacher, which even made her review her stereotype of the lessons teacher. This is notable since there seems to be an acknowledged positive difference in the way the extra-lessons teacher delivered the learning content. Lochan and Barrow (2012, p.415) confirmed this in their research as they surmised that:

the approach to instructional delivery used in private lessons focuses a lot on individual attention. So the use of small groups and actual one-on-one teaching is a popular strategy used by teachers.

This raises the issue that teachers may change their teaching styles due to the extra monetary incentive, which they do not have in the mainstream setting. However, I

must acknowledge there are many limitations that mainstream teachers may face in the form of large class size and lack of technological facilities that may stymie the effective delivery of the curricula. Also, extra-lessons teachers have the power to limit the number of students in their class and so may choose an ideal number to facilitate the interactive and conducive learning environment that may increase the opportunity for success.

P6-776 also acknowledged the disadvantages in her daughter having to give up some extra-curricular activities, did not have relaxation time and:

[i]n doing extra lessons she did not get realistic or adequate perceptions of time management and balance to prepare her for life. In real life you can't put everything on hold in the pursuit of one thing. She was only able to do so because parents were able to take up the slack.

This response clearly demonstrates that this parent is consciously shielding her daughter from the real life experiences and responsibilities all in an effort to make the time available to attend extra-lessons. In so doing, I believe that her daughter is not being provided with the best opportunities achieve her full potential, knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will enable her to become a well-adjusted, economically productive and socially responsible adult (Rampersad 2002, p.2). However, the parent is well within her right to decide that extra-lessons is the priority as she may believe that it can ensure academic success in their context. In-fact she may even challenge my position and claim, in her perspective, that as a parent she is primarily responsible in determining the best choices to facilitate her daughter's effective learning and academic success by providing immense levels of support. Therein represents a major challenge that parents and guardians face in having to provide all round support for their children. In the today's world where in most families both parents work, it is indeed challenging to provide this kind of support. Actually, this is another way in which the high socio-economic status families are at an advantage in that they can provide these all round support systems geared towards ensuring their children's effective learning and academic success.

The three form six students who attended extra-lessons were clear that extra-lessons had them better prepared for class but turned out to be very demanding due to the

number of long hours. These findings are also supported in Bray's (2003, p.34) research, which recognises students' mental and physical fatigue. S6-827 was forlorn as she related:

[y]es, it does take a toll both mentally and physically. Most lessons are on a weekday after school, some the whole weekend. So as soon as the bell rings students have to rush to class to learn even more. Therefore, as soon as you come home in the night you just want to sleep but you can't because you have to do homework for the next day.

It does appear that some students see extra-lessons as a necessary pathway towards academic success amidst all the long hours, lack of extra-curricular activities and apparently a life of solely academia with little or no holistic or all-round development activities.

4.2.2.5 IQ10 Analysis - "Do you give paid extra lessons?"

T-1 was very clear that it was unethical to give paid academic extra-lessons as he questioned *'Do you think that there's anybody who can spend hours and hours teaching lessons and their school classes will not suffer? I don't.'* Nine of the sample of teachers, inclusive of senior teachers, gave extra-lessons and the primary motivation was financial. However, they assured that the extra-lessons actually enhanced their teaching skills, as they were better able to plan, deliver and assess children, although T-3 indicated that it was the same in-school teaching material that she used. T-3 went on to indicate that teaching students from different backgrounds also challenges and improves one's skills as a reflective practitioner. ST-5 helped her own students at no charge. The teachers who did not give extra-lessons were due to personal commitments particularly family life and having young children. However, most agreed that if they consider it in future, it would be for their own financial benefit. While many teachers may make the case for giving extra-lessons, I really would like to suggest that government policy might be the only objective way to manage this extra-lessons practice due to the range of ethical implications that exist.

4.3 Research Question 3 (RQ3)

This section presents and analyses the findings related to “**What are the perspectives of students and their parents regarding the opportunity costs of extra-lessons?**” that is RQ3. First the questionnaire data and analysis will be presented followed by the interview data and its’ analysis.

4.3.1 RQ3 Questionnaires

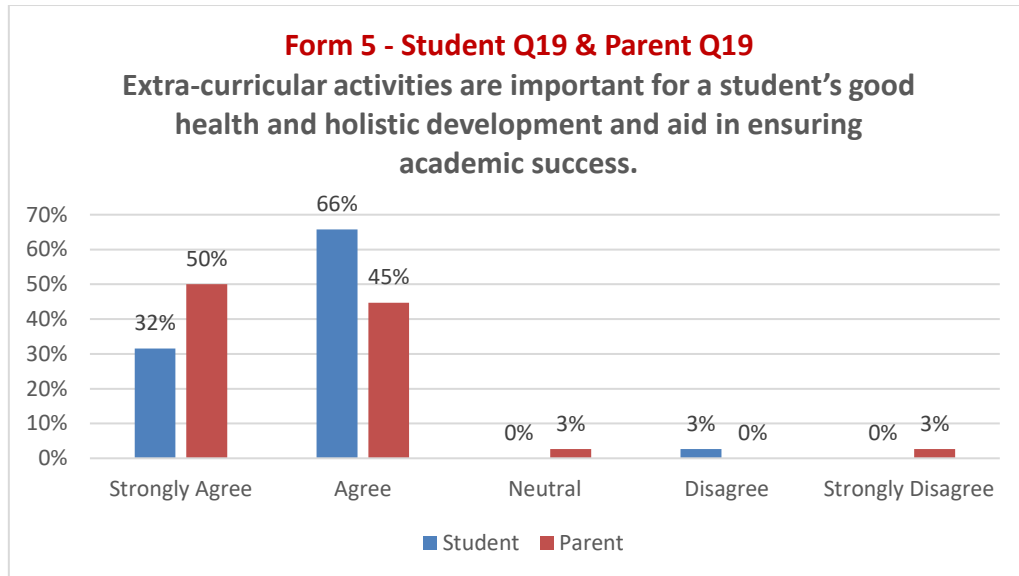


Figure 46

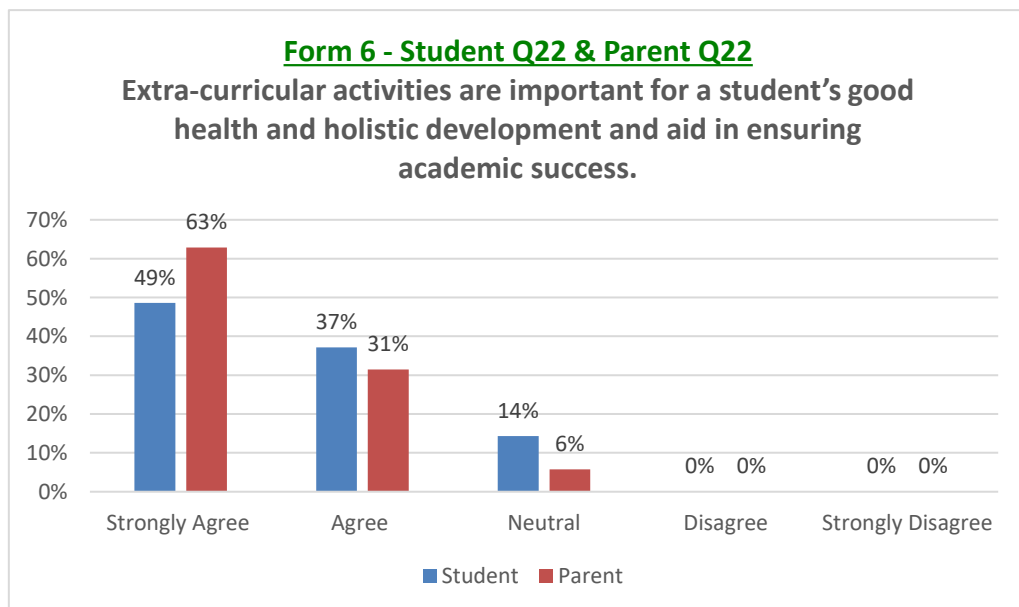


Figure 47

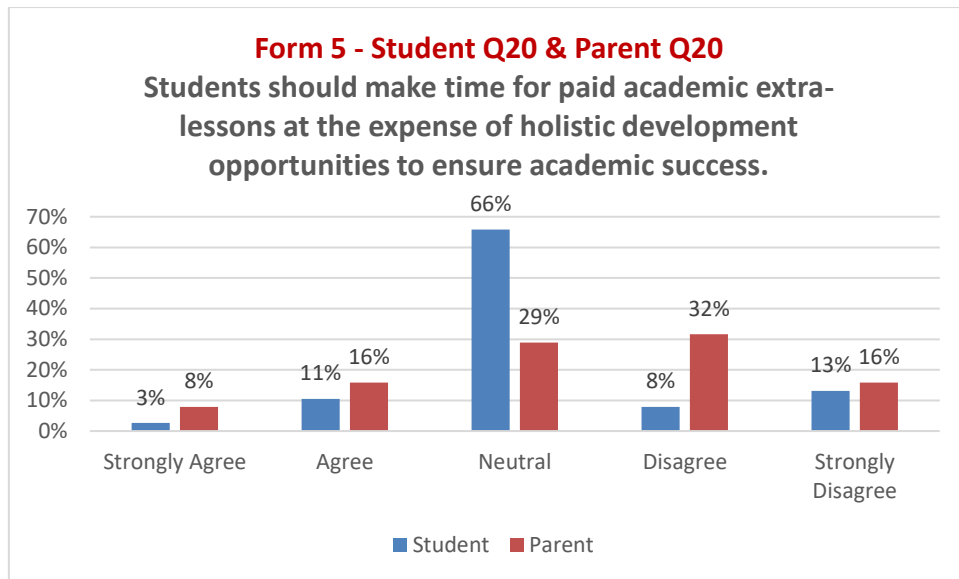


Figure 48

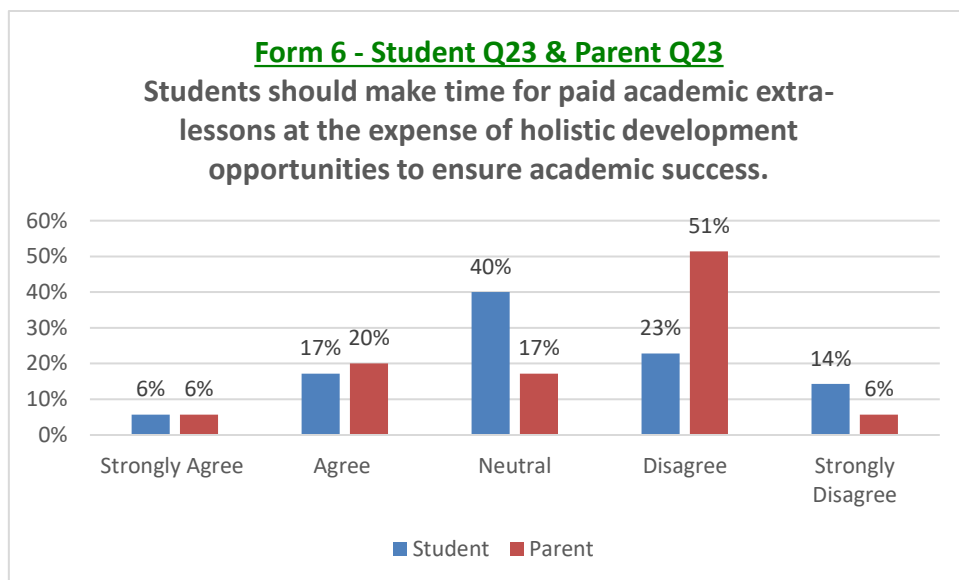


Figure 49

Figures 46 and 47 show that, both parents and students overwhelmingly agree that, extra-curricular activities are important for a student’s good health and holistic development and aid in ensuring academic success. This type of rationale follows in the data displayed in figures 48 and 49 where the majority of students and parents did not strongly agree or agree that paid extra-lessons should be done at the expense of holistic development opportunities to ensure academic success. However, I can immediately suggest that these may be theoretical answers since in IQ7’s responses the parents and students who attended extra-lessons lamented that they had no time for anything else. The following interview questions would shed some light on this assertion.

4.3.2 RQ3 Interviews

Following are the responses from the interview questions and their analyses that address RQ3.

4.3.2.1.d IQ4 – Analysis of “How do you view the role of extra-curricular activities towards achieving success?”

Among the form fives, of the two who attended extra-lessons S5-204 and her parent did not see extra-curricular activities as important towards success however, S5-332 noted that:

I enjoy being in the choir, a few school clubs and playing sports. I get a lot of exercise and relaxation. But I have to focus a lot on my schoolwork as well.

Her parent, P5-332, was also clear that:

[e]xtracurricular activities help to make my child physically fit and healthy which would help her to concentrate and focus more when it comes to schoolwork.

From the four who did not attend extra-lessons, S5-206 took part in house and sport activities at school; S5-226 enjoyed sporting activities especially Physical Education and spent much time outdoors at home; S5-386 plays sports which makes her happy and healthy and S5-402 enjoys tennis and music which she says is important to her balance and to have fun. Their parents also recognised the key role of relaxation and holistic development afforded by extra-curricular activities. In effect these four students were actively involved in extra-curricular and holistic type development activities. Whether or not these extra-curricular activities were done in preference to extra-lessons does not change the reality that both students and parents recognised their importance towards being healthy, balanced and happy. Massoni (2011, p.2) importantly highlights that:

[s]tudents that participate in extracurricular activities also showed positive changes in students self confidence, teacher perception, and greater confidence, and then developed positive school related adult attachments.

Hence, it is reasonable to suggest that these four students may be better able to approach their mainstream teachers, should they need to, to improve their learning experience. I believe that, this is worthwhile to further investigate in the context of

extra-curricular activities and how it may affect student's interactions with their teachers. P5-332 stated that:

[e]xtracurricular activities helps to make my child physically fit and healthy which would help her to concentrate and focus more when it comes to schoolwork.

P5-386, further explained that:

[e]xtracurricular activities helped to make my child a happy, healthy and well-balanced student. I think that it has increased her academic performance.

These two parents echoed the ideas of the other two form five parents and also the form six parents. Thus, students who are involved in extra-curricular activities, coupled with this type parental support and thinking, may be more confident about their learning success in the in-school environment. Significantly, at the form six level, every student and their respective parent, regardless of whether they attended extra-lessons or not, valued the significant roles of extracurricular activities to: develop the holistic and well-rounded student; create balance; develop discipline, time management and punctuality; and build teamwork, interpersonal relationships and leadership. However, all the while parents acknowledged that extra-curricular activities are valuable to successful university applications as universities the world over are seeking students who are all-round. This is notable as in addition to the academic, health, emotional and psychological benefits of extra-curricular type activities, the benefit of having these activities listed on a student's transcript to be forwarded to universities will make stakeholders take more notice.

Among the teachers, and similar to the form six stakeholders, there was consensus towards the key role of extra-curricular activities towards: teaching communication skills; parallel between extra-curricular success and academic success; holistic development; extra-curricular as an absolute necessity; extra-curricular success complements academic success; leadership, organisation and teamwork skills; provides real world kind of interaction and discipline; and time management. However, ST-1, with 30 odd years' experience, pointed out that:

it's critical to overall success and to balance your life and develop coping skills for many of life's problems. Unfortunately, many of them do not see the need and they focus on running from these lessons to those lessons.

These teachers' findings support the recognition of the importance of extra-curricular activities toward student all round wellbeing, high confidence and self-esteem and educational success (Rampersad 2002; Massoni 2011; Lunenburg 2010).

4.3.2.2.d IQ8 Analysis - "What are your views on students pursuing paid extra lessons at the expense of or in preference to other extracurricular activities?"

Among the form fives, the two students who attended extra-lessons noted that schoolwork comes first. However, from the other four S5-226 acknowledged she may also focus on schoolwork close to exams and her parent also reminded that she couldn't afford the extra-lessons. S5-206, though not currently in extra-lessons, her parent indicated that if she could have afforded, she would enrol her close to exams. P5-332 acknowledged that extra-curricular made her daughter well balanced, made her more focused on her schoolwork but ultimately schoolwork takes priority. Notably, S5-386 and her parent were of the view that the extra-lessons enhanced academic performance. P5-402 was, in my view, grounded in his thinking that:

[c]ertain things are important, family time, birthdays, ...
Sometimes I find that extra-lessons takes up too much valuable time. Sometimes is every subject area so no day is free including Saturday. You're building a highly stressed person who might be academically successful but unable to appreciate and experience what life is really about.

This kind of concern is real as the pressures of attending extra-lessons can weigh on the students and their respective families. An average workday is eight hours and students who participate in extra-lessons are expected to attend a school day of similar length and then proceed to extra-lessons. Thus, supplementary tutoring may dominate the lives of students and their families, thus reducing the time available for sports and other activities that are significant to well-rounded development (Bray and Lykins 2012, p.xi).

Among the form six there was consensus that although extra-curricular is important sacrifices must be made at examination time to ensure best use of time towards examination success. P6-776 aptly describes the reality of the secondary school examinations and the realistic and tangible examinations success in noting:

[e]xtracurricular are very important for balance, stress relief, relaxation etc., lessons should not replace them. Giving up everything else to focus on exams is not the best approach. However, if the time of the lessons of choice clashes with them then one has no choice since the purpose of extra-lessons is to ensure exam success and the chance of that exam will not come again - just a small window of opportunity time wise, so one would have to make the sacrifice.

This is in keeping with her position as a parent who consciously shielded her daughter from the real life experiences and responsibilities all in an effort to make the time available to attend extra-lessons.

The teachers acknowledged that the search for success through gaining scholarships might force students to forego extra-curricular activities, particularly around final examination time. This willingness or recognition to attend extra-lessons close to final examinations is characteristic of Bray's (2006, p.515) assertion of a clear relationship between extra-lessons and final examinations. However, this really results in students being in an academic setting Monday to Saturday for most waking hours of the day, which can lead to other psychological and emotional problems due to lack of rest and all-round development opportunities. T-9, who has a daughter at Excellence High, was quite worried as to the consequences of students essentially having no balance in their life as she noted that:

[a]s a parent of a lower school student as well I am concerned. Recently one of our open scholarship winners talked about how lonely and depressed she was and how she was a cutter, had no friends, did not talk to her teachers, and tried to commit suicide during school life. Imagine my daughter hearing this from an academically successful student. This child was not balanced, emotionally pained and distressed. Yet she was lauded as a success.

This alarming type of situation can be positively addressed through extra-curricular activities and pastoral care, particularly in the form of opportunities that can teach students how to be confident, improve self-esteem and, emotional, physical and

psychological health. Well-planned extra-curricular options for students can only redound to their physical, emotional and psychological benefit (Rampersad 2002; Massoni 2011; Lunenburg 2010). Interestingly, some of the teachers commented that the fact that Universities now look for extracurricular activities in their application might cause students to opt to remain in some form of extra-curricular activity. Notably, this option once again characterises the choice of an advantageous opportunity in the search for educational success in the form of University enrolment.

4.3.2.3.b IQ9 Analysis - “Can you say if you have observed student fatigue that may be related to extra lessons?”

Of the teachers, i.e. the 15 teachers and 5 senior teachers, all but three overwhelmingly agreed that they saw student fatigue and upon asking, extra-lessons seemed to be the common cause. Hallak and Poisson (2007, p. 259) warn about a *‘heavy workload due to cumulative effort of mainstream and private tutoring, leading to student fatigue.’* I myself, observe the forlorn students and upon inquiry realise the root of their tiredness is for the most part extra-lessons. Notably, ST-5 also pointed out that social media might be a factor in student fatigue as well. Interestingly enough, although I did not ask about this in the study, the reality of teacher fatigue also comes to the fore as those in-school teachers who go off to extra-lessons after school will also face the same challenges, however they have the benefits of monetary incentive, controlling their intake of students and scheduling their classes. Also, quite worryingly, they may be able to get away with underperforming in the mainstream schooling due to lack of proper supervisory and monitoring policies. Furthermore, aside from the issue of teacher supervision, legally in T&T, teachers are entitled to fourteen days sick leave and fourteen days occasional leave, that is twenty-eight days pre-approved leave, per academic year. Thus, teachers do have the legitimate, but not ethical, means of actually absenting themselves from school close to examinations time to conduct their extra-lessons classes and not have to worry about any salary deductions or job complications. Again, the issues of corruption and exploitation arise as key monitoring and supervisory challenges may develop.

Next, the final chapter of the study, Chapter 5, concludes the research by answering the stated research questions and then considers the contribution of the study to the educational process in the T&T secondary school context.

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter aims to effectively conclude the research under the headings of the respective research questions, while suggesting recommendations.

5.1 RQ1 - What are Excellence High stakeholders' definitions of effective learning and students' success?

The findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data present some very clear results regarding RQ1. Generally, the prestige denominational girls' secondary school, Excellence High, is seen as one, which encourages all-round and holistic development during the school day and also after school through extra-curricular activities. The school environment is viewed as one of very high academic performance. More specifically, firstly, regarding effective learning, stakeholders in the form of parents, students and teachers, seem to agree with the proposed definition of effective learning in the questionnaire, i.e. *“Effective learning means that students are able to fully understand what is taught based on their taught and applied experiences in their learning environments.”* This definition was proposed such that the layperson may be able to understand and determine to what degree they agree with the definition. Arguably, this may in some way lead the respondents' answer, however, in this context this was beneficial for comparison of the respondents' answers. Essentially, the definition is standard and so provides a viable measure of comparison from the respondents' answers.

Furthermore, the interviews allowed respondents to define and explain the concept of effective learning from their own perspective. Although it may be suggested that my proposed definition could influence stakeholders' own definition and ideas, I must submit that these interviews were done long after the questionnaires were completed. I really do not think that respondents would have had the time to remember such detail. In defining this concept of effective learning core issues of: learning for a better society; being able to pass examinations; focus and interest in the subject matter; having a comfortable and non-judgemental learning environment; healthy eating and sleeping habits; extra-curricular activities that are essential for a student's mental and physical health; teachers who practised lifelong learning; teachers using a

variety of teaching methods to reach each student; critical thinking; effective communication; critical engagement of the material; holistic learning; cooperation skills and team building; time management; application of concepts taught; and life skills inclusive of behaviour and etiquette. In effect, based on the findings, I submit that there seems to be consensus that effective learning requires successful curricula delivery by dedicated teachers who are lifelong learners, in a comfortable learning environment that includes healthy and motivated students who are encouraged to be critical thinkers and so generate informed, reflective and analytical decisions regarding academics and life's skills. This type of effective learning process may then be a true '*process of conscientization*' (Freire 1985, p.106), which resonates with Illeris's (2009, p.20) external interaction process between the learner and his or her social, cultural or material environment, and an internal psychological process of elaboration and acquisition.

Secondly, all stakeholders including students, parents and teachers, overwhelmingly view student success in terms of academic and scholarship success. Essentially there was the equating of student success with examination success. The role of the teacher towards achieving this academic success was seen as important, as they are seen as the one who must master the knowledge and impart it successfully, completely and interactively to the students, all in an environment conducive to learning and student comfort. In effect, the teacher, whether mainstream or private, is considered key to effective learning and student success. The research did show the importance of stakeholders' perspectives since if the in-school teacher is perceived to be falling short then the student and their parents, who could afford, sought external help in the form of supplementary tutoring. Interestingly, in the case of one form five interviewee, S5-204, extra-lessons was sought from the same mainstream teacher who was falling short. This scenario actually highlights the issues of professionalism, ethical responsibility and possible exploitation on the part of the teacher. It follows that this actually may be a real example of the legitimacy of possible unethical practices of teachers who may provide tutoring to their own charges by intentionally underperforming in the mainstream classroom (Hallak and Poisson 2007, p.266).

Although, the students did acknowledge the importance of all round mental, physical and emotional health for their effective learning and success, the defining factor appears to be academic achievement through examination success. Finally, to answer RQ1, respondents concurred that effective learning meant the teacher teaching in such a way that students can understand, internalise, synthesise and regenerate the knowledge. Students' success meant essentially academic success in the form of scholarship. This type of effective learning that ensures students' academic success, requires expert teachers who continuously learn, and successfully deliver the curricula all in a conducive learning environment that caters to multiple abilities and intelligences, in large part, to facilitate the academic achievement of scholarship.

In terms of relevant research, I think that T&T's MOE should pursue avenues to really accumulate parental data regarding profound concepts such as effective teaching and learning, and academic success, and how it meshes with the needs of T&T. In my own experience in the secondary school education system, many parents tend to go with the flow of the respective institution and are sometimes afraid to question for fear of victimisation and discrimination. Reasonably, those parents who are educationally and professionally empowered may be the ones who question and even challenge the status quo, a position that the educationally, socially and economically disadvantaged parent may not choose. Thus, this kind of potential research may really serve to inform policy makers so that in their communication to key stakeholders, such as parents, there may be clear criteria and guidelines for parents to look for when assessing whether their children are recipients of quality teaching that engenders effective learning and student success. If parents can better understand effective learning opportunities and the relevant context that applies to their child, then they will be empowered to choose wisely in relation to beneficial opportunities for their children's educational life and in reality, life itself. In my opinion, these opportunities should ideally be a combination of academic and holistic development opportunities that are provided in the mainstream educational experience.

5.2 RQ2 - What are the beliefs of Excellence High's stakeholders regarding the role of extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students' success at secondary school?

To answer RQ2, the research showed that the majority of stakeholders, parents, students and teachers, supported the role of extra-lessons as significant to academic success. In my opinion, this appears to facilitate the perpetuation of the view that the prestige setting, culture and ethos of Excellence High may be key factors towards these stakeholders' views. Given the perceived prevalence of extra-lessons in the T&T denominational secondary school setting, this research study could reasonably form the basis of developing a research model across the range of our denominational secondary schools, with special focus on the denominational culture. In 2018, these denominational schools accounted for 362 out of the total 369 scholarships on offer (Gov.TT 2018), which clearly shows that in terms of Excellence High's definition of academic success, these denominational schools are excelling at it. In so doing possible '*cultural models*' (Rinne and Fairweather 2011, p.3) could be explored to guide the understanding of these prestige denominational schools, and in so doing findings could be used to assist in improving educational practice.

The research further showed that the weekly hourly attendance at extra-lessons was high and although cost was a significant factor, some parents were willing to spend as they viewed it as necessary towards students' success. The reality of socio-economic disadvantages was present as there were parents among the interviewees that could not afford and so had to rely on the in-school system. I do believe that this is significant and warrants further examination, as socio-economic status does affect educational opportunities (Brunton 2002, p.165). In my view, research of this nature may be used to inform government policy and implementation, that can help the children that may be socio-economically disadvantaged and possibly culturally displaced, like I would have been when I was at school. As mentioned earlier, the GoRTT has no policy on extra-lessons and so there is much scope for providing meaningful information that can assist in positively changing this cultural and socio-economic reality.

In the T&T context where the GoRTT provides free primary and secondary education, I would like to raise the question of whether extra-lessons should be made illegal. It is not farfetched to penalise, discipline or even terminate teachers who engage in this practice as the government already pays their salaries. Although this may seem draconian, the reality of corrupt and unethical practices is evident when there are no accountability, checks and balances. In effect these teachers are a law unto themselves. Pertinently, this research clearly showed that the teachers who did engage in extra-lessons, all agreed that it was for financial gain and of those who did not, all agreed that if they started it would be for extra remuneration. Additionally, the findings, though statistically small, showed that in-school teachers did give extra-lessons to their mainstream students. While there may be support for teachers to supplement their earnings and there are no laws being broken, the ethical implications are debateable as the incentive of unchecked tax-free earnings can create a parallel private classroom that students may feel pressured or even be pressured to attend. In the T&T secondary school's educational setting, whether it's one student or many, issues of educational inequality and possible corrupt practices are untenable when examined against GoRTT Strategic Plan's (2011, p.xi) eighth principle, which speaks of being equitable so that students will benefit from high-quality learning opportunities.

A government's approach to this shadow education system particularly regarding the inequalities that may exist is indeed a reasonable indicator of their genuine concern. I reiterate that the GoRTT has no policy regarding extra-lessons; actually, there is really no acknowledgement of the extra-lessons phenomenon. Thus, I would like to support Bray's (2011, p.64) position that the governments that are really concerned would be wise to commence with the mainstream school systems rather than just treating the symptoms in the shadow. Hence, I submit that the GoRTT needs to really put its children first and undertake much needed research by examining the perceived and real failures of the mainstream schooling process and take the necessary measures to address such issues. Only then can there be a clear and rational focus on the development of appropriate policy to ensure equity when taking into consideration the extra-lessons paradigm such that the practice can be either made illegal, or implemented in such a way that it is licensed, monitored, measured to students' benefit and even taxed. Governments do have the power to take extra-lessons out of

the shadows and adopt a policy of taxation by establishing a legal framework for the implementation of supplementary tutoring. Bray and Kwo (2014, p.33) support that for *'practical financing and equity across sectors, governments need tutors to pay taxes as much as workers in other sectors.'* Significantly, Lee (2013, p.52) noted that in the Republic of Korea supplementary tutoring tax was estimated in 2010 to comprise 3% of Gross Domestic Product. In so doing, income from this avenue can be used in the improvement of the actual mainstream schooling processes as well as other aspects of national development.

Notably, the mainstream schooling system is supposed to provide equality and impartiality for all students. In my view, there must be monitoring and supervision policies that Heads of Departments implement under the instructions of the MOE to ensure that curricula delivery is done successfully and potential issues that may arise, whether from the teacher or student perspectives, are well documented, ventilated and positively dealt with. This type of supervision and monitoring will ensure that the MOE will be aware of the shortcomings in the mainstream schooling and so be able to develop and implement policies that can aid both the students and mainstream teachers. In T&T's secondary education system the extent of supervision used consists of clinical supervision, which is the term used to refer to the monitoring of teachers' curricula delivery by their respective Heads of Departments; and Staff Confidential Reports. However, in my experience these are really a formality for salary increments, and not tangibly used to determine or facilitate effective learning, students' understanding or effective teaching.

In addition to supervision and monitoring processes, I would also like to suggest research and exploration into the implementation of mentoring programmes in our education system. These may help teachers to become better using a more collegial and collaborative approach. In so doing, the whole concept of extra-lessons could now be reviewed or re-engineered so that the government's complement of teachers could be better prepared and used to undertake a more comprehensive effort in mainstream student learning. A real possibility can be the that the mainstream experience could now be improved using the time slot of extra-lessons but in an equitable manner that is available to all students, where the focus could also be on including holistic and extra-curricular type development activities. Furthermore, in

the extra-lessons setting tutors may feel that they have more control over what they teach, to whom, when, and where, which can lead to creativity which may be otherwise stifled by perceived bureaucracy in the mainstream setting (Bray 2011, p.64). Therein lies an example of how government policies can be informed by possible positives of the shadow education system towards the improvement of the mainstream educational process. This type of initiative regarding extra-lessons may go a long way to support advocacy that governments should explore the use of tutoring as a tool to improve equity (Dang and Rogers 2008, p.16).

Regarding effective learning and educational success, the research was clear that some respondents felt that the combination of the in-school education system and extra-lessons seemed the ideal for effective learning geared towards academic success, particularly in the form of scholarships. However, I think that the finding that two students who never took extra-lessons achieved the epitome of success, in the form of open scholarships, is indeed significant. In the year 2018 in T&T the total number of scholarships on offer was 369 with 186 open and 183 additional (Gov.TT, 2018). To place this clearly in context, out of a total of 8000 odd students who wrote the examinations there were only 186 open scholarships that could have been gained. In my opinion, these two students represent a reality that with their hard work bereft of the extra-lessons environment, they were able to gain two open scholarships out of a competitive field of 8000 odd students and placed in the top 3% of the country. This may reasonably raise the question: “*Are extra-lessons really necessary?*” as these two students opted not to participate and were able to excel nationally, while engaging in holistic and extra-curricular activities. This question is especially important if you are in the prestige denominational school setting, in which students compete for the few available places and academic excellence seems the default measure of success and the school culture seems supportive of extra-lessons as a competitive advantage. These two students’ achievements are indeed notable, and I suggest requires further research on a denominational and national level to see just how many of the scholarship winners are not part of the extra-lessons circle and students’ rationales for choosing not to participate in extra-lessons.

In this study, these two students were very clear that out of school time was for all-round, holistic extra-curricular activities and so were also very well balanced and

emotionally, physically and psychologically healthy students. They, themselves, spoke of the importance of extra-curricular activities, healthy eating, sleeping and resting habits towards their success, even though they had not written the examinations to achieve the scholarships as yet. Their confidence in their abilities as well as their teachers was also evident, together with the support of their parents who chose not to bow to extra-lessons pressure. For me, this particular finding is what really demonstrates the answer to students who effectively learned, in reality the way I think effective learning and students' success should ideally be. This distinction of "real" effective learning as opposed to learning for examination or academic success was clearly discriminated from their perspective. Hence, the goal of success and learning, teacher competence and the learning environment are issues that must be considered when defining effective learning, as the research pointed to the importance of context. I would want to add though, that regardless of context particularly for examination success, to me a healthy, happy and well-balanced student is the one who I feel is better able to be that civic-minded citizen who can successfully contribute to the betterment of society.

On the issue of teachers giving extra-lessons to the in-school students and their colleagues' students, clearly most stakeholders, including the teachers, agreed that this practice might be deemed unethical, serve as a conflict of interest and also possibly exploit students. However, the fact that some teachers did attempt to justify the practices, coupled with students acknowledging that they did attend in-school teachers' lessons, point to the need for further exploration of these issues so that the results can be used to inform appropriate educational policy development. I think that the GoRTT should consider making such practices illegal with established disciplinary consequences in the form of levels of suspension that may lead to termination if offenders do not reform. I cannot support any type of setting wherein the environment is there to enable corruption and exploitation of students, especially when the government keeps it in the shadows. In the T&T context, research in extra-lessons specific to corruption, unethical practices and exploitation can really open the eyes of the unsuspecting public and so may positively assist parents and students in decision making for the educational process.

The findings showed that some of the form six students saw extra-lessons as an opportunity to socialise which places emphasis on learners being social beings and the idea of learning as social participation (Wenger 2009, p.240). I think that extra-lessons as a possible extra-curricular activity that can be beneficial to students during the highly competitive environment, is also an area that needs exploration. This can be further investigated from the viewpoints of interacting with other students in an academic setting and/or the social interaction with students from other schools, backgrounds, experiences, and interaction with the opposite sex as well, to see how these factors may affect the learning process as there can be positives that may motivate students to learn.

Nonetheless, personally I think this is not a healthy practice as firstly this is the extra-lessons setting which I do not endorse and secondly, I think that the socialisation aspect should be done in a social setting not trying to sneak it in under the guise of education. This type of socialisation should be where the key role of extra-curricular comes in where students can work in teams of various types, and backgrounds, of peers, do other type of non-academic activities, show leadership, and even lose and positively benefit and learn from the experience. I believe that students know there are opportunity costs to pursuing extra-lessons as opposed to extra-curricular, and so they may consciously look for, or even create, avenues in the extra-lessons setting to experience extra-curricular benefits. Hence, it was worthwhile to examine stakeholders' views of the opportunity costs of extra-lessons, the third research question of this study.

5.3 RQ3 - What are the perspectives of students and their parents regarding the opportunity costs of extra-lessons?

The research showed consensus regarding the key role of extra-curricular activities towards effective learning and student success through all-round holistic development. However, most stakeholders supported the view that extra-lessons took first priority especially around examination time, sometimes at the expense of students' rest, relaxation and even school deadlines. Although two form six students who did not attend extra-lessons gained open scholarships, other stakeholders were of the view that regardless of all the long hours and lack of extra-curricular activities and

all-round development opportunities, extra-lessons is seen as a required pathway towards academic and examination success, not necessarily effective learning. Hence, there was clear support of foregoing all activities in search of academic success through attending extra-lessons, particularly at examination time.

Alarming, the voice of T-9 echoes in my head as she worries for her own daughter at Excellence High; currently in form two, stating that:

one of our open scholarship winners ... tried to commit suicide during school life ... This child was not balanced, emotionally pained and distressed. Yet she was lauded as a success ... Then they go university and do the same because that's all they know. Creates many broken people out there.

In my view, this type of situation severely compromises the ability to create physically, psychologically and emotionally healthy citizens that can meaningfully contribute to nation building. In my view, Excellence High, just like all schools, must adequately provide the educational environment inclusive of academic skills together with learning and teaching that promotes physical, psychological, and social well-being and so create the foundation for healthy development (Rampersad 2002, p.1). Thus, I propose that this kind of circumstance that T-9 worries about warrants investigation on a larger scale, particularly in denominational schools with the prestige setting of academic excellence, since students' mental and physical health and well-being seems at risk in search of this examination based academic success.

5.4 Conclusion

The guiding force of this research really was my positionality as a student, teacher, parent and educational researcher. Philosophically, I am of the view that our mainstream education system must reach students at their respective levels and effectively develop them from that point to become intelligent, civic-minded citizens. As an educational researcher, secondary school teacher and parent, extra-lessons has always concerned me, although I have never participated in extra-lessons in any form, whether as a student or teacher. Notably, as a student I spent my out of school time involved in extra-curricular and holistic development activities which I believe, contributed immensely towards own effective learning and success, firstly, as a

student and now, as a teacher, parent and educational researcher. At Excellence High, I observed students going off to extra-lessons, sometimes Monday to Sunday and in the formal classroom setting these students seem to appear disinterested as well as mentally and physically exhausted. Thus, I chose to undertake this research to investigate the prestige denominational girls' secondary school, Excellence High, stakeholders' definitions of effective learning, student success and stakeholders' perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving students' success and the opportunity costs that are involved. Moreover, as an educational researcher and reflective practitioner, I sought to add to the scant research regarding extra-lessons, in the T&T context.

A mixed methods approach was used as I saw the value of both the comparable quantitative data and the contextual interpretative qualitative data. The subsequent data analysis involving both, effectively showed patterns, linkages, correlations and even newly generated constructions. As an insider researcher I made sure that I was mindful of my foremost duties, responsibilities and ethical practices during the undertaking of this research. In so doing, I used Wellington's (2000, p. 54) mantra that '*ethical considerations override all others*,' since my integrity is foremost. This was especially important as the research involved my supervisors, colleagues, students and their parents, and so pertinent issues of trust and consent had to be ensured. These involved informed consent, right to withdraw; and privacy and ethics; confidentiality, anonymity and sensitive use of information. My effort to address all these in an ethical, practical and professional manner saw the details of the research and issues of anonymity and confidentiality, clearly outlined in the permission letters, in Appendix 2.

For this study I undertook to explore stakeholders' perspectives as I sought their frame of reference, which characterised interpretive research. Furthermore, I sought the stakeholders' views regarding the key concepts of effective learning, student success and the role of extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students' success and the opportunity costs involved. This 'grounded' (Glaser and Strauss 1967) information where theory emerged from stakeholders pointed us to understand the social reality of Excellence High's parents, students and teachers and to demonstrate how their views shaped their respective actions. I reiterate that the

GoRTT has not in any way addressed or acknowledged the extra-lessons practice. Hence, these Excellence High stakeholders' responses and ideas may very well provide a tangible foundation for further research particularly from a government perspective that may stimulate some form of positive change to the education system. Therein lies the possibility for the research to have a transformative effect with the aim to improve, a fundamental aspect of the 'emancipatory' (Habermas 1972, in Cohen *et al.* 2003, p.29) interest in educational research. As this research is informed by investigation, analysis and grounded information, it is my hope that the GoRTT can use the findings as a starting point to engineer policy and guidelines to improve equality and equity in T&T's education system.

Respondents generally agreed that effective learning meant effective curricula delivery by dedicated teachers who are lifelong learners, in a conducive and interactive learning environment that includes healthy and motivated students who are encouraged to be critical thinkers. In effect, stakeholders' definitions of effective learning genuinely reflected Illeris's (2009, p.43) concept of the '*the whole person in the social situation – it is a philosophical anthropology but also sociology and psychology.*' Significantly, this type of learning situation involves both the student and the teacher having meaningful, perceptible and constructive experiences. The results showed that extra-lessons is viewed as meaningful to achieving effective learning and students' success in the form of academic achievement such as scholarships, regardless of the possible unethical and corrupt practices. Notably, this academic success was differentiated against the concept of effective learning, which involved a more holistic approach to student life.

Furthermore, stakeholders in the form of parents and teachers, showed considerable agreement that the school's cultural and outreach activities played an important part in the educational experience at Excellence High. Notably, the denominational nature of the school was not seen as important, as the school's culture and prestige orientation outweighed the religious aspect of the schooling experience. These findings are representative of the notion that denominational schools continue to strive for excellence in all aspects of the curriculum and the social welfare of both its students and society (Singh and James nd, p.48). Some respondents would have opted for extra-lessons but could not afford and so socio-economic factors were evident

regarding the affordability of these supplementary classes. Socio-economic status and school culture, particularly in the denominational prestige setting of Excellence High, were found to be determinants towards stakeholders' views and their resulting choices for perceived effective educational opportunities such as extra-lessons.

The prestige orientation of the school was evident from stakeholders in the form of teachers' and parents' views of the school. ST-1, with 30 odd years' experience noted '*everybody takes extra lessons so why is it that our girls will still get a lot more scholarships?*' Notwithstanding, due to this competitive nature and academic excellence of the school, students looked for a way to get a competitive edge through attending extra-lessons. Moreover, some parents and students willingly accepted the opportunity costs of foregoing potentially valuable holistic development opportunities to attend extra-lessons in search of academic success, mindful of the possible negative effects. However, significantly, there was conclusive evidence of two scholarship winners who never attended extra-lessons but sought holistic development through extra-curricular activities and appeared to be well-balanced students. Notably, they also held their teachers in high esteem, and in my view, they seemed to ideally epitomise the concept of effective learning and student success, which points to the reality that extra-lessons was not necessary in their context.

The results of this study have provided informed, comparable and grounded conclusions regarding perceptions of effective learning, students' success and the role of extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students' success and the opportunity costs that were involved, in the prestige denominational setting of Excellence High. It is hoped that this research may serve as a valid contribution to the body of knowledge regarding shadow education and private tutoring that Bray (2011, p.14) speaks of. Moreover, I aim to also present this final work to Excellence High in the hope that that stakeholders, particularly teachers and administration, may be able to use it in a beneficial manner towards improving the educational processes at Excellence High. Furthermore, in the T&T context these findings can be used as a starting point to re-examine the formal secondary schooling experience with particular emphasis on the significance of all-round holistic development towards effective learning and educational success. In stating this, I must reiterate my ideology, which

values the role of holistic development based on my own experiences and observations.

Furthermore, in the T&T context, I anticipate that these findings can be used to investigate and generate a stronger foundation of evidence across similar type prestige schools as well as other public secondary schools. This type of undertaking will be invaluable in the development of relevant policy regarding extra-lessons, so that corrupt and unethical practices can be stamped out. In so doing, students must be able to benefit from a more accountable and comprehensive mainstream schooling experience that provides free pre-tertiary education. In my view, this mainstream formal secondary schooling process must equitably, completely and effectively prepare the students in its charge to achieve effective learning and educational success from a holistic standpoint, both for academic as well as life's challenges. In so doing, I reiterate my original position, that the GoRTT through '*authentic*' (Davis *et al.* 2015, p.65) impartial and effective learning experiences in our mainstream education system, must successfully develop our students into well-balanced, all-round, healthy, intelligent, and civic-minded citizens that can constructively contribute to nation building, that is, my view of effective learning for students' success.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – ETHICS APPROVAL



Downloaded: 31/05/2018
Approved: 02/06/2015

Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak
Registration number: 90265060
School of Education
Programme: Educational Studies (EDD/Educ Stds in Caribbean DL) - EDUR29 (ORACLE code = EDUR29)

Dear Sherell

PROJECT TITLE: Exploring stakeholders perspectives of the role of extra-lessons towards students success at Excellence High.
APPLICATION: Reference Number 002570

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 02/06/2015 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 002570 (dated 19/05/2015).
- Participant consent form 005483 version 1 (19/02/2015).
- Participant consent form 005484 version 1 (19/02/2015).
- Participant consent form 005482 version 1 (19/02/2015).
- Participant consent form 005485 version 1 (19/02/2015).

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 – PERMISSION LETTERS

Appendix 2a – Administrator Permission Letter

19th February 2015.

Member of Administrative Staff,
Excellence High School.

Dear Colleague,

Further to our discussion regarding my proposed research, I am now officially seeking your permission to participate in my proposed research study at Excellence High. Following are the details.

As a student of the University of Sheffield pursuing an Educational Doctorate (EdD), my proposed research aims to **explore Excellence High’s educational stakeholders’ understanding of student success and their perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving student success and the opportunity costs that are involved.**

As a teacher, professional and insider researcher, I am cognizant of my responsibilities when undertaking any form of research as ethical considerations are paramount. I am mindful that participants in the research study are entitled to, and must be informed about, the purpose of the study and publication of findings involved, potential consequences for themselves, and the need to give their informed consent prior to participation.

I would like to ask your participation on two levels, firstly to fill out the questionnaire and then subsequently agree to be interviewed by myself. I am also requesting your consent to audio record the interview. All data is to be kept and analysed by me and transcripts will be given for your perusal. In terms of confidentiality I am the only one who will know your identity and responses regarding the research and I would like to guarantee that I will keep this

information confidential. Upon successful completion of the research study, all recorded media will be destroyed.

I look forward to your cooperation and positive response.

Yours respectfully,

Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak

PLEASE DETACH THIS RESPONSE SHEET BELOW AND RETURN.



ADMINISTRATOR

Title of Research Project: Exploring stakeholders' perspectives of the role of extra-lessons towards students' success at Excellence High.

Name of Researcher: **Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak**

Participant Identification Number for this project: **A01**
box

Please initial

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet/letter dated 19th February 2015 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
3. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for Mrs. Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.
4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research
5. I agree to take part in the above research project.
6. I agree to complete the questionnaire provided.
7. I agree to be interviewed.
8. I agree for the interviews to be audio recorded.

Name of Participant (Administrator) Date Signature

Name of person taking consent Date Signature
(Lead Researcher)

***To be signed and dated in presence of the participant.
Once this has been signed by all parties the participant will receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form with the accompanying information letter.***

Appendix 2b – Principal Permission Letter

19th February 2015.

The Principal,

Excellence High School.

Dear Madam,

Further to our discussion regarding my proposed research, I am now officially seeking permission to undertake the research study at your esteemed institution. Following are the details.

As a student of the University of Sheffield reading for an Educational Doctorate (EdD), my **proposed research aims to explore Excellence High’s educational stakeholders’ understanding of student success and their perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving student success and the opportunity costs that are involved.**

As a teacher, professional and insider researcher, I am cognizant of my responsibilities when undertaking any form of research as ethical considerations are paramount. Moreover I have a continued role at Excellence High hence carrying out this research hinges on appropriately seeking the permission of all stakeholders. I am mindful that participants in the research study are entitled to, and must be informed about, the purpose of the study and publication of findings involved, potential consequences for themselves, and the need to give their informed consent prior to participation.

Once ethical clearance is given from The University of Sheffield, I would propose the research period to be March 2015 to July 2015. I would like to initially field questionnaires to stakeholders in the form of Teachers (*including Heads of Departments and Deans*), Parents and Students of forms 4, 5, and 6. Participants will also be asked to be interviewed and those who agree will then be

interviewed one on one as per their agreement. Most importantly I would like to interview the Principal and Vice Principal as well. Each participant will be written to ask for consent and stated guarantees of confidentiality will be also given in these letters. In the case of the student population both the student and the parents will be asked for consent. I do intend to ask to audio record the interviews as well. Upon successful completion of the research study, all recorded media will be destroyed.

As Principal you will be privy to all the questionnaire and interview questions prior to them being distributed. This is especially important to my research process as you had previously agreed to be my professional guide/advisor and in so doing, remain critically aware of the on-going research process.

I look forward to your cooperation and positive response.

Yours respectfully,

Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak

PLEASE DETACH THIS RESPONSE SHEET BELOW AND RETURN.



PRINCIPAL

Title of Research Project: Exploring stakeholders' perspectives of the role of extra-lessons towards students' success at Excellence High.

Name of Researcher: **Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak**

*Participant Identification Number for this project: **PR01***
initial box

Please

4. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet/letter dated 19th February 2015 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
5. I understand that all participation is voluntary and that it stakeholders are free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should stakeholders not wish to answer any particular question or questions, they are free to decline.
6. I understand that all responses will be kept strictly confidential by Mrs. Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak.
4. I agree for Mrs. Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak to undertake the above mentioned Research project at this institution which will be referred to as "Excellence High" and for the data to be used in future research.

Principal

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent
(Lead Researcher)

Date

Signature

***To be signed and dated in presence of the participant.
Once this has been signed by all parties the participant will receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form with the accompanying information letter.***

Appendix 2c – Parent And Student Permission Letter

19th February 2015.

Dear Student and Parent,

As a student of the University of Sheffield pursuing an Educational Doctorate (EdD), my proposed research aims to **explore our school's educational stakeholders' understanding of student success and their perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving student success and the opportunity costs that are involved.**

As a teacher, professional and insider researcher, I am cognizant of my responsibilities when undertaking any form of research as ethical considerations are paramount. I am mindful that participants in the research study are entitled to, and must be informed about, the purpose of the study and publication of findings involved, potential consequences for themselves, and the need to give their informed consent prior to participation.

I would like to ask both your participation on two levels, firstly to fill out the respective questionnaire and then subsequently agree to be interviewed (both student and parent) by myself. I am also requesting your consent to audio record the interview. All data is to be kept and analysed by me and transcripts will be given for your perusal. In terms of confidentiality I am the only one who will know your identity and responses regarding the research and I would like to guarantee that I will keep this information confidential. Upon successful completion of the research study, all recorded media will be destroyed.

I look forward to your cooperation and positive response.

Yours respectfully,

Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak

PLEASE DETACH THIS RESPONSE SHEET BELOW AND RETURN.



PARENT/GUARDIAN

Title of Research Project: Exploring stakeholders' perspectives of the role of extra-lessons towards students' success at Excellence High.

Name of Researcher: **Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak**

Participant Identification Number for this project: **P4-1**
box

Please initial

- 7. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet/letter dated 19th February 2015 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
- 8. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
- 9. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for Mrs. Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.
- 4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research
- 5. I agree to take part in the above research project.
- 6. I agree to complete the questionnaire provided.
- 7. I agree to be interviewed.
- 8. I agree for the interviews to be audio recorded.
- 9. I agree for my child/ward to participate in the research project.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant (Parent)	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent (Lead Researcher)	Date	Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant. Once this has been signed by all parties the participant will receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form with the accompanying information letter.

PLEASE DETACH THIS RESPONSE SHEET BELOW AND RETURN.



STUDENT

Title of Research Project: Exploring stakeholders' perspectives of the role of extra-lessons towards students' success at Excellence High.

Name of Researcher: **Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak**

Participant Identification Number for this project: **S4-1**
box

Please initial

10. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet/letter dated 19th February 2015 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

11. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

12. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for Mrs. Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.

4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research

5. I agree to take part in the above research project.

7. I agree to complete the questionnaire provided.

8. I agree to be interviewed.

9. I agree for the interviews to be audio recorded.

Name of Participant (Student)

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent
(Lead Researcher)

Date

Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant. Once this has been signed by all parties the participant will receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form with the accompanying information letter.

Appendix 2d – Teacher Permission Letter

19th February 2015.

Member of Teaching Staff,

Excellence High School.

Dear Colleague,

Further to our discussion regarding my proposed research, I am now officially seeking your permission to participate in my proposed research study at Excellence High. Following are the details.

As a student of the University of Sheffield pursuing an Educational Doctorate (EdD), my proposed research aims to **explore Excellence High’s educational stakeholders’ understanding of student success and their perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving student success and the opportunity costs that are involved.**

As a teacher, professional and insider researcher, I am cognizant of my responsibilities when undertaking any form of research as ethical considerations are paramount. I am mindful that participants in the research study are entitled to, and must be informed about, the purpose of the study and publication of findings involved, potential consequences for themselves, and the need to give their informed consent prior to participation.

I would like to ask your participation on two levels, firstly to fill out the questionnaire and then subsequently agree to be interviewed by myself. I am also requesting your consent to audio record the interview. All data is to be kept and analysed by me and transcripts will be given for your perusal. In terms of confidentiality I am the only one who will know your identity and responses regarding the research and I would like to guarantee that I will keep this

information confidential. Upon successful completion of the research study, all recorded media will be destroyed.

I look forward to your cooperation and positive response.

Yours respectfully,

Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak

PLEASE DETACH THIS RESPONSE SHEET BELOW AND RETURN.



TEACHER

Title of Research Project: Exploring stakeholders' perspectives of the role of extra-lessons towards students' success at Excellence High.

Name of Researcher: **Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak**

Participant Identification Number for this project: T-1 *Please initial box*

13. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet/letter dated 19th February 2015 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
14. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
15. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for Mrs. Sherell Bachoo-Ramsewak to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.
4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research
5. I agree to take part in the above research project.
6. I agree to complete the questionnaire provided.
7. I agree to be interviewed.
8. I agree for the interviews to be audio recorded.

Name of Participant (Teacher) Date Signature

Name of person taking consent (Lead Researcher) Date Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant. Once this has been signed by all parties the participant will receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form with the accompanying information letter.

APPENDIX 3 – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Appendix 3a – Principal/Administration Interview

ADMINISTRATION INTERVIEW

These questions are focused on students in the examination classes of forms 5 and 6.

1. What is your understanding of effective learning?
2. What are your views regarding a successful student at this school?
3. How do you view the role of the teacher regarding achieving effective learning and student success?
4. How do you view the role of extra-curricular activities towards achieving student success?
5. What are your views regarding the role of paid extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students' success?
6. What are your views on giving paid extra-lessons to students whom you may teach in school?
7. What are your views on giving paid extra lessons to students who may currently be taught by another teacher at this school?
8. What are your views on students pursuing paid extra lessons at the expense of or in preference to other extra-curricular activities?
9. Can you say if you have observed student fatigue that may be related to extra lessons?

Appendix 3b – Teacher Interview

TEACHER INTERVIEW

These questions are focused on students in the examination classes of forms 5 and 6.

1. How long have you been a teacher?
2. What is your understanding of effective learning?
3. What are your views regarding a successful student at this school?
4. How do you view the role of the teacher regarding achieving effective learning and student success?
5. How do you view the role of extra-curricular activities towards achieving student success?
6. What are your views regarding the role of paid extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and students' success?
7. What are your views on giving paid extra-lessons to students whom you may teach in school?
8. What are your views on giving paid extra lessons to students who may currently be taught by another teacher at this school?
9. What are your views on students pursuing paid extra lessons at the expense of or in preference to other extra-curricular activities?
10. Can you say if you have observed student fatigue that may be related to extra lessons?
11. Do you give paid extra lessons?

IF YES

- What is/are your motivation(s) for giving paid extra-lessons?
- How does paid extra lessons affect your in-school curriculum delivery.

IF NO

- Why?
- Would you consider giving paid extra lessons in the future?

Appendix 3c – Parent Interview

PARENT INTERVIEW

1. What is your understanding of effective learning?
2. What are your views regarding a successful student at this school?
3. How do you view the role of the teacher regarding achieving effective learning and your child's success?
4. How do you view the role of extra-curricular activities towards achieving your child's success?
5. What are your views regarding the role of paid extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and your child's success?
6. What are your views on your child's in school teacher giving paid extra-lessons?
 - Would you feel pressure to enrol your child?
7. What are your views on your child attending another teacher's paid extra lessons?
 - What if the teacher is also from the school?
8. What are your views on your child pursuing paid extra lessons at the expense of or in preference to other extra-curricular activities?
9. Does your child attend paid extra lessons?

IF YES

- How would you describe the time spent?
- How would you describe the cost?
- Can you say if your child has experienced fatigue that may be related to extra lessons?

IF NO

- Why?
- Do you feel that your child will be disadvantaged in any way?

Appendix 3d – Student Interview

STUDENT INTERVIEW

1. What is your understanding of effective learning?
2. What is your view of a successful student at this school?
3. How do you view the role of your school teachers regarding achieving effective learning and your success?
4. How do you view the role of extra-curricular activities towards achieving your success?
5. What are your views regarding the role of paid extra-lessons in achieving effective learning and your success?
6. What are your views on your in school teacher giving paid extra-lessons?
 - Would you feel pressure to enrol?
7. What are your views on attending another teacher's paid extra lessons?
 - What if the teacher is also from the school?
8. What are your views on pursuing paid extra lessons at the expense of or in preference to other extra curricular activities?
9. Do you attend paid extra lessons?

IF YES

- For how many subjects out of a total of how many done at school?
- How many hours per week?
- How would you describe the cost?
- Can you say if you have experienced fatigue that may be related to extra lessons?
- How does paid extra lessons affect your in class experience and school deadlines?

IF NO

- Why?
- Do you feel disadvantaged in any way?

APPENDIX 4 – QUESTIONNAIRES

Appendix 4a – Form 5 - Student Questionnaire

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

PARTICIPANT -

This research aims to explore understandings of effective learning, student success and perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving students' success and the opportunity costs that may be involved.

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE.

Please complete this survey. You may place a tick in the relevant column, **eg. ✓**, and where indicated circle YES or NO.

STATEMENT or QUESTION	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
At this school I have an all-round and holistic educational experience.					
Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities during the school day.					
Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities after the end of the school day.					
The school's cultural and outreach activities play an important part in my educational experience.					
The school's religious teachings play an important part in my educational experience.					
The environment at this school is of a very high academic performance and achievement.					
Effective learning means that students are able to fully understand what is taught based on their taught and applied experiences in their learning environments.					
Effective learning requires the intervention of expert teachers.					
Scholarships are a measure of academic success at this school.					
My in school teachers provide an ideal learning environment to ensure academic success and effective learning opportunities.					
I am fully satisfied with the curriculum delivery of my teachers in school, towards achieving academic success.					
Do you attend paid academic extra-lessons? YES NO					
If YES, how many hours per week? _____					
I feel that it is necessary to attend extra-lessons to ensure academic success.					
I attend paid academic extra-lessons just for revision.					
I attend paid academic extra-lessons because my parents feel that it is necessary for my educational success.					
I see extra-lessons as an opportunity to socialise .					
Are any of your paid extra-lessons teachers the same as your in school subject teachers? YES NO					
A school teacher is responsible for the complete and effective delivery of the curriculum in school to their respective charges to ensure effective learning and academic success.					
Extra-curricular activities are important for a student's good health, holistic development and aid in ensuring effective learning and academic success.					
Students should make time for paid academic extra-lessons at the expense of holistic development opportunities to ensure effective learning and academic success.					
Additional Comments:					
Would you be willing to be interviewed by the researcher regarding this research? YES NO					

Appendix 4b – Form 5 - Parent Questionnaire

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

PARTICIPANT -

This research aims to explore understandings of effective learning, student success and perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving students' success and the opportunity costs that may be involved.

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE.

Please complete this survey. You may place a tick in the relevant column, **eg. ✓**, and where indicated circle YES or NO.

STATEMENT or QUESTION	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My child has all-round and holistic educational experience at school.					
Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities during the school day.					
Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities after the end of the school day.					
The school's cultural and outreach activities play an important part in my child's educational experience.					
The school's religious teachings play an important part in my child's educational experience.					
The environment at this school is of a very high academic performance and achievement.					
Effective learning means that students are able to fully understand what is taught based on their taught and applied experiences in their learning environments.					
Effective learning requires the intervention of expert teachers.					
Scholarships are a measure of academic success at this school.					
The in school teachers provide an ideal learning environment to ensure academic success and effective learning opportunities.					
I am fully satisfied with the curriculum delivery of the teachers in school, towards achieving my child's academic success through effective learning.					
Does your child attend paid academic extra-lessons? YES NO					
If YES, how many hours per week? _____					
What is the average cost per hour? _____					
This financial cost of academic extra-lessons is affordable.					
Paid academic extra-lessons are essential to my child's effective learning and success.					
My child attends paid academic extra-lessons just for revision.					
My child attends paid academic extra-lessons because as a parent I feel that it is necessary for educational success.					
I see extra-lessons as an opportunity for my child to <u>socialise</u> .					
Are any of the paid extra-lessons teachers the same as in class subject teachers? YES NO					
A school teacher is responsible for the complete and effective delivery of the curriculum in school to their respective charges to ensure effective learning and academic success.					
Extra-curricular activities are important for a student's good health and holistic development and aid in ensuring academic success.					
Students should make time for paid academic extra-lessons at the expense of holistic development opportunities to ensure academic success.					
Additional Comments:					
Would you be willing to be interviewed by the researcher regarding this research? YES NO					

Appendix 4c – Form 6 - Student Questionnaire

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

PARTICIPANT -

This research aims to explore understandings of effective learning, student success and perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving students' success and the opportunity costs that may be involved.

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE.

Please complete this survey. You may place a tick in the relevant column, eg. ✓, and where indicated circle YES or NO.

STATEMENT or QUESTION	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
At this school, I have an all-round and holistic educational experience.					
Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities during the school day.					
Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities after the end of the school day.					
The school's cultural and outreach activities play an important part in my educational experience.					
The school's religious teachings play an important part in my educational experience.					
The environment at this school is of a very high academic performance and achievement.					
Effective learning means that students are able to fully understand what is taught based on their taught and applied experiences in their learning environments.					
Effective learning requires the intervention of expert teachers.					
Scholarships are a measure of academic success at this school.					
My in-school teachers provide an ideal learning environment to ensure academic success and effective learning opportunities.					
I am fully satisfied with the curriculum delivery of my teachers in school, towards achieving academic success.					
Do you attend paid academic extra-lessons? YES NO If YES, how many hours per week? _____					
I feel that it is necessary to attend extra-lessons to ensure academic success.					
My success at the CXC CSEC examinations was due to my in school teaching.					
My success at the CXC CSEC examinations was due to my extra-lessons classes.					
My success at the CXC CSEC examinations was due to a combination of in school teaching and extra-lessons classes.					
I attend paid academic extra-lessons just for revision.					
I attend paid academic extra-lessons because my parents feel that it is necessary for my educational success.					
I see extra-lessons as an opportunity to socialise.					
Are any of your paid extra-lessons teachers the same as your in school subject teachers? YES NO					
A school teacher is responsible for the complete and effective delivery of the curriculum in school to their respective charges to ensure effective learning and academic success.					
Extra-curricular activities are important for a student's good health, holistic development and aid in ensuring effective learning and academic success.					
Students should make time for paid academic extra-lessons at the expense of holistic development opportunities to ensure effective learning and academic success.					
Additional Comments:					
Would you be willing to be interviewed by the researcher regarding this research? YES NO					

Appendix 4d – Form 6 - Parent Questionnaire

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

PARTICIPANT -

This research aims to explore understandings of effective learning, student success and perceptions of the role of extra-lessons towards achieving students' success and the opportunity costs that may be involved.

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE.

Please complete this survey. You may place a tick in the relevant column, **eg.** ✓, and where indicated circle YES or NO.

STATEMENT or QUESTION	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My child has all-round and holistic educational experience at school.					
Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities during the school day.					
Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities after the end of the school day.					
The school's cultural and outreach activities play an important part in my child's educational experience.					
The school's religious teachings play an important part in my child's educational experience.					
The environment at this school is of a very high academic performance and achievement.					
Effective learning means that students are able to fully understand what is taught based on their taught and applied experiences in their learning environments.					
Effective learning requires the intervention of expert teachers.					
Scholarships are a measure of academic success at this school.					
The in school teachers provide an ideal learning environment to ensure academic success and effective learning opportunities.					
I am fully satisfied with the curriculum delivery of the teachers in school, towards achieving my child's academic success through effective learning.					
Does your child attend paid academic extra-lessons? YES NO					
If YES, how many hours per week? _____					
What is the average cost per hour? _____					
This financial cost of academic extra-lessons is affordable.					
Paid academic extra-lessons are essential to my child's effective learning and success.					
My child's success at the CXC CSEC examinations was due to the in school teaching.					
My child's success at the CXC CSEC examinations was due to the extra-lessons classes.					
My child's success at the CXC CSEC examinations was due to a combination of in school teaching and extra-lessons classes.					
My child attends paid academic extra-lessons just for revision.					
My child attends paid academic extra-lessons because as a parent I feel that it is necessary for educational success.					
I see extra-lessons as an opportunity for my child to socialise.					
Are any of the paid extra-lessons teachers the same as in class subject teachers? YES NO					
A school teacher is responsible for the complete and effective delivery of the curriculum in school to their respective charges to ensure effective learning and academic success.					
Extra-curricular activities are important for a student's good health and holistic development and aid in ensuring academic success.					
Students should make time for paid academic extra-lessons at the expense of holistic development opportunities to ensure academic success.					
Additional Comments:					
Would you be willing to be interviewed by the researcher regarding this research? YES NO					