

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES OF CVQS IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN
SOUTH TRINIDAD: A CASE STUDY

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Running head: IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES OF CVQS

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IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES OF CVQS

Abstract

The Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) was created as a regional qualification to be implemented in various CARICOM nations. The CVQ was introduced since 2007 and mandated by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Trinidad and Tobago to be implemented in the secondary school system since 2012. Thus far, many schools still struggle to have this educational initiative fully implemented within their curriculum. At the Greenville Secondary School some CVQ areas have been implemented with greater levels of success than others, as all school personnel do not appear to be sold on the CVQ approach. The problem of the study was to identify the issues which are hindering the successful implementation of the CVQ programme at this school. A qualitative research method was employed to unearth the issues encountered in the implementation of CVQ. Data was collected via a survey interview-questionnaire, personal interviews, observations and examination of documents. The participants included 55 school personnel, and one representative each from the NTA (National Training Agency) and the MOE. The findings show issues with resources, buy-in, communication, the status of TVET and the overall implementation process. In addition, self-efficacy issues as well as a desire for some form of compensation for increased workloads were expressed by school personnel. The findings were significant as many issues were identified in the implementation of the CVQ.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES OF CVQS

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List of Acronyms

CANTA	Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community
CBAM	Concerns-Based Adoption Model
CBET	Competency Based Education and Training
CBETA	Competency Based Education, Training and Assessment
CBT	Competency Based Training
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CVQ	Caribbean Vocational Qualification
CXC	Caribbean Examination Council
DTET	Department of Technical Education and Training (Sri Lanka)
EV	External Verifier
IV	Internal Verifier
MOE	Ministry of Education
MTEST	Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualification
NEC	National Examination Council
NTA	National Training Agency
NTATT	National Training Agency Trinidad and Tobago
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
NYSC	National Youth Service Council (Sri Lanka)
PLAR	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
ROS	Regional Occupational Standard

SCOTVEC	Scottish Vocational Education Council
SoC	Stages of Concern
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
TTNVQ	Trinidad and Tobago National Vocational Qualification
TVE	Technical Vocational Education
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VTA	Vocational Training Authority (of Sri Lanka)

Implementation Issues of CVQs in a Secondary School in South Trinidad:
A Case Study

Chapter 1: Introduction

Educational systems globally are constantly under pressure to perform and meet the demands of the rapidly changing and increasingly complex world today. Educational reform and implementation of new programmes are common methods utilized in the quest to fulfil these educational demands. These strategies however are not always as easily or successfully implemented as desired. Too often issues arise which may hinder successful implementation or cease implementation altogether.

Internationally, policy makers have acknowledged that a key element of improving economic performance is the development of better technical skills. Additionally, the economic importance for skills development has been augmented by the growing number of international discussions surrounding high skills, globalization and the knowledge economy. Likewise, a lack of skills at the individual level is generally seen as a main factor in poverty. McGrath (2002) explains that without skills, individuals are far more prone to be in poverty since he/she is neither very employable on the labour market nor able to make a viable living in subsistence or self-employment activities. The theories of John Dewey a renowned philosopher of vocational education emphasize the significance of “education which acknowledges the full intellectual and social meaning of a vocation”. (Dewey, 1966, p. 318) The notion of a vocation is extensive and

provides an excellent means for reconstructing Vocational Education and Training (VET). With the increased demands worldwide on VET to provide the skills that workers and economies require, many countries have responded through the development and implementation of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

A National Vocational Qualification or NVQ is a work-based award achieved through training and assessment. NVQs are usually offered in various occupational areas which are based on National Occupational Standards that describe the 'competencies' expected in various job roles. The NVQ can usually be attained either through educational institutions or through industry. An awarding organization is responsible for putting in place the arrangements for reporting that allow for the recognition and award of NVQ unit awards and full occupational standard awards (all required units completed).

NVQs are an integrated system of qualifications for commercial and industrial training popularized in 1986 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The employer-led National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) was given the responsibility for their development. Similarly, in Scotland the Scottish Vocational Education Council (SCOTVEC) is responsible for the Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). In the United Kingdom, it is expected that NVQs will improve the status of VET comparable to traditional academic qualifications, plus foster greater investment in training. (Eurofound, 2014) Additionally, achievement of NVQs is used as a performance indicator to measure success of national training policies, programmes, and institutions operating

currently (for instance Training and Enterprise Councils). (Eurofound, 2014)

Although many stakeholders have supported the concept of NVQs, their implementation has been troubled by a great deal of controversy. Uncertainties have arisen about the validity of work-based assessment; the absence of written exams; the inclination for some of the qualifications to be narrowly defined and task-specific; the low levels of skill being required; and the capability of training systems and staff in many institutions and workplaces to provide the support which training and assessment of NVQs requires. In spite of the best efforts of the government and NCVQ, it was found that NVQs are being utilized by only a small minority of employers. (Eurofound, 2014)

The national review of VET in England, the Wolf Report (Wolf, 2011) was extremely critical of the present provisions for VET as having no returns for NVQ levels 1 and 2 as she stated “low-level vocational qualifications, notably NVQs, have, on average, absolutely no significant economic value to their holders unless they are gained as part of a completed apprenticeship. This is especially true if they were gained on a government-financed scheme”. (p. 150) However, she goes on to say that researchers are very cognizant that “effects which appear to be the result of one variable (such as a qualification) may actually be the result of some other ‘unobserved’ variable. (Wolf, 2011, p. 150) Therefore, the strength of these analyses is contingent upon the available data.

In Sri Lanka, VET is provided by government as well as private organizations. The Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) introduced the NVQ system in response to problems which arose regarding the

lack of public recognition for courses conducted by these training institutions due to discrepancies in curricula, methods of assessment, levels of assessment, ability of instructors, training materials, etc. (Wettasinghe, Sanjeewa, Kumara, & Edirisinghe, 2010) There are 7 identified levels in this NVQ system. Both local and international certificates are issued and accepted according to the students' competency levels, through the consideration of the scope of the occupation, and the knowledge, skills and responsibility to complete the required tasks.

According to Wettasinghe et al. (2010), Competency Based Training (CBT) was implemented to train learners under the NVQ system to become competent employees. Curricula were developed by the authorized body NITE SL for identified occupations in order to launch the CBT. Additionally, there was an urgent need for training of the training providers, and curricula was developed for training personnel at institutions such as VTA, DTET, NYSC as well as some of the private organizations. In Sri Lanka, the identification of issues in implementing CBT for the NVQ system in the Tertiary, and Vocational Education and Training sector was essential. These issues were examined and possible solutions for the implementation issues of the NVQs were derived.

The implementation of NVQs has often been plagued with many common issues as evident in various countries. The Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) which was created as a regional qualification is not different in this manner as it is being implemented in various CARICOM nations.

This research paper looks at the various issues encountered during implementation of the CVQ into the secondary school system of Trinidad and Tobago. This is achieved through a case study undertaken at the Greenville Secondary School (pseudonym). Included in this chapter is the background which gives a description of the CVQ to provide an understanding of the requirements for this educational initiative. This section also reviews the 2012 mandate of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and its impact on this school. Additionally, a description of the school is included to provide an understanding of its situation and issues involved. This chapter also includes the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions and the expected outcomes. Chapter 2 includes a review of literature related to the topic. It is followed by Chapter 3 – Methodology, and Chapter 4 – Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings. The final chapter, Chapter 5 – Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations presents the findings and conclusions based on both the literature review and the case study and suggests future research directions. The paper presents a detailed report of the case study conducted at this school involved in the implementation of the CVQ programme. Various issues for effective implementation such as management practices, the implementation process, and availability of resources, results and outcomes were investigated.

Background

In Trinidad and Tobago vocational education or skills training can be attained either through educational organizations at secondary, post-secondary, or tertiary levels or through industry and also informal apprenticeships. The National

Training Agency (NTA), an agency of the Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training's (MTEST) is responsible for TVET and by extension, carrying out reform in TVET nationally. Established in January 1999, it was designed to operate as a private state-owned agency. The NTA works in close collaboration with the relevant stakeholders in industry and education and training to develop, implement, monitor and certify vocational education and skills training.

According to the National Training Agency's report presented to the ILO's Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum in 2006, reform of the TVET system is necessary due to identified factors such as: an inadequately trained labor force, competency levels not equal to international standard, high levels of informal uncertified apprenticeship, migration of skilled labour through the region, and urgency of training demands. (National Training Agency, 2006)

Within recent years, many education and training programmes geared towards providing or improving skills training for the labor force were introduced. Post-secondary and tertiary level programmes offered, such as MUST (Multi-Sector Skills Training Programme), HYPE (Helping You Prepare for Employment), YTEPP (Youth Training & Employment Partnership Programme), MILAT (Military-led Academic Training Programme), MYPART (Military-led Youth Apprenticeship Re-orientation Training Programme) and OJT (On-the-Job Training) have been utilized for training and retraining of persons entering or already in the labour market. Additionally, PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) has been implemented by the NTA for certifying persons who are skilled but are not certified. Depending on the programmes pursued, certification

is attained either at the national level through the TTNVQ (Trinidad and Tobago National Vocational Qualifications) or at the regional level with the CVQ.

At the secondary level, the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) in partnership with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the National Training Agency (NTA) provide access to Form 5 and Form 6 students to the Caribbean Vocational Qualification in Schools (CVQ in Schools). (NTA, 2014) The first groups of students were granted CVQ certification in 2007. Commonwealth sources used this as a measure of success as the reported number of students obtaining full CVQs and unit awards, also presented indicators of declining attrition rates, diminished demonstration of deviant behaviours, a propensity to entrepreneurship and the general improvement of CVQ students in academic subjects pursued. (Commonwealth Ministers, 2014)

Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ). The CVQ is an award which represents achievement of a set of competencies which define essential work practices of an occupational area, in accordance with the levels expressed within the Regional Qualifications Framework. The CVQ is based on the CBETA (Competency Based Education, Training and Assessment) model which tends to be learner-centered. CBETA also edicts change in the teacher role from that of an information-giver to that of a resource person, where students are given more responsibility for their own learning and development. Student participation is critical to CBETA. It also recommends more flexible methods of instructions to facilitate the inclusion of all learners.

Occupational standards. To earn an award, students need to demonstrate competence in attainment of CARICOM-approved occupational standards which were developed by industry experts, practitioners and employers. Occupational Standards (OS) describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for performing effectively in the workplace. These standards known as the Regional Occupational Standards (ROS) are comprised of units. Each unit is then subdivided into elements which consist of performance criteria. Students can earn unit awards or by achieving all units for the OS achieve a complete CVQ award. The CVQ is available to secondary school students, uncertified school leavers, employees, displaced workers seeking to be reskilled to re-enter the work force, self-employed individuals pursuing new skills and/or certification, and persons seeking new skills.

Levels of competencies. The occupational standards are developed within the Regional Qualification Framework which identifies five (5) levels of competencies which facilitate progression from lower level to higher level skills. The definition of competency levels within the framework facilitates the comparability of skills within and across industries and sectors in an objective, valid and reliable manner. Level 1– Apprentice or Supervised worker: a worker at this level assists or works under the direction of a skilled person. Level 2 - Skilled Worker: a worker at this level performs non-routine and complex tasks with minimal supervision. Level 3 - Skilled technical/Supervisory worker: a worker at this level performs complex, non-routine tasks independently. Level 4 - Professional/Managerial/Master Craftsman: competence at this level includes the

application of knowledge in a wide range of multifaceted, technical or professional work activities completed in a wide variety of contexts. Level 5 - Chartered Professional/Managerial: competence at this level includes the application of a variety of vital principles across a wide and regularly unpredictable range of contexts.

Awarding body. The CVQ evolved from the collaboration of various national training agencies within the Caribbean. The original vocational qualification introduced in this country in 2007 is the Trinidad and Tobago National Vocational Qualification or TTNVQ administered by the NTA. Similarly, Jamaica has the NVQ-J which is administered by HEART Trust/NTA and Barbados has the NVQ administered by the TVET Council Barbados. The aim of the CVQ is “the development of the Ideal Caribbean Worker”. (NTA - National TVET Control Centre, 2014)

Who is responsible for awarding the CVQ? The National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (NTATT) or commonly named the NTA, is the certifying body for the CVQ in Trinidad and Tobago. National Training Agencies (NTAs) in other Caribbean nations also grant the CVQ award. However, the CVQ in secondary schools is awarded by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). (NTA - National TVET Control Centre, 2014)

Key personnel. Key personnel involved in the award of a CVQ are assessors, internal verifiers and external verifiers. In the secondary school system Assessors, usually the teachers determine a candidate’s competence against the

ROS via various techniques of assessment. Usually, selected Heads of Department or senior teachers are trained by the NTA to perform duties as Internal Verifiers (IVs). They are responsible for ensuring that the assessors are performing assessments in line with established quality standards. IVs are also required to sample assessment records and assess candidates to ensure reliability of the assessment evidence. The NTA appoints personnel for industry to act as External Verifiers (EVs). EVs are not affiliated with the training institution or organization, and are responsible for auditing the assessment and internal verification processes to ensure that NTA quality standards are met. Additionally, EVs observe assessments and internal verifications to confirm that collected evidence is reliable and the level of record keeping is satisfactory. (NTA, 2014)

CVQ requirements. An important element of the CVQ in schools is school administrators must be aware of the requirements for a successful competency based programme in schools. These requirements are the foundation of good practice in delivery of the CVQ. These elements as listed in the OAS Hemispheric Project Document (2014) are:

- i. use of an assortment of teaching methods and aids
- ii. sufficient materials, equipment and space are available
- iii. availability of an environment which simulates the work place and work experience opportunities is available to students
- iv. students are knowledgeable about criteria and attitudes important to the occupation

- v. each student's training programme ought to be individualized and self-paced as much as possible
- vi. repetition of learning activity and reinforcement until competent
- vii. satisfactory achievement of all stated competencies for programme completion
- viii. individualized student records are kept and reflect the student's progress
- ix. detailed and continuous feedback is given to students/trainees on their progress
- x. students' evaluation should reveal the level of competency achieved.

CVQ design. The CVQ is designed as a broad-based training for employment. It offers an alternative path to further or higher education and is anticipated to have equivalent standing with academic qualifications at the same level. It complements the academic track and provides for apprenticeship with real world of work experiences. In addition to ensuring that the holder of this qualification can perform in the workplace, it also allows for recognition and portability of the qualification throughout CARICOM and globally. Past work experience and skills can also contribute towards the CVQ. A significant feature of the CVQ is if not completed at a school or center, the candidate can continue at another approved center at a later time.

There are no special entry requirements and no time limits for pursuing a CVQ award. Anyone can work towards CVQ Certification. Candidates can be

certified in secondary schools, in the workplace, through registering and training with any approved training organization, or by registering with the NTA if they have already acquired the necessary skills through PLAR.

Assessment. Candidates are enrolled for assessments in a particular skill area. Once prepared, a candidate is assessed for his/her competence by the assessor. Successful completion of a unit is then recorded and documented on an official transcript. To gain a full CVQ award the candidate must complete all units specified in the qualification structure for the ROS being pursued. The training provider furnishes evidence to the NTA and the external verifier which is the basis on which the candidate will be awarded a CVQ certificate. The Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) is responsible for conducting quality audits over the period of the programme and will award the CVQ in schools certificate. (NTA, 2014)

As part of the assessment for the CVQ award, candidates must demonstrate their competence in work-based activities through simulation in the school workshop/laboratory. Assessments are usually but not limited to the following methods: observation of performance or processes, examination of finished products, written testing, oral questioning, and evaluation of a portfolio. The assessment can be repeated several times until the student can demonstrate competence in the occupational area. Also, if a candidate has an objection arising from the assessment process an appeal to the awarding body can be made.

CVQ rationale. The CVQ was introduced with the intention of providing an opportunity for the rationalization of TVET in Trinidad and Tobago. (NTA -

National TVET Control Centre, 2014) This involves curricula reviews and restructuring of assessment and evaluation methods. The aim is to establish a rational TVET system. The CVQ is an industry driven operating model which provides the opportunity to inject new materials and technology into the curriculum. It is also designed to enhance education and training programmes to more effectively align to real-world work performance requirements. The expected result is that a workforce which is better prepared for the world of work will be produced. Additionally, it also has Caribbean-wide recognition and can facilitate the regional mobility of labour.

The CXC collaboration. The awarding body of the CVQ in secondary schools throughout the region is the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). This was mandated by the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) XV. (Caribbean Examination Council, 2014) CXC's prime responsibility is quality assurance. Preparation in schools requires the collaboration of the MOE, and the NTA together with CXC. The Ministry of Education is responsible for converting the approved occupational standards into suitable curriculum, furnishing the schools with the required resources and training teachers to be able to deliver the programmes in the secondary schools. Teachers or assessors are required to be well qualified and have knowledge about the world of work. Additionally, the numbers of teachers/assessors available should be sufficient to ensure adequate monitoring. The facilities at schools are expected to have up-to-date equipment and necessary technologies, otherwise candidates should be exposed via job experience. The method of delivery should

be suitable for maximizing learning. Furthermore, career guidance should be made available from the start of the learner's training until the end when guidance in search of employment should be available. (Caribbean Examination Council, 2014)

Ministry of Education (MOE) mandate. The MOE issued a mandate in 2012 that sought to implement CVQ Level 1 into the nationwide secondary school system. The directive required each student entering Form 4 to be enrolled to pursue a CVQ. The students in schools equipped by the MOE were expected to be entered for assessments in specific skill areas. Their subject teachers were also expected to be trained to instruct and perform continuous in-school assessment.

The National Training Agency (NTA). National Training Agency (NTA) is expected to work closely with schools. The NTA assists with orienting staff to the methods in competency assessment. Also, they can provide a crucial connection to the industry sector so students can benefit from practical and theoretical elements throughout the training programme. The NTA is also responsible for conducting the facility audit at schools before the start of the programme of instructions. The supply of qualified personnel who function as external verifiers is also the responsibility of the NTA. The duty of conducting training of teachers to become assessors and internal verifiers in Trinidad and Tobago was assigned to the NTATT. They initially trained many teachers for the TTNVQ and later retrained those teachers and trained new teachers for CVQ.

Training delivery and approval of assessment centres. One major area of quality assurance is in the delivery of training. This can be work-based, institutional-based, distance or a mix of training modalities. In each case, standards are defined for the delivery of training and assessment and providers are required to be approved. (Caribbean Examination Council, 2014) According to the CXC, approval covers: statutory compliance, staff resources, physical resources, learning resources, assessors, internal verification procedures, external verification procedures, and management of information (record management, security and storage). All assessment centres must satisfy the minimum requirements for competence-based training, assessment and certification.

CVQs in Secondary Schools

There are 134 government/government-assisted secondary schools throughout Trinidad and Tobago. These schools have been approved by the MOE to provide secondary-level education which includes the CVQ. However not all schools have been participating in the CVQ in schools programme. Table 1 illustrates the performance of the programme over the past seven years. The number of schools currently involved in CVQ training and assessment is 50, up from 13 schools in 2007 at the inception of CVQ in Schools programme. The implementation of CVQs into the secondary school system has been slow and appears ineffective.

Despite the 2012 MOE mandate, there appears to be no significant increase in the number of schools registering students and an actual decrease in

the number of candidates registered from 1301 in the year 2011(pre-mandate) to 1083 in 2012 and further decreasing to 1062 in 2013.

Table 1

Statistical Award Data for 2007-2013

DETAILS	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of Schools	13	33	32	40	43	44	50
Number of Candidates	437	897	1314	1051	1301	1083	1062
Units awarded	1984	7895	7657	9996	9032	14497	15506
Full CVQs	89	385	397	584	524	583	688

Note – Taken from Statistical Award Data 2007-2013 (CVQ in Schools Unit, 2013)

Subsequent to the mandate, the registration of 2013 CVQ candidates were completed between September to December, 2012 on the CXC/CVQ online database. Candidates were registered by their schools with the guidance of the MOE Examinations Section for CVQs being pursued. According to the CVQ in Schools Unit at the NTA, only 53 secondary schools registered one thousand five hundred and nine (1509) candidates (1014 males and 495 females) in thirty-one (31) occupational areas. (CVQ in Schools Unit, 2013) Candidates were registered for a total of 1725 CVQs.

For the year 2013, 50 of the 53 secondary schools registered submitted awards for one thousand and sixty-two (1062) candidates in twenty-nine (29) occupational areas. This meant that four hundred and forty-seven (447) or approximately 30% of the registered candidates did not obtain an award. It also

meant that 2 occupational areas were not assessed. Candidates were submitted for a total of 1209 CVQ awards or 516 (30%) less than that for which they were registered. The report indicated that 14,970 unit awards and 688 full CVQ awards were submitted to CXC by secondary schools. Additionally, one hundred and eighty-four (184) External Verifications were conducted by thirty-five (35) External Verifiers for the academic year 2012-2013 and one hundred and nine (109) Internal Verifiers conducted five hundred and seventy-four (574) Internal Verifications in twenty-nine (29) occupational areas. The candidates were assessed by 180 teachers/assessors who submitted candidates for CVQ awards in 2013 in the fifty (50) secondary schools. (CVQ in Schools Unit, 2013) On average 3.6 teachers per registered school have been performing duties as assessors for students to obtain a CVQ award and 37% of the secondary schools in the nation are participating in the CVQ in Schools programme.

Greenville Secondary School

The Greenville Secondary School is a well-established school located in a rural community in south Trinidad. The school is a co-educational school with a population of 689 students (343 boys and 346 girls). The administration is comprised of a principal and two vice principals. The total number of teaching staff is 56, which includes 5 Deans of Discipline and 5 Heads of Department. The non-teaching staff is 12, which includes the clerical staff as well as laboratory and workshop assistants.

The curriculum at the Greenville Secondary consists of a mix of academic subjects and technical vocational areas. The academic and technical qualification attained is the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC). The school boasts of a wide variety of vocational subject areas such as: Building Technology – Woods, Electrical/Electronic Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Technical Drawing, Food and Nutrition, Home Management, Clothing and Textile, and Electronic Document Preparation Management. These vocational areas are some of the fields in which CVQ is expected to be accomplished.

Despite the wide range of TVET areas, the implementation of CVQ in this school does not appear to be wide spread. Since the Ministry of Education's mandate in 2012, one small group of 7 students was registered with 3 students being awarded unit awards in 2013 for Commercial Food Preparation. There were three groups certified in 2014, two groups (8 and 12 students) were awarded full CVQ awards in the area of Data Operations while one group (21 students) achieved four units under the ROS for Grow Box Operations. The CVQ for Commercial Food Preparation was not pursued. An interesting point to note is that neither of the occupational areas completed in 2014 is traditionally considered a TVET area. The teachers conducting the training and assessment were from the Science, Information Technology and Business Studies Department. The TVET teachers in the school have either not started or started and abandoned the CVQ programmes with their classes.

Problem Statement

The CVQ was introduced since 2007 and mandated by the MOE to be implemented in the secondary school system since 2012. Yet, many schools still struggle to have this educational initiative fully implemented within their curriculum. At the Greenville Secondary School some CVQ areas have been implemented with greater levels of success than others, as all school personnel do not appear to be sold on the CVQ approach. The problem of the study is to identify the issues which are hindering the successful implementation of the CVQ programme at the school.

This study aims to ascertain the issues which are affecting the successful implementation of the CVQs into the secondary school through a case study conducted at the Greenville Secondary School.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to identify the issues which are hindering the successful implementation of the CVQ in schools programme which can facilitate the removal of roadblocks and the formulation of possible solutions.

Research Questions

This qualitative case study is focuses on three research questions which were formulated:

1. What roadblocks (if any) can one discern from the opinions of school and NTA personnel that impede progress towards CVQ implementation?

2. Are school personnel sold on the CVQ approach: do they believe it to be an appropriate way to certify skill?
3. Is there evidence that the relevant Ministry has done enough to assure the adoption of the CVQ approach in the secondary school system?

All three questions were operationalized in this research.

Expected Outcomes

The significance of this study is to gain a better understanding of the factors which influence implementation of an educational initiative. The information gained can be used to better understand what is required for improving the success of the implementation of the CVQ in schools programme or for future educational initiatives.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Many of the most significant initiatives and practices developed by educators or policy makers require dramatic changes in our way of thinking about, delivering, administering, assessing, and instructing training. The study of adoption, diffusion, implementation, and upkeep of innovations is crucial to the field of education. Though it may be possible to identify some noteworthy exceptions, generally indicators show minimal changes during the last few decades in the manner education and training are conducted. Change is often faced with resistance from the various stakeholders. The implementation of new educational initiatives very often fails to reach its full potential due to various factors such as: resistance to change, implementation issues and diffusion shortfalls. Two keys to success which are common to all change efforts but very often are not adhered to are the need to have a proper plan and to complete the entire plan.

A comprehensive review of relevant literature is presented to provide an adequate context for the research problem and the purpose of this study. This section of the research paper explores change through an examination of change theories and educational change initiatives. Also included is an examination of implementation of change and diffusion of innovation. The literature review was completed to gain a better understanding of requirements for successful implementation of an educational initiative such as the CVQ.

Theories of Change

There are many change theories which can be analyzed to gain answers to the questions: What are the roadblocks to change? And, how does successful change happen?

Social Learning Theory. Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT) highlighted the significance of observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. (Bandura, 1977) SLT explains behavior as continuous shared interaction between cognitive, behavioural, and environmental factors. This type of observational learning involves fundamental processes such as attentional, retentional, motor reproduction and motivation or reinforcement.

These processes are especially important when implementing employee-training programs and can significantly improve the chance of success. Attentional processes takes into consideration that individuals learn from and pay attention to a model they can relate to. Employees or trainees can be influenced easily when the model presented is attractive, well arranged, convincing, grabs their attention, and is a subject of interest. Retention processes refer to an individual's ability to recall the model and its characteristics. The motor reproduction process describes an individual's ability to put into action what they have observed. Motivation or reinforcement processes occurs when an individual's behaviour changes as a result of rewards and positive incentives. Performance of the targeted behaviours is given greater attention, and better rewards, which results in more frequent performance. The effectiveness of the

initiative being implemented depends on the level of trust, admiration, and respect which it can evoke from the observer. Accordingly, initiatives should represent a level of behaviour that the observer is capable of achieving. (Robbins, 2003, pp. 46-47)

Social Cognitive Theory. Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986) originated as the Social Learning Theory. It advocates that learning happens in a social context with an active and mutual interaction where behaviour change is affected by "environmental influences, personal factors, and attributes of the behaviour itself." (Robbins, 2003) Two central elements of changing performance, attitudes and practice are a person's behavioral capability which refers to their ability to actually perform behaviour through crucial knowledge and skills, and self-efficacy which indicates the person's level of confidence in his or her capacity to effectively accomplish the behaviour.

The individual must possess self-efficacy. This is achieved when he/she has confidence in his/her ability to perform the behaviour and when there is an incentive to do so. As a component of operant conditioning, social learning theory depicts behaviour as a result of consequences. Individuals will adopt or reject changes depending on their perception of the consequences of their behaviour. Therefore, for social learning to occur, the individual's positive expectations of the behaviour must outweigh their negative expectations. Self-efficacy is perhaps the most significant characteristic which determines a person's behavioral modification. The justification is that these anticipated consequences are examined by a person's anticipations and guides their willingness to perform the

behaviour. Self-efficacy can be improved by providing clear instructions, the opportunity for training or skill development, and demonstrating the preferred behaviour. (Kritsonis, 2005)

Model of Change. Kurt Lewin's Three Step Change Model looks at conflict derived from habits or inner resistance. (Lewin, 1947) Based on a 3 step approach to change, Lewin endorsed that change or the adoption of new behaviour only occurs after the initial step to discard the old behaviour is accomplished. He suggests 3 phases of change: unfreeze, movement and refreeze.

At the *Unfreeze* phase, a sense of urgency about the requirement for change is created, where managers or administrators are educated, and anxieties of individuals which results in resistance or conforming to group decisions are removed. This can be achieved through the use of activities which motivate individuals by readying them for change, by developing trust and acceptance for the need to change, and through active participation in identifying issues and formulating resolutions as a group. (Robbins, 2003, pp. 564-65)

In the *movement* phase the actual change in the organization occurs. A different level of equilibrium is achieved through activities which encourage buy-in of the new plan/initiative and promote the required movement. Organizations should encourage: working together in pursuit of new and relevant information for solving the problem; influencing employees to agree that the status quo is not favourable and offering encouragement to assess the problem from a new

perspective; and linking the participants' observations to leaders that are respected, powerful and also support the change. (Kritsonis, 2005)

Finally, in the *refreeze* phase fortification of the changed condition occurs. This phase seeks to ensure that the new system is maintained over time. Without this step the change will be temporary as employees are very likely to revert to their old behaviours. This essential step is actually employed to stabilize the new equilibrium and integrate new values into the existing traditions and values of the organization. Robbins (2003, pp. 564-65) suggests the use of formal and informal mechanisms such as policies and procedures to implement Lewin's third step and reinforce and institutionalize new behaviours.

Illustrated in Lewin's model are the effects of forces that either encourage or impede change. Specifically, change is promoted by driving forces and opposed by restraining forces. Therefore, only when the combined strength of one force is greater than the combined strength of the conflicting set of forces will change occur. (Robbins, 2003, pp. 564-65) Strong leadership is essential to create the driving forces necessary to execute the plan for change.

The change may make rational sense, but if consideration to human feelings and experiences are missing then implementation can have undesirable consequences. According to Kritsonis (2005), Lewin's model may result in stakeholders getting so enthusiastic about implementing change, that they overlook the employees' feelings, attitudes, previous input or experiences. Subsequently, they are confronted by either little enthusiasm or resistance.

Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory. Lippitt, Watson, and Westley (1958) extended Lewin's 3 Step Change Theory to create a 7 step theory which places more emphasis on the duties of the change agent than on the progression of the change itself. It is a process where information is constantly exchanged. The steps identified are:

1. Diagnose the problem. Identify the need for change.
2. Assess the motivation and aptitude for change.
3. Assess the resources and motivation of the change agent: the change agent's commitment to change, power, training and endurance.
4. Choose progressive change objects. Develop action plans and establish strategies.
5. The role of the change agents should be designated and clearly understood (e.g. facilitator, assessor and internal verifier) so that expectations are clear.
6. Maintain the change through communication, feedback, and group coordination.
7. Gradually withdraw from the assisting relationship. The change agent should gradually disengage from the helping role. This will ensue as the change develops into part of the organizational culture. (Lippitt et al., 1958, pp. 58-59)

Lippitt et al. point out that permanency of changes are more likely if they spread to nearby systems or to subsections of the system immediately affected. Changes are engrained when all stakeholders are onboard. For example, if all

departments or schools adopt a new educational initiative like the CVQ, it is far more likely to be retained than if only a few departments or schools are onboard. The more “widespread imitation becomes, the more the behavior is regarded as normal” and the possibility of it being sustained. (Lippitt et al., 1958, pp. 58-59)

Implementation

The implementation of new initiatives especially on a large scale is usually a very challenging and complex process. Implementation itself refers to the process of putting a decision or plan into effect. It is the accomplishment of an application, or execution of an idea, process, or policy.

Stages of implementation. Four stages of implementing an innovation or initiative as suggested by the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (2010) are: choosing to implement the innovation; preliminary implementation; sustained implementation, and; termination or transformation of the innovation. To successfully achieve these implementation stages, they suggested some essential strategies for enabling implementation of policies or innovation into organizations. The first suggestion is to formulate an executive alliance responsible for decision making to support the adoption of the initiative or innovation. Second, align the initiative to the existing goals and values of the organization. Next, they suggest observing implementation and outcomes of the innovation being implemented. Finally, encourage communities of practice to reinforce endurance of the innovation.

Implementation of educational reform. Many school-based pilot programmes do not endure. This struggle is often attributed to inadequate or one-time funding which fails to provide the additional resources required assuring the sustainability of projects. As Carnoy (2000) argues, funding is limited as most governments are under pressure to decrease public spending on education, at the same time they need to fund expansion of their educational systems. Other reasons for the struggle to survive include: sidelining of vocational learning in terms of status within the school system, resource allocations, the deliberate reliance on supplementary funding by the school systems, certification, minimal or no allowances for community or stakeholders' engagement, and the lack of strategic plans and visions about higher education and training as well as employment options for students entering the labour market, and their inclusion within a wider framework such as a National Qualifications Framework. (Malley & Keating, 2000)

As noted in Australia in the Working Nation White Paper (White Paper, 1994), locally initiated change of further training through schools had positive effects on school retention and youth transition to work. VET provided classroom and simulated workplace instruction that resulted in learning outcomes which comply with National Training Framework (NTF) standards. The VET in Schools also anticipated that learning outcomes would provide for a vocational qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). (Malley & Keating, 2000)

The NTF model introduced into the Australian school system was implemented as an addition to the existing school curriculum. Considering the costs of organizing workplace simulated learning, school systems commonly conclude that this form of vocational education cost more to provide than standard academic subjects. The availability of funds to maintain these VET initiatives in schools then takes on a commanding role. (Kemp, 1999)

CBAM - Stages of Concern. The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is utilized to address the implementation of change on a systems level. This model assists supervisors or leaders of change to understand the process of change, responses to change, and the required actions to help ensure the achievement of the change initiative. Two dimensions which are critical indicators of the level of performance, and cornerstones to CBAM are Levels of Use of the innovation and the Stages of Concern (SoC). (Hall & Rutherford, 1975)

Fuller's earlier discussions on SoC indicated stages from initial unrelated, to self, to task, and eventually impact concerns. (Fuller, 1969) Fuller explains that when an innovation or educational initiative is first introduced the individual's first concern is for self; how will I be affected? Once these concerns are resolved, he/she will next focus on the task and eventually shift focus to the impact the educational initiative will have on the learner.

Newlove and Hall (1976) built upon Fuller's SoC and identified seven different "stages of concern about an innovation". The seven stages of concern they identified are:

0 – Awareness: Slight concern or minimal participation with the innovation.

1 – Informational: Indication of a general awareness and interest in learning more.

2 – Personal: Uncertainty about the individual's role, the demands of the innovation and his/her capability to meet the demands.

3 – Management: Focuses on the processes and tasks and the best use of resources and information. The main issues are organizing, managing, efficiency, and scheduling.

4 – Consequence: Focuses on the effect of the innovation on the students, its relevance, evaluation of outcomes, etc.

5 – Collaboration: Focuses on coordinating and cooperating with others concerning use of the innovation.

6 – Refocusing: Focuses on widespread benefits of the innovation. It may also give consideration to major changes and possible alternatives.

Having and changing concerns are variable as individuals. However, the development of higher levels of concern can be achieved by providing experiences and resources which can provide the elements for arousing and resolving concerns. It is not guaranteed however that formation of new higher level concerns would eliminate the lower levels of concern experienced by

persons involved in the implementation of the innovation. (Newlove & Hall, 1976) Ultimately, despite all interventions, it is a personal decision whether to change or not.

Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory

There has been growing interest by educational administrators in the problems faced with educational change (Fullan, 1991) in why teachers resist it (Hargreaves, 1994) and in why it is challenging to “diffuse” innovations. (Havelock & Havelock, 1973)

The Diffusion of Innovation Theory, developed by E.M. Rogers in 1962 explains how, over time, an idea or invention gains impetus and diffuses (or spreads) over a particular population or social structure. (Rogers, 2003) The outcome of this diffusion is that individuals adopt a new idea, behaviour, or product. A person adopts an innovation, and diffusion is accomplished, through four stages: awareness of the need for an innovation, decision to adopt (or reject) the innovation, initial use of the innovation to test it, and the continued use of the innovation.

Rogers (2003), explains adoption as “a decision of full use of an innovation as the best course of action available” and rejection as a decision “not to adopt an innovation” (p. 177). He defines diffusion as “the process in which an innovation is communicated thorough certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (p. 5). Vital components of the diffusion of

innovations as expressed by his definition are innovation, communication channels, time, and social system.

Rogers describes an innovation as “an idea, practice, or project that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption”. (Rogers, 2003, p. 12) It does not have to be new or newly created only perceive as new. Uncertainty is a significant impediment to the adoption of innovations. The reduction of uncertainty of adopting the innovation can be achieved when individuals are informed about the advantages and disadvantages as well as all consequences. Rogers states that to reach a mutual understanding communication which includes an innovation, two individuals or other units of adoption, and a communication channel is necessary. He argues that the inclusion of the time dimension in diffusion research gives it strength. The final element in the process is the social system. Rogers (2003) defined the social system as “a set of interrelated units engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal” (p. 23). Diffusion of innovations occurs in the social system and is determined by the social structure.

The innovation-decision process is described by Rogers (2003) as “an information-seeking and information-processing activity, where an individual is motivated to reduce uncertainty about the advantages and disadvantages of an innovation” (p. 172). Rogers’ innovation-decision process involves five steps:

1. Knowledge - Learns and seeks information about an innovation.

2. Persuasion - Forms a negative or positive attitude towards the innovation.
3. Decision - Elects to adopt or reject the innovation.
4. Implementation – The innovation is put into practice.
5. Confirmation – Looks for support for the decision made.

These stages normally follow each other in a chronological sequence. However, the discernible benefits of an innovation can predict the rate or the speed at which an innovation is adopted.

Educational Change in Developing Countries

Educational change in the developing world has been viewed as a tool for correcting the many issues plaguing countries. The implementation of educational change in itself has also been overwhelmed with various issues. Countries such as India, the Philippines and South Africa have attempted reform of VET for various reasons and have all encountered difficulties of varying degrees.

Second-class education in India. In India, VET has long been associated with low-status and low-paying manual work or jobs. Considered an education system for the “poor and educationally backward sections of the society” VET is usually offered to those who are not qualified for admission into higher education. (Tilak, 2002) Despite efforts to increase the provision of VET to areas throughout the country, numerous economic, political and social factors contribute to the difficulties faced in extending the VET system. In rural areas for instance, VET is considered as ‘second-class education’. (Agrawal, 2012) The low status of VET

further exasperates attempts to widen the reach of VET to provide skills which are in demand to a highly unskilled labour force or reskill those who possess skills that are not in demand.

A World Bank report (World Bank, 2008) on skill development in India highlighted the poor labour market outcomes of people trained in vocational education. Evidently, a large quantity of people remain unemployed after completing VET courses. This occurs as employers prefer to hire academically qualified persons and train them to perform the jobs which otherwise would be performed by VET graduates. Agrawal (2012) explains that this occurs as employers are not satisfied with the level of training VET graduates receive and prefer to train employees themselves. Additionally, many lower level positions are filled by engineering degree holders which should have been filled by technician level graduates. The case in India depicts a situation where stakeholders need to be involved in and sold on the VET offerings so that graduates are in demand and possess the skills required by employers. Revision of the curriculum and delivery methods of training programmes to meet the needs of industry is necessary. If the possession of a VET certificate or diploma is in demand by employers then consequently, the VET programmes will be in demand by candidates seeking to enter the workforce.

School effectiveness in the Philippines. It is largely accepted that teacher effectiveness can be attained if satisfactory benefits and professional autonomy are accessible to them. (Nir, 2002, cited in de Guzman, 2007) Despite the scarcity of data to show how decentralization efforts have influenced teacher

effectiveness in the Philippines (de Guzman, 2007), this developing country has witnessed many efforts introduced by the Department of Education. Carlson (1989) claimed that schools with increasing level of autonomy are bound to show evidence of greater participation in the decision making by parents, teachers, principals and students.

Additionally, to determine the need for improvement and adjustment of existing curricula, consultative meetings were held with various stakeholders to amass their input related to curricular offerings as specified in the Philippine Education Learning Competencies. (de Guzman, 2007) It was anticipated that the new curriculum would improve the country's quality of education. The Philippines' Department of Education also encouraged partnerships with community members for the purpose of resource sharing.

The Revised Basic Education Curriculum (RBEC) pursues the development of competencies using varied materials and teaching strategies as well as various integrative modes of instruction. These modes of instruction, according to Robertson and Briggs (1998, cited in de Guzman, 2007) are important to generate enduring and meaningful school improvement.

The Philippines example highlights the need to train teachers, provide necessary resources and encourage decision making by consultations with all stakeholders.

Educational renovation in South Africa. There has been a lot of criticism of the approach to national educational policy reform taken to

implement school improvement policies in South Africa. The focus has been on the gap between policy intentions and implementation. (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005)

Studies have identified ways in which the state's policy dictions have largely ignored the influences of the professional views of schools and teachers. (Harley & Wedekind, 2004) This effect has been openly demonstrated by the discrepant implementation of school curriculum policy. Fataar (2007) noted that very often educational reform initiatives authorized at the national scale are reinterpreted in the local context. In his research, Fataar (2007) identified the importance of how policy becomes a part of, and is given meaning in a particular context rather than on what the policy does.

The implementation process is of great significance as experienced in South Africa. The merits of the actually policy is often overshadowed by poor and lax implementation procedures. Additionally, the perspectives of those involved in the actual implementation at the school level is often ignored which leaves room for misinterpretation and apprehension.

Common Themes in the Literature

The examination of the literature provided a number of commonalities on which several themes and recommendations for implementation of educational initiatives have been identified. These themes provided a platform for aspects of this research.

Implementation process. The need to follow an implementation process is evident in theories of change such as the Social Learning Theory, Lewin's Model of Change, Lippitt's Phases of Change, stages of implementation and CBAM-Stages of Concern. These models all suggest a step by step process for encouraging the adoption of a new behaviour when implementing a new initiative. A strategic plan must be in place. If the implementation process is not developed properly or followed, then major issues will arise as experienced in South Africa.

Leadership. The role of the leader is undoubtedly a key element in implementing change. Good leadership is necessary from the initial planning stage, through the entire implementation process and for maintaining the initiative. Lewin's Model of Change speaks of leadership forces and the need for driving forces as opposed to restraining forces to realize change.

Resources. The provision of resources is crucial for successful implementation of any educational initiative. The provision of required materials and equipment, and facilities to implement or test the initiative are all necessary elements. Funding plays a pivotal role as one-time or initial funding is not enough to sustain change. The usually higher cost to provide TVET must be considered and proper financial resources be made available to cater to the increased cost of materials, tools and equipment to not only implement but also to sustain the initiative. Additionally, proper training of all persons involved is essential to provide the expertise necessary to carry out the change and implement new curriculum, programmes or initiatives. Attention must likewise be paid to time

allocation which will facilitate successful implementation or diffusion of an innovation.

Self-efficacy. The importance of self-efficacy is pivotal for personnel to become involved in the change initiative as suggested by the Social Cognitive Theory. The literature shows that teacher training will improve both capabilities to perform behaviour as well as confidence in its execution, as Stages of Concerns (CBAM) can be addressed. These rudiments greatly improve the chances for successful implementation and sustainability of the initiative. The presence of an incentive to adopt the new behaviour is also recommended. Rewards or recognition as well as intrinsic motivation can be contributing factors for behaviour modification.

Buy-in. A common thread in all the literature reviewed is the need for buy-in by all stakeholders for any proposed initiative. All stakeholders must recognize the need for change. Illustrated in the educational change examples in developing countries, stakeholders' participation is recommended from the beginning to gain input for policy and programme development, decision making and participation in implementation planning. Later, stakeholders' involvement is necessary to ensure initiative are implemented and diffused via social systems and community acceptance and recognition is heightened.

Status of TVET. Promotion of TVET initiatives can be easier if the status of vocational education is improved and the quality is established. Suggestions for increasing demands for TVET include providing better outcomes via higher

education prospects and labour market opportunities. Trainees must be aware of potential benefits of any TVET programme. Additionally, higher education organizations should accept the qualification for articulation into further education programmes. Also, employers must recognize and demand these programmes for the training to be viable. If the TVET programme is not considered suitable or valuable then the programme will not be sustained.

Communication. The importance of communication is highlighted as a key element in the Diffusion of Innovation theory. Other theories also support communication between all parties involved: leaders, programme developers and providers, principals, teachers, students, parents, industry or future employers and higher education providers. Communication between parties to get everyone onboard is necessary as is the creation of communities of practice which can further support the implementation and sustainability of an educational initiative.

It is evident that significant work is needed to provide a model for implementing any educational initiative. The literature was used to provide guidance for the research which was undertaken to identify issues involved in the implementation of CVQs.

Chapter 3: Methodology

For unearthing the issues encountered in the implementation of CVQs in a secondary school, a descriptive case study approach was chosen. The entire research was conducted and the report completed within a six-month period. The first three months were spent doing background research, reviewing the literature and applying for and acquiring the relevant permission to conduct the research. The case study was conducted at a school - the Greenville Secondary School in south Trinidad. To obtain rich qualitative data from the participants' viewpoints, multiple sources of data (Yin, 2014) were used to gain answers to the research questions.

Research Method and Design

A qualitative case study approach was selected for this study. It provided an opportunity to better understand the situation regarding the implementation issues of CVQs in secondary schools. Permission to conduct the study was attained from the MOE - Education Planning Division (see Appendix A) and endorsed by the principal of the school under study.

Qualitative research. Johnson (1995) suggests that qualitative methodologies are powerful tools for improving our understanding of teaching and learning. Strauss and Corbin (1990) assert that qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon or to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively. A qualitative method is suitable for

describing or interpreting a situation (Hoepfl, 1997), and to take full account of the many interaction effects that take place in social settings. Cronbach (1975)

A single case study. The design of the case study utilized in this instance is a single case – the Greenville Secondary School. Why select a case study? The case study was “employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved” as suggested by Merriam (1998). Stake (1995) explains that a case study is expected to “catch the complexity of a single case”, additionally, Robert Yin (2014) points out that a case study is used to cope with the “technically distinctive situation” which exists, it relies on multiple sources of evidence, and benefits from theoretical prepositions to guide data collection and analysis.

The Greenville Secondary School was selected since its situation appears to be a good example of the implementation of the MOE’s CVQs in schools initiative. The implementation of CVQs in this school has realized varying degrees of success, from full CVQ awards to areas which have not started or plan to start the CVQ. The varying issues that are hindering the successful implementation of the CVQ initiative are of interest.

Participants. The participants in this study were personnel from the Greenville Secondary School, the NTA and the MOE Curriculum - TVET Unit. These participants represent the people associated with this school and the CVQ initiative being implemented. The school personnel included three administrators (one principal and two vice principals) as well as fifty-two teachers out of a

population of fifty-six. The four teachers who did not participate were inaccessible due to extended leave or unavailability. One CVQ trainer from the NTA and one Curriculum Officer from the MOE Curriculum Division also participated in the study.

Sampling. Purposive sampling (Patton M. , 1990, p. 169) was utilized as participants selected were expected to generate “information-rich” and useful data for the research. The school personnel were selected because of their direct involvement in the CVQ initiative as administrators or in curriculum delivery at the school. One personnel from the NTA was selected since he has been directly involved with the implementation of vocational qualifications at this school from the inception of the TTNVQ in 2007 and more recently with the CVQ. He facilitated teacher training on numerous occasions as well as was involved in the facilities audit, certification of assessors, auditing documentation and providing guidance for CVQ awards and unit awards in the past. He continues to be the liaison person between the school and the NTA. The personnel from the MOE Curriculum – TVET Unit was included as a participant when he visited the school by invitation of the principal, to conduct a presentation to parents and students to enlighten them on the CVQ as a choice of study. He is a TVET Curriculum Officer and is closely involved in the implementation of CVQs in schools as a representative of the MOE and is one of their presenters in their recently started education drive. Participants were free from any control and data were collected in the regular environment.

The sample size for the personal interviews was seven: 4 CVQ teachers/assessors (Interviewees A to D), 1 administrator – the school principal (Interviewee E), 1 NTA personnel (Interviewee F), and 1 MOE curriculum personnel (Interviewee G). This sample size was selected as it should be the most productive sample to adequately answer the research questions. A larger sample of teachers/assessors may be utilized but four were selected in this case as a level of saturation or redundancy is anticipated as the emergence of new categories, themes or explanations may cease. The focus is not merely on the sample size but as suggested by Patton (1990), “the information-richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher” which contributes more toward the “validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated” from a qualitative inquiry. (pp. 184-85) This sample size was also selected because a larger sample would require more time to complete the research.

The four participants selected represent teachers/assessors who are at various stages of implementation as well as specialists in various occupational areas: a TVET teacher who has not yet performed as an assessor (Interviewee A - Carpentry); an assessor in the past year but not at present (Interviewee B – Commercial Food Preparation); an assessor for unit awards only at present (Interviewee C – Grow Box); and an assessor for a group of students completing full CVQ awards in the current year (Interviewee D – Data Operations).

Data collection. A type of case study interview called the survey interview (Yin, 2014) was utilized. This survey interview in the form of a structured questionnaire (see Appendix B) was employed to gather survey data

embedded within the case to gain a better understanding of the circumstances at the school. This primarily provided background information. From a population of fifty-nine school personnel, fifty-five questionnaires were completed and recorded as Participants 1 to 55. The questionnaire also allowed for descriptive qualitative data to be gathered by the use of four open ended questions which contributed toward answering the research questions.

As suggested by Yin (2014), interviews are one of the most important sources of evidence in a case study. Semi-structured personal interviews were conducted in order to gather data on the issues faced in the implementation of CVQs (See Appendix C, D and E for a list of Interview Questions utilized for teacher/assessor interviews, school Administrator and NTA trainer interviews respectively). Additionally, a semi-structured impromptu interview was conducted with the curriculum personnel from the MOE. The interviews took between thirty to sixty minutes each and resembled “guided conversations rather than structured queries”. (Yin, 2014) The use of individually conducted semi-structured interviews allowed more in-depth information to be acquired from some of the school participants who were directly involved in the CVQ implementation at the school. This method of data collection permitted the participants to express themselves freely and enabled the researcher to “respond to the situation at hand”. (Merriam, 1998) In most cases, the interviewees were able to review the interview questions beforehand which provided the chance to reflect upon the questions and events surrounding the CVQ in their school. This

was not a requirement for the interview to be conducted, but most participants took the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the interview questions.

Observation of a CVQ presentation conducted by a member of the MOE Curriculum – TVET Unit was completed. This provided some insight into the role of the MOE in the implementation of CVQ in the schools among other information. Additionally, an examination of documents at the school regarding the implementation of CVQs in schools was conducted to gain awareness of the situation at the school and communications between the relevant parties involved.

Strategies for Rigour

Strategies to support rigour in qualitative research are suggested to improve the dependability of the research. Seales and Silverman (1997) recommend rigour strategies to deal with bias, error, reliability, validity and trustworthiness.

Validity and reliability. Often it is suggested that the evaluation of the quality of qualitative data should go beyond conventional practices. Seales and Silverman (1997) argue that rigour and validity are suitably important in qualitative research; however authenticity rather than reliability is often the issue in qualitative research. Usually, the objective of qualitative research is to gain an 'authentic' understanding of people's experiences. The most effective route to achieve this it is believed is the use of open-ended questions. (Seales & Silverman, 1997) Both data collection instruments, the survey interview or

questionnaire and the personal interviews utilized open-ended questions to achieve more “authentic” responses.

Strategies employed in this research for recording data accurately and comprehensibly were the use of digital audio recordings, which were then used to create a verbatim transcript of the interviews. Interviewees were then given the opportunity to peruse the transcripts to further ensure reliability and true representation of their responses. Interviewee G did not wish to be recorded so notes were taken in lieu of the recording.

Triangulation. The strength of case study data collection can be improved by the use of different sources of evidence. (Yin, 2014) From the four types of triangulation identified by Patton (2002) two types were utilized to build credibility: triangulation of data sources and triangulation of data methods.

Triangulation of data sources. Data triangulation refers to the collection of data from multiple sources which provide the advantage of corroborating the same findings. (Yin, 2014) To cross verify the information in the case of this study, the multiple sources of data used included various school personnel, as well as NTA and MOE personnel, and supporting documents. Also, querying the same participant several times or on several occasions also “serves in its own way as a set of multiple sources” as suggested by Yin (2014). This method was employed with school personnel who participated in both the survey interview and personal interview. Data triangulation validates data and research by cross verifying the same information.

Triangulation of data methods. Methodological triangulation is defined as the use of more than two methods in studying the same phenomenon under investigation. (Mitchell, 1986) Triangulation of methods was achieved by combining multiple methods to gather data in this case study such as: interviews, observations, questionnaire or survey interview, and documents, to conduct primary research at different times. By using different methods or approaches to collect data, diverse information that provided complementary data sets was obtained. It is said that if both approaches yield results that support the theory or hypothesis, then it is logical that the data is valid if different methods produce similar results.

Transcription techniques. Transcription techniques were developed for conversation analysis which improves the accuracy with which data is recorded. (Seales & Silverman, 1997) Transcription is a crucial aspect of managing the data. The interviews conducted in this research were digitally voice recorded with the participant's consent and later transcribed verbatim using word processing software. The interviews were conducted in person, with the exception of one. Interviewee F from the NTA was unavailable to meet in person because of his busy schedule and agreed to participate in a telephone interview. This conversation was also audio recorded and later transcribed. Participants were then given the opportunity to read and confirm the transcripts. Some took the opportunity while others declined.

Thick description. Thick description is usually performed to improve the transferability of information. Thick description is described by Lincoln and Guba

(1985) as a method of achieving a form of external validity. In this report, thick description is used to describe the situation in sufficient detail so the reader can begin to evaluate the degree to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, and situations.

Research Ethics

Ethics is considered a “cornerstone for conducting effective and meaningful research”. (Drew, Hardman, & Hosp, 2008) Ethical conduct considered included permission, confidentiality, anonymity and avoiding researcher bias.

Permission. The initial step for this research included seeking permission to conduct research at a government school. The principal of the school was first approached to seek permission to conduct research at the Greenville Secondary School. A permission letter was presented together with the requisite forms and accompanying documents - copies of questionnaire and interview questions. The principal endorsed and submitted the documents for approval to the Ministry of Education – Educational Planning Division. A letter of approval from the director of the Educational Planning Division was subsequently attained.

According to Drew et al. (2008) the researcher’s duty is to ensure that participants have a “thorough understanding of the purpose and methods to be used in the study, the risks involved, and the demands placed upon them as a participant.” Permission was sought in the form of ‘direct consent’ (Drew, Hardman, & Hosp, 2008, p. 57) from all participants prior to their contributing to

the data collection activities. Assent to participate in the research was acquired verbally since participants were all adults in this case study. If students were participants in the data collection then ‘substitute consent, or third-party consent’ (p. 57) in the form of written parental permission would have been sought.

The following protocols were observed to ensure informed consent: participants were made aware that permission was given by the relevant ministerial authority to conduct the research, the purpose of the research was disclosed as well as the procedures, duration and expected outcomes; participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time; they were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. An introductory letter was included in the questionnaire (see Appendix B) and participants were informed verbally prior to the personal interviews and at the point of distribution of the questionnaires. Additionally, contact information for the researcher was included in case participants need any clarification or further information.

Anonymity. A traditional method of avoiding privacy problems is to practice anonymity to protect participants. (Drew, Hardman, & Hosp, 2008, p. 72) The use of fictitious names is utilized to disguise the identity of individuals, groups, organizations and locations. In this research the school has been assigned a pseudonym. Additionally, participants are not identified by name but were assigned participant numbers in the case of the questionnaire and an alphabetical code and title for interviewees.

Confidentiality. The privacy and confidentiality of all participants is protected so that they would not be placed in any undesirable position. All records of this research/study will be stored safely and securely to maintain participants' confidentiality. Participants' names do not appear anywhere on the questionnaires or interview transcripts.

Bias. Steps were taken to avoid researcher bias by asking good questions and interpreting the answers fairly. (Yin, 2014) Questioning techniques were developed to avoid certain types of questions such as provocative, leading and loaded questions. Instead the focus was on opinion, knowledge and experience. Particular care to avoid interviewer bias meant the use of a systematic approach to soliciting, recording and interpreting information. Since qualitative researchers focus on the importance of not tampering with the natural setting under study, the collection of data was in its natural setting at the school at a place and time convenient to the participants.

Since bias can occur at any phase of research, including study design, data collection, and in the process of data analysis, this researcher took care to follow all recommended steps to ensure ethical conduct, rigour, and research processes were followed to avoid any misrepresentation of information. Some writers/researchers acknowledge however that all research is biased to some degree since researchers have a partiality to some paradigm. (Belk, 2006, p. 322), Or as Selltiz, Jahoda, Deutsch and Cook (1962, p. 583) point out, 'interviewers are human beings and not machines, and their manner may have an effect on respondents' so that there is always the danger of bias sneaking into interviews.

Method of Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is generally a labour intensive and time consuming task. (Drew, Hardman, & Hosp, 2008) However it was very gratifying to see patterns emerge and to be able to extract meaningful information and conclusions. A thematic, descriptive approach was employed. It relied on all relevant evidence and the most significant issue of the study is addressed. (Yin, 2014)

The first step conducted as the data was collected was to organize the data. This involved transcribing the interviews and recording the data collected by the questionnaires. This was an ongoing procedure followed throughout the data collection process. Computer programmes such as Microsoft Excel (spreadsheet) and Word (word processing) were used to assist in this qualitative data analysis.

Thematic analysis of data. Thematic analysis is the most common method used for descriptive qualitative research. The thematic analysis looked across all data collected to identify the common issues that reappeared, and identified the central themes that summarized all views collected. The thematic analysis was conducted in stages.

First, the transcripts were read and annotated. Preliminary observations were made. This was especially useful with the initial transcripts as attempts were made to get a feel for the data.

Second, themes were identified. This was achieved by looking in detail at the data to start identifying themes. Notes were made in the column adjacent to the transcribed data/text. These were abstract and not just a summary but main

ideas expressed by the participants. Lines were numbered to make it easy to refer to each segment of data when coding or discussing it. A list of these themes was formulated as the data was examined.

Third, a coding scheme was developed. This involved gathering together the initial themes to create a list of all themes and codes to be applied to the data. Broad codes were divided into a number of sub codes as required. It was useful to develop the coding scheme as soon as initial data was collected. Colour coding was also employed to easily identify the assigned codes.

The fourth step was to code the data. Coding allows for the 'cluster' of key issues in the data and facilitates the steps towards 'drawing conclusions'. (Bell, 2005, p. 214) This step involved applying the codes to the whole set of data, by entering codes in the columns of the transcripts using the word processing software. In some cases, the same line(s) of data was coded in several different ways, from very basic codes to categories that reflect broader analytic themes. The whole data set was coded and identifying colours assigned as applicable.

Finally, the coded text was sorted and data grouped and compared to similar pieces of information to provide an analysis of the patterns created. The framework for the analysis was explanatory – guided by the research questions.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Limitations are influences that the researcher cannot control. One limitation in this research was time constraints. The entire research was conducted in a six-months period. The procedure to acquire the required permission took

approximately three months, which meant data collection, analysis and completion of the report was limited to a three month period.

The non-participants in the questionnaire were also a limitation as the researcher had no control over the availability of the school personnel or their willingness to participate. Four school personnel were not available out of the fifty-nine teaching and administrative personnel at the school. The instruments utilized also provided a limitation in its inherent design as to the amount and type of information acquired. In qualitative research another limitations is that usually the findings cannot be generalized to the larger population. This is especially true when the definition of the population is broad.

The delimitations were the choices made by the researcher. It describes the boundaries that were set for the study. The delimitations include the choice of a single case – one secondary school. This school was selected since it has been involved in the CVQ and TTNVQ from inception. Also, the participants were limited to school administrators and teaching staff only. Students and non-teaching staff were excluded. Additionally, external participants were limited to one NTA personnel and one representative of the MOE Curriculum Unit. These participants were selected since they were a good representation of the personnel directly involved in the implementation of the CVQ in Schools initiative.

The data collection instruments were delimited to an interview survey – questionnaire and personal interviews. Observation and document analysis were included to a limited extent to review relevant information.

Generalization

Generalizability in qualitative research refers to the extent to which theory developed within one study may be exported to provide explanations for experiences in comparable situations. (Krefting, 1991) One perspective suggests that the ability to generalize is not relevant in many qualitative research projects. Guba (1981) presented another viewpoint on applicability in qualitative research by referring to fittingness or transferability, as the criterion against which applicability of qualitative data is measured. This criterion is met when the findings fit into contexts outside the study situation as determined by the degree of similarity or goodness of fit between the two contexts. Findings are for this situation/context and generalization is not expected for this qualitative study, due to the small sample size, and uncontrollable factors such as culture. However, some degrees of similarity may be evident.

Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to identify the issues which are hindering the successful implementation of the CVQ in schools programme, with focus on the Greenville Secondary School. As discussed in the previous chapter, triangulation of data collected occurred via a survey interview-questionnaire, personal interviews, observation and examination of relevant documents. This chapter describes the findings of this research study. The first two sections describe the results in terms of descriptive statistics and the status of the CVQ implementation at the school. In the following three sections, the data collected has been organized based on emergent themes and placed in context of each of the research questions.

Descriptive Statistics

There were fifty five participants in the survey interview – questionnaire: 3 administration and 52 teaching staff. Of these participants, 16 were males and 39 females. The majority of participants were over 40 years old. The number of staff between the ages 18 -40 years were 20, from 40 to 49 were 15, and 50 to 60 were 20. The school personnel involved with CVQ at the school either directly or indirectly were 21 while 34 were not involved in any way. Eighteen persons were teachers who have received some level of training as a CVQ assessor while the remaining 3 were school administrators who were involved in administrative functions. Of the 18 teachers, 6 were under the age of 40, 6 were between 40 and

50 years old and 6 were 50 and above. The three administrators were all over 50 years of age.

The personal interviews were conducted with seven interviewees. Interviewees A to D were teachers trained as assessors in four different occupational areas. Interviewee E – Administrator was the principal of the school, while Interviewee F – NTA was involved with the implementation of CVQ and training of teachers at the school, and Interviewee G – MOE Curriculum is a member of the TVET Unit whose duties include the delivery of presentations at schools to inform parents, students and school personnel about the CVQ in schools programme.

Findings - Status of Implementation at the School

The status of implementation of the CVQ in this school shows various stages of implementation for different occupational areas. The responses to assessor interview Question 4 “Has this CVQ (your area of specialization) been implemented at this school?” were varied. Interviewee A - Carpentry stated “No. It has been a bit challenging to get it going. It has never been started.” Interviewee B – Commercial Food Preparation (CFP) responded “Yes and no. There is one group which did it. There is supposed to be another group which did not do it, the third group I can’t say whether they will be doing it or not.” The third respondent Interviewee C – Grow Box answered “Yes, I tried it last year to this year. One group of students – 21, which was a humungous class and they did not get full certification.” Interviewee D – Data Operations responded “Yes, it has been implemented. First time. The 14 units were completed – the full standard.”

In response to the question “Do you believe the CVQ has been successfully implemented at this school?” Interviewee E – Administrator gave the response “The answer is no. Because there is a type of teacher apathy in teaching CVQ.” He continued that “teachers have failed to acknowledge that CVQ is a MOE mandate.” While Interviewee F – NTA responded “You need a little more cooperation from the teachers. Because some of the teachers refuse to do it right now, like those in metal work and woodwork.”

Research Question 1:

What roadblocks (if any) can one discern from the opinions of school and NTA personnel that impede progress towards CVQ implementation?

The opinions of school and NTA personnel were gathered via both the questionnaire (Appendix B) and personal interviews (Appendices C, D, and E). The data collected was organized into themes after the raw data was coded. The following are the findings according to the themes derived.

Self-efficacy. The issue of self-efficacy was examined in both the questionnaire and interview questions. The level of self-efficacy appears low. Results show that 14 of the 18 teachers who indicated involvement with CVQ responded that they have received training for CVQ but only 7 indicated that they were certified as an assessor. In response to Question 18 on the questionnaire, 11 persons rated their confidence to perform duties as an assessor for CVQ as unprepared, poor or fair. While 4 gave a rating as good. The remaining six out of the 21 participants who indicated involvement with CVQ at this school responded

as not applicable or did not respond. No participant gave the response of very good.

Responding to the question “Do you believe you are adequately prepared for the implementation of the CVQ into the Secondary School?” The following are the interviewees’ responses:

Interviewee A: “Yes I am.”; “Delivery yes. The assessment is rather challenging because there is a lot of paper work.”

Interviewee B: “Yes I have the skills to impart to the students”; but added that “we don’t feel comfortable enough to actually get it done.”

Interviewee C: “No, not really”; “We were trained with the technical requirements of putting CVQ together, but in terms of specialization in the field of grow box operation, no.”

Interviewee D: “No, I don’t think so”; “I’m better prepared to do it a second time, but, again I still feel you need to have some form of standardization.”

Interviewee E: “As a principal, I have received no training in any component of CVQ implementation or even policy development regarding implementation of CVQ. Absolutely none.”

Conversely, in response to the question if the staff is prepared, Interviewee F as the NTA trainer responded “Yes, the teachers are trained.”

Resources. In response to Questionnaire Item 21, 16 participants rated the level of materials/resources available for CVQ implementation as poor or fair, while 2 participants rated the level of materials/resources as good and 3 responded as not applicable or gave no answer.

Interviewee E stated that “Generally the resources that are required to teach CVQ in most of the areas, the same resources can be used to teach CSEC. The resources are satisfactory but not necessarily good.” Resources were a popular topic in the interviews. Most interviewees indicated issues with the availability of resources for implementing CVQs. These issues were divided into distinct categories.

Facilities and equipment. Facilities and equipment were generally reported to be inadequate. The following are verbatim reports of the interviewees’ views on the adequacy of facilities and equipment:

Interviewee A: “You need more space to work with. Because certain aspects of the skill need more space to perform. The facilities are not sufficient. Resources are insufficient.”

Interviewee B: “We have the equipment, because it’s the same equipment used for CSEC.”

Interviewee C: “the lab is an old run down lab that we’re working in. The facilities – we don’t have facilities, we don’t have resources, equipment, we don’t have enough boots for the children.” Additionally, “we don’t have enough space, because I have a class of 21 children who are

supposed to be making grow boxes. Because of the lack of resources and the lack of time I do more group instead of individual work.”

Interviewee D: “Issues- lack of resources. We don’t have enough computers, and computers go down, they’re not being replaced or sometimes they’re not being fixed as quickly as they should. This CVQ has a lot of photocopying that you have to do and in terms of photocopier machine we didn’t have one at all. And sometimes I had to take from my own pocket to go and do photocopies, which is unfair.” Also, “We have the software, but out of the 10 computers, we only have 4 with internet access. We need the internet to do research on the different units.”

Interviewee E: “I think we may have some of the facilities, some of the physical resources.” He added, “I think it is not good, but satisfactory.”

Interviewee F: “what CXC is expecting is that we do the facilities audit and we advise the school as to what material they will need. They will build capacity over the years. Over a period of time, they will buy the necessary tools and equipment but they will have something to start with. You have to continuously build on what they have.”

The NTA audit completed prior to the commencement of the CVQ initiative at the school had deemed the school as having adequate equipment and other resources. Some funds (\$100,000) were allocated to the school in the initial stage to purchase any additional materials and equipment. The principal indicated that he was not aware of how these funds were spent.

Safety: The topic of safety was raised by Interviewee C who performs as a trainer/assessor for Grow Box Operations. In this area she reiterates, safety is of paramount importance. However she laments the dangers present and the lack of safety equipment and materials. Interviewee C explained:

Knowing that safety is one of the main things you have to do before you even start the CVQ. Safety equipment, eye wash station, they have to touch fertilizers. They have to do spraying and they can't spray, I don't know why they put that on the ROS.

Better facilities would encourage me to implement it and make my students safer and it will demonstrate the first part of safety from the ROS.

My concern for my student's safety is one of the reasons.

According to Interviewee C, units of the occupational standard are not possible to be completed at schools since "Yes they have to monitor the crop but they can't spray chemicals. I will not allow anybody to spray any chemicals. And we don't have the safety equipment to be able to carry out that practice." She is very concerned that "All of our labs in the school are not up to the OSH Act at all. Safety is a big issue and we don't have that here."

Materials. The lack of materials and consumables was an issue highlighted by many interviewees. Interviewee B noted issues with resources as she described her experience about the lack of resources:

You have to be begging for photocopying to be done, for access to a computer, for printing of documents, for the students' work. It really is a

turn off, because you have to be begging. The last class that I had, it was hell to get things photocopied, it was hell to get things printed, and it was hell to get access to a computer.

She added also that the need to practice increased the demand for consumables which was not always provided. She had issues when trying to source materials as she describes “Administration find we use too much food stuff, why is it we want this, or we want that, as if we’re carrying it to our house.” She expressed issues with the allocation of funding when she stated that “we need more resources from the ministry. From the administration as well. When we receive funding, it is not given to those areas that it’s supposed to.”

Interviewee D also experienced a lack of support for implementing the CVQ by difficulties in accessing materials. She explains:

Printing is another problem. You didn’t have ink when you need it. The printer without ink doesn’t make sense. And even paper, when you ask for paper they would question you and say like ‘You again?’ like if you’re using the paper for your own personal thing and not for the students.

Interviewee E explains that “the fair allocation of resources for the teaching of CVQ which unfortunately may not happen” because the belief that the CSEC is of greater importance to the measurement of performance of the school and therefore resources would be so allocated.

Human resource. Human resources were examined in two perspectives: the sufficiency of labour and the level of preparedness of the CVQ personnel in terms of training.

Manpower. With regards to sufficiency of labour most personnel - school and NTA, indicated a need for more staff to divide the increased workload.

Verbatim reports of their views are listed:

Interviewee A: “Teachers can get help, with paperwork. Assistance will help implementation in the area.”

Interviewee C: “I require more teachers, somebody should be teaching CVQ alone, somebody should be teaching CSEC alone and if they want to rotate it fine. Specialize – you can’t do all or you’re going to get crazy.”
Also, “MOE can hire more teachers. Bring in trained people to teach the CVQ if you really want it to work.”

Interviewee D: “Because of the amount of paper work that is being done, we have to have somebody who can assist with the set of photocopying that is needed.”

Interviewee E: “we have the same teacher teaching both, and there is a level of burn- out and overwork in doing that.”

Interviewee F: “One teacher alone cannot do all the paperwork. A lot of people complain about the paperwork.”

Preparedness. Training of the human resource at the school was a very contentious issue. It was suggested that training needed to be improved. All assessors interviewed expressed the need for further training:

Interviewee A: “I think it needs training throughout”; and “More training with computers will help. Training from NTA, need more time. More specific training in your area and then broaden it so that it’s easier when you have a smaller area to deal with. More simplified training concentrating on your skill area”.

Interviewee B “Retraining – actually I have done training about four times, yet I still don’t feel confident within myself to deliver what it is that’s required. Because it was one day training.” Additionally, “The training was too general, too broad. They had all the different areas together. It was not specific to my area.”

Interviewee C “We were trained with the technical requirements of putting CVQ together, but in terms of specialization in the field of grow box operation, no.” She added, “If I have to teach CVQ, yes you need more hands on training and experiences. The EV needs to come and demonstrate what is required”.

Interviewee D “The training is not sufficient and there’s no standardization. If a teacher is doing something in terms of my Data Operations, there is no standard throughout as to what to look for. Everybody is just guessing what it possibly means.”

Suggestions were also made for restructuring training with suggestions given as follows:

Interviewee A: “Train with other teachers in same area. From other schools also to share best practices. Peers to participate in training. You can learn better from your peers. Restructure training. Guidance from peers to show how easy it is. Cater to teacher at different levels. Senior or older teachers may learn at a slower rate and can get frustrated. The younger teachers may pick it up faster.”

Interviewee C: “More best practice, because every school is doing their own dramas.” Also, “The group training was not adequate – agri people need to go one side, everybody needs to go in their own area and talk to their curriculum officer and talk to whoever is their EV. We don’t see our curriculum officer and EV often.”

Interviewee D: “The sharing of best practice might have helped. Actually, the only way I could have completed this Data Operations CVQ group was because I got help from Ms. S. She had a good idea, experience. Otherwise I don’t think I would have been able to complete it.”

Interviewee E: “We need to have more effective, more efficient, more representative training to cover all the people who are involved in the CVQ process: principals, heads of departments, who are not always very

willing to pursue implementation of CVQ, and, most of all, the teachers who actually teach CVQ”

The principal - Interviewee E summarizes the issue of resources as: “Whilst we may have some of the resources, I think that the facilities in terms of human resources are still inadequate, in the sense that there is a certain amount of apathy in the teaching of CVQ in secondary schools.” He explains that “in particular some of the older teachers who are close to retirement; I don’t think they have bought into the CVQ concept as yet.” He concludes that “the human resource component I think still is not satisfactory.”

From the NTA’s perspective Interviewee F explained that they are not responsible for skill specific training; their role in training is “we train them in the methods of assessment only.” From his point of view “the teachers are trained.”

Time. In response to the questionnaire Item 22, 10 of the 21 participants rated the time allocation for the implementation of the CVQ in terms of class periods as either poor or fair, 7 rated it as good and 4 responded as either not applicable or gave no response.

Interviewees also discussed the issue of time in terms of number of teaching periods timetabled per week; time needed for training and practice; time to plan and execute assessment; and time to complete paperwork. Most interviewees agreed that time was not sufficiently allocated. Interviewee A suggested five additional periods per week to execute the CVQ in his occupational area. Additionally, he indicated that a lot of time was required for

planning which “takes away from personal time. There is a lot of work involved. It is extra work, additional work to prepare. Out of class time.”

Interviewee B also indicated the need for time to plan. She stated that “There are time constraints. The numbers of periods are insufficient.” According to her, “The CVQ and CSEC overlap, but there are some additional areas as well. You need more time, or separate it and give one teacher to teach CSEC and one to teach CVQ. Don’t timetable the same teacher to teach both CSEC and CVQ.” Interviewee C concurs: “The problem with us – well the time, in terms of the amount of teachers we have to be able to do it. We cannot be doing CSEC and CVQ.”

Both Interviewees B and C spoke of the need for time to practice. Interviewee C stated students needed more time to practice and that “8 periods is for CVQ and CSEC, it is not enough time. Because we’re not allocated separate time for CVQ.” According to her this results in “literally running out of time if you have to do it properly.” She suggested that the time allocated is “not enough for the amount of work that needs to be done.” Interviewee D had similar experiences as the previous interviewees. Additionally though she noted that to complete the entire Occupational Standard with her students “extra time had to be found somehow other than normal school hours for them to finish up.”

Interviewee D agrees that the workload should be divided if sufficient time is to be made available for completing the CVQ. She stated that students should choose “either CSEC or CVQ, but not together. With different teachers,

one doing CSEC and one doing CVQ and alternate it. That would be a solution. Running it parallel is too much.”

The school administrator also listed time as an issue “from a timetabling point of view.” He suggested that the situation would have been “more manageable” if there were separate teachers to teach CVQ- Grow Box and CSEC Agricultural Science given the demands for more class periods. The NTA personnel however declare however that “once you get about 7 or 8 periods per week it could be done.” He suggested that the key is “to learn to budget your time.”

Rewards. The need for some form of reward or incentive was common among most assessors interviewed. Interviewee A believed that teachers need some incentive. He suggested “some reward, whether it’s more money, but some reward like that. Teachers should be compensated because of the additional work load.” Interviewee B also spoke of the need for “Compensation for the workload and also for the qualifications.” Interviewee D agreed with her colleagues by her opinion: “I think because of the extra amount of work we should be compensated in some form or the other for it.”

Implementation practices. Many issues arose in terms of the implementation plan and execution. Interviewees expressed concerns with the way the CVQ has been implemented. Interviewee B stated that “Whether or not it will be done depends on the teacher’s willingness to do it. The teacher will dictate whether the child will prepare for the CVQ or not.”

Interviewee E does note however that teachers play a large role in the current situation at the school since “teachers have failed to acknowledge that CVQ is a MOE mandate.” He acknowledges that the school is obliged to implement the CVQ and that “it has nothing to do with a personal preference, our choices are limited.”

Interviewee C was concerned that proper adoption processes were not followed prior to this educational initiative being implemented. She stated that “We cannot just copy things wholesale. We have to work it with our culture, our children, work it with the mindset of parents, and then it will work.”

Another implementation issue with regards to change was noted by Interviewee D as she stated:

Because there’s a lot of bureaucracy, and at the top they still think that CSEC is better than CVQ any day. They are not flexible and change takes a long time to change at the top. They’re not going from the top down to change but from the bottom to change. And it doesn’t make sense because we at the bottom are spinning top in mud, and not going anywhere because nobody at the top is listening to us.

Interviewee E takes part responsibility for the implementation shortfall at the school as he admits that “In our school, my efforts have been lacking. And that is something that the principal accepts responsibility for, because our implementation is unsatisfactory.”

Generally, implementation requires funding of the new programme and then continued efforts to sustain the initiative. Interviewee E attributes the failure of the implementation of the CVQ largely to funding. He explained:

CVQ is considered parallel curriculum which requires additional funding, which is not forthcoming. The standard of measure of a school, from the ministry's point of view now, is academic performance whether it's CAPE or CSEC. Why would a principal want to expend money on a curriculum that provides little benefits to the students at the expense of the academic areas?

He acknowledges that the school was given a onetime grant of \$100,000 but noted that "additional funding is really required to subsidize the cost of adequate equipment, machinery, resources, and teacher resources and things like that. So the cost factor is one of the issues faced in the implementation of CVQs."

He adds that "the planning and implementation component is lacking and inadequate." He raised the point that the mandate has been unfairly passed down since "some schools so far have been allowed to not do CVQ for example some of the prestige board schools, while other government schools are demanded to implement it."

A major component of implementation with regards to promoting the CVQ to foster buy-in by stakeholders was deficient. According to Interviewee E:

The promotional skill of some of the people who represent NTA and the MOE should be improved. They don't really inspire; they inspire little in

the teachers and principals with whom they communicate to actually commence implementation of CVQs in secondary schools.

Those given the responsibility to implement CVQ seem to not have satisfied their obligations satisfactorily. Interviewee E noted that while conversing with other principals, “we all agreed that some of the people themselves who come to promote CVQ from NTA lack the enthusiasm. They lack the energy that is needed to promote a parallel syllabus, in this case CVQ.”

Interviewee F did not raise any issues with the implementation process but rather spoke about the role of the school personnel. He explained that “some of the IVs are not fulfilling their roles. They need to start doing internal verifications earlier to help monitor the programme.” Additionally, he stated that “Only the first two years is hard.” He simplified the procedures that teachers should follow to accomplish the parallel curriculum: “What they have to do is to marry the CSEC with the CVQ. They have to map it out and see what are the common topics. So when you teach one you teach the two together.”

Status of TVET. An issue encountered in the implementation of the CVQ in schools pertains to school and NTA personnel’s perception of TVET. It is often said that certain types of students pursue TVET. Opinions of the interviewees were not divergent to this idea.

Interviewee B described the students in the TVET area as “usually both weak and lazy to an extent.” He attributes this as a reason why CVQ would not be

successful since “the paper work they have to do they don’t want to complete that aspect of it.”

Additionally, school personnel did not have very positive opinions about the level of qualification CVQ offers. Generally CVQ was considered a second-choice. Interviewee B expounds that “it’s the low level entry jobs you’re preparing them for if they do a CVQ alone. So if they want to get upward mobility now they have to have CSEC.”

Interviewee C also appears unconvinced that CVQ is beneficial to students. She suggested that steps be taken to “develop the recognition, give that level of satisfaction. I did a CVQ, ok I can go there or I know I’m getting employed.”

Interviewee E believed that the CVQ was meant for students “who are not necessarily academically inclined. And no matter who says what, that is what the original intentions of CVQ was.” He justifies that because the school is assessed by its academic performance and not on “the basis of the amount of CVQ areas or subjects that are taught” this is the reason the school is not “really adequately prepared to implement CVQ.”

Despite Interviewee F stating that “CVQ is for everybody” he still believes that there is a disparity between the students and that “the bright ones could get the full CVQ and the weaker ones should get unit awards.” Similarly, Participant 17 interprets that “CVQ qualifications should be for students who cannot cope at CSEC level.”

Communication. Issues with communications were very common in the research. Generally the complaint was that there was not sufficient interactive communication but rather a one-way dialogue or information simply being passed down. In some cases there was a lack of communication altogether.

Interviewee B describes the lack of communication as the absence of information for students, parents and staff. The problem which arose was that stakeholders were not sensitized about what is required and “the value of the CVQ.” Additionally she pointed to a lack of recognition of the CVQ on the job market: “When you look at the job market and the requirements. They don’t really ask for CVQ.” Interviewee E agreed by stating “I think a more effective, a more instructive; a more appropriate promotional programme needs to be done at a national level”.

Interviewee C said that teachers needed to “get feedback from their curriculum officer as well as their EV. Get to build that relationship between their EV and curriculum officer.” Sharing the sentiments about feedback was Interviewee D. She stated that when dealing with NTA personnel “if we have problems and we’re asking for clarification it’s difficult” because “they don’t want to listen to what you have to say.” She goes further to say “when they come to do their training they don’t listen”.

The problem appears to not be solely with NTA as Interviewee D stated: “Sometimes I feel that NTA does not listen to teachers. They are doing just like MOE and they are just giving orders as to what is supposed to be done.”

Research Question 2:

Are school personnel sold on the CVQ approach: do they believe it to be an appropriate way to certify skill?

The results are mixed with regards to the belief in the CVQ approach and its ability to appropriately certify skills. Some believe that it is appropriate but not necessarily appropriate in the secondary school, and questions the benefits to students. Of major concern in the findings is the knowledge or lack of knowledge about the CVQ.

CVQ awareness. It is difficult for school personnel to be sold on the CVQ approach as they know little or nothing about it. Results of questionnaire Item 23- Rate your level of knowledge about CVQ (see Table 2), shows a serious deficiency in terms of educating school personnel about this educational initiative. Merely about one quarter of the participants rated their knowledge level as good. Eight of these 13 participants were personnel actually involved with CVQ.

Table 2

Results: Questionnaire Item 23- Rate your level of knowledge about CVQ

	All participants	Participants involved with CVQ
Never heard of it	2	0
Poor	16	2
Fair	24	11
Good	13	8
Very good	0	0

Participant 55 clearly summarizes the issue by stating “I have no idea what CVQ is about. Non-CVQ teachers should be educated about it so that they will

have information to pass on to their students.” Interviewee E further explains the issue by saying, “I don’t think CVQ has been packaged, prepared and presented to teachers and students as being student friendly and being user friendly.”

Buy-in. The persons interviewed all had varying degrees of misgivings about the CVQ. Interviewee A does not appear to have bought into the CVQ in schools initiative. He does agree that CVQ is an appropriate way to certify skills; however he believes “outside of school... it would be easier for students to access the programme.” He states that too much is going on in the school at once and “We have the children confused.” Additionally he indicated that there is no need for the CVQ “If a student is doing a CSEC and passing”, and reiterates his point by saying “I don’t think the CVQ has any advantage over the CSEC.”

Interviewee B was more positive when asked of the appropriateness of CVQ to certify skills. She stated “It is one of the ways yes. It is skills based.” She explained further that “Yes it is an appropriate way, but it has to be sold. It has to be modified. We teachers need to buy into it. Teachers haven’t bought into it.” She suggested that “They have to do some PR with it” because according to her “right now it’s just going through the motions. They need to sell it to the entire society.”

Interviewee C also does not appear persuaded as she states “Once we are convinced that it’s just as weighted as a CXC subject then we will be able to convince parents and students and even other people in the academic area that this makes sense.”

Interviewee D appears indecisive as she explained “Skills itself – Yes. Yes I believe that it’s good for certifying the skills but sometimes it’s kind of difficult to make that distinction between skills and the theory work that goes with it.” She continues that “I don’t think it’s a true reflection of everybody’s skills. Some were definitely more skilled than others.” She is not sold on the CVQ approach and shows preference for CSEC when she said “Doing both together, I don’t think that makes sense. If I had to, I would advise the child to choose CSEC.”

Interviewee E responded “The answer is yes, I think it is an appropriate way to certify skills.” However, he goes on to say “But, because it has not gained national acceptance, remember the primary reason for CVQ is to obtain employment ok, and if employers don’t require CVQ as an essential skill, then what’s the sense in doing it.”

Interviewee E – the principal of the school, does not appear to have bought into the CVQ approach. He is concerned that CVQ is taking away from the efforts that should be placed on the CSEC curriculum. He maintains that the performance of the school is measured by its CSEC and CAPE results. He explained that “We are still steeped in being in a society where success is measured in terms of academic performance and unfortunately CVQ doesn’t fit the mold of an academic area.” He added that “If someone can show me one employer that has indicated a need for a CVQ area as a requirement I’ll be happy.”

Generally, some school personnel may believe the CVQ has its merits however the main issue they highlighted is the actual implementation of the CVQ in schools. Comments by questionnaire participants such as “It is a very good

idea, but the CVQ is not well implemented in secondary schools”, “implementation is a problem due to lack of resources, communication, time, etc.”, and “if it is a mandate then its implementation should be standard in all schools” all indicated their opinion of “Poor implementation methods.”

Participant 35 explained that “I think that the CVQ is a good idea but it seems that the way it is implemented needs to be simplified.” While Participant 40 expounds that “CVQ is a good programme once properly implemented with sufficient time and resource allocated to it.” Other participants made comments such as “Not enough research done prior to implementation. Some teachers and students still not clear on the programme” and “The intention is a good one, but it should involve all stakeholders' input in implementation and delivery.”

Student benefits. The responses to questionnaire items 24 to 26 (see Table 3 and Table 4) provided valuable information regarding the school personnel’s belief in CVQ providing any advantage to students as well as their role in counselling and guiding students in subject and career choices.

Table 3

Responses: Questionnaire Items 24, 25 and 26: All participants

No.	Question	YES	NO	MAYBE
24	Are you involved in subject choice counselling with students?	20	35	-
25	Do you offer career guidance information to students?	39	15	1 – No ans
26	Do you believe attaining a CVQ occupational standard can offer any advantage to a student?	19	9	27

Table 4

Responses: Questionnaire Items 24, 25 and 26: The 21 staff involved with CVQ

No.	Question	YES	NO	MAYBE
24	Are you involved in subject choice counselling with students?	4	17	-
25	Do you offer career guidance information to students?	13	7	1 - No ans
26	Do you believe attaining a CVQ occupational standard can offer any advantage to a student?	10	5	6

The data shows the majority of school personnel are not convinced that the CVQ offers any advantage to students, yet most school personnel indicated that they offered career guidance information to students. The implications of this can be dire for the success of CVQ in schools. Of great significance is the finding that approximately half of the staff actually involved with CVQ at the school believes that CVQ offers some benefit to students. It is apparent that all staff involved with CVQ at the school has not bought into the CVQ in schools initiative.

Interviewee A makes the point that students need to know the benefits of the CVQ as he explains that “students need to be aware of the CVQ and where it can put them in their career.” Similarly, Interviewee B had concerns about the benefits to students as she stated:

When you look at the ads for jobs, no where do you see that they ask for the CVQ. They need to recognize the value or the importance of the CVQ. Even tertiary level institutes they don't recognize the CVQ either. UTT advertised some course with food and there was nothing mentioned about CVQ, nothing mentioned about CSEC for food and nutrition.

She further contends that “We are education students for what? To go where, just to go home?” She suggested that:

The CVQ is preparing them only for the low level entry jobs and not allowing them room to grow, academically or to further their education. Unless they have that drive to further themselves then. With CVQ alone that’s low level jobs with limited options.

Interviewee B offers that this must be the reason for resistance of the CVQ:

“Looking at the child’s future ahead, that’s probably why people may be resisting that as well.”

Interviewee C is also not convinced that the CVQ approach is beneficial.

With regards to a student furthering his/her education she stated:

It does certify them with a skill. At least something they can do on the outside. But in terms of moving up from one stage to another, like how you’ll take CXC, no I have not seen that implemented as yet in the secondary school system.

With regards to employment she is equally skeptical: “Employment – well I haven’t seen anything play of as yet to see students being accepted out there. I don’t know.”

Interviewee D noted some benefit to the students: “In terms of the skills itself, I would say yes, they really had to do a lot of practicing of the different software packages - productivity tools. I felt it was beneficial to them.” However,

in terms of benefits to be derived from certification, she appears not as convinced. As she states “Most employers are still bent on CXC results not really so much on CVQ.” She goes on to say that “some of them probably don’t even know what CVQ is about. So I feel they need to make employers more aware of it. I still feel they will give preference to the CSEC child and not the CVQ child.” In order to be convinced that the programme is beneficial she suggests the relevant authority should “Show me how it is profiting my students. You need to sell it to the employers also, and then it will make sense selling the CVQ.”

Interviewee E does not appear to be persuaded that the CVQ is an appropriate way to certify skills as he stated “Under the present structure, no. Again, it all boils down to national acceptance of CVQ as a credible and creditable assessment.” According to Interviewee E “while CVQ in principle is a very creditable idea, I don’t think CVQ provides any advantages to the candidate at all.” He suggests that “NTA and the MOE need to/must show students benefits that can be derived from pursuing CVQ at the secondary school level” or else “the students are going to be at a disadvantage.”

Research Question 3:

Is there evidence that the relevant Ministry has done enough to assure the adoption of the CVQ approach in the secondary school system?

The answer to this research question was sought from various sources. From discussions with school personnel and examination of documents provided it was found that after the 2012 mandate from the Ministry of Education, most of the directives and guidance concerning the CVQ in schools programme were

given to schools via the NTA. For example, in a communication dated 16th January, 2014 the NTA advised principals of the secondary schools about deadlines and procedures for registration for 2014 CVQ Awards, awards information, external verification procedures and deadlines, and directions for entering of awards information.

Dissemination of information. Evidence of a MOE communication to schools in the form of a memorandum with the subject “Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) in Schools Presentation” showed some effort on behalf of the MOE Curriculum Development TVET Unit. This document requested principals to make arrangements to schedule a presentation by the TVET Unit at the school. The presentation was aimed at students entering form 4 in the next academic year starting September 2014. The target audience was these students and their parents. However, this document dated 6th February, 2014 was never received at this school from the MOE. A copy of the document was faxed to the school on the 21st May, 2014 from another school due to personal conversations between two teachers of both schools. The memorandum arrived at the school a mere two weeks prior to a planned meeting with school officials, parents and students.

Top down approach. Interviewee D pointed out that that MOE has not done enough to encourage the adoption of the CVQ in schools. She stated:

MOE just dictates. MOE does not really support teachers in how they go about doing their job. There is only a one way communication. They order

teachers about what to do, but they do not accept feedback from the teachers to know what's your problem, how am I going to help you. There is no forward and backward communication at all when it comes to that. It's top down and that's it.

Interviewee E also points out shortfalls in the MOE role as he stated:

I believe that the MOE needs to show to the students as well, benefits that can be derived from pursuing the CVQ at the secondary school. It's almost as though it's done in a top down manner. I MOE say you school do CVQ and your choices are limited you have to do CVQ.

Efficiency. Interviewee E raised the point that efficient staff is needed at the MOE “who have the energy and the skill to convince schools and members of staff that CVQ is the way to go.” Additionally, it appears that the MOE's curriculum personnel are not prepared to answer questions as he detailed:

There are a lot and lot of questions, and unanswered questions. Because some of the curriculum people were stumped. They were not qualified meaning that they didn't have the background and information and knowledge base to answer some of the questions the principals were asking about CVQ.

Many school personnel indicated shortfalls which were assumed to be the responsibility of the NTA. Interviewee F however stated that these were the responsibility of the MOE. He said “The MOE need to come and speak to the teachers and students.” He further differentiated roles of the NTA and the MOE:

The NTA is actually a monitoring agency. We do not implement the CVQ. The training providers are the implementers. We facilitate the certification of the candidates. The training of the teachers. The training provider, whether a private person or the MOE, they need to provide the resources, the correct staff, the correct equipment and tools and so on. And the timetabling and all these things has to be addressed by the ministry.

These were all issues discussed by school personnel, most of which were assumed to be the responsibility of the NTA.

Marketing. Many participants expressed the need for a marketing plan. As Interviewee F stated “We need to have a marketing plan, a marketing strategy.” The MOE Curriculum Division – TVET Unit has the responsibility of marketing the CVQ in schools.

Interviewee G presented the benefits of pursuing the CVQ such as encouraging entrepreneurs as he pointed out that “We are already seeing students going into their own business”. He also informed the parents and students that the CVQ is being accepted by institutions such as UTT (the University of Trinidad and Tobago) and TTHTI (Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute) for matriculation. This information however is not widespread as most teachers still do not know of it. Also, parents and students almost missed the opportunity to become aware of these benefits because of inadequate communication of valuable information by the relevant MOE department. Interviewee G acknowledged that the relevant department of the

MOE has not done sufficient to market the CVQ in the past. However he pointed out that steps are being taken at present and would be further escalated in the near future to promote CVQ nationally.

Summary of Findings

Several observations were made in this research as the participants' responses were clustered around recurring themes. The findings pertinent to the three research questions and the derived themes are summarized below.

Research question one. The opinions of school and NTA personnel directed attention to low levels of self-efficacy of all CVQ related school personnel. Generally, the lack of resources was highlighted as shortfalls in facilities, equipment, materials, human resources and time were discussed. Furthermore, many teachers/assessors interviewed expressed the desire for some form of reward or compensation for the additional workload. Additionally, school personnel were concerned about the approach by which the CVQ has been implemented. The status of TVET at the school appears to be low as most participants believe CVQ to be a second choice and meant for students who are not "academically inclined". Communication issues were also emphasized as participants complained of one-way communication or a lack overall.

Research question two. Mixed results were obtained since generally school personnel believed the CVQ is an appropriate way to certify skills, but not necessarily in the secondary school. Participants expressed that CVQ awareness needs to be improved as all stakeholders should be educated. Additionally, the

issue of buy-in was recurrent as many participants were not convinced of the CVQ approach and showed preference for the CSEC curriculum and qualification. Plus, teachers were generally not aware of benefits to the students who pursued CVQ at the secondary school and therefore appeared not to be sold on the CVQ approach.

Research question three. The opinions of the research participants gravitated toward the poor performance of the relevant Ministry regarding dissemination of information. The examination of documents also confirmed shortcomings. Additionally, interviewees complained of the ‘top down approach’ taken to implement the CVQ in schools initiative. The efficiency of MOE staff and the performance of their roles were also areas of concern. Likewise, participants spoke of the absence of a visible marketing strategy.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify the issues which are hindering the successful implementation of the CVQ in schools programme. Using a qualitative research methodology, a case study was conducted at the Greenville Secondary School to gather the opinions of school personnel as well as NTA and MOE representatives. Overall, information was gathered from 55 participants from the school via a survey interview - questionnaire. Five of these school personnel together with one representative each from the NTA and the MOE Curriculum Department participated in personal interviews. Observations as well as examination of relevant documents were also completed.

The status of implementation of the CVQ at this school is diverse for the various occupational areas: the CVQ has not been implemented in many areas and does not appear that it will begin soon, while other areas started and abandoned the programme, and others have started and realized at least one cohort of student awards. Analysis of the research data revealed the presence of numerous issues which appear to be impeding the successful implementation of the CVQ programme at this school. These ensuing issues were divided into three distinct categories to provide answers to each of the three research questions. This chapter discusses these findings. In addition, conclusions and recommendations for future practice and research based on the study are presented.

Research question 1. What roadblocks (if any) can one discern from the opinions of school and NTA personnel that impede progress towards CVQ implementation?

It was found that staff and administration had issues with self-efficacy. The school personnel who are key to the successful implementation of the CVQ at the school all expressed some level of ill preparedness and low confidence in their ability to perform the required duties. This is a significant issue as Robbins (2003) commented on the importance of ability and self-efficacy to changing performance.

Findings suggested that the level of resources at the school were inadequate. Suggestions were made for better facilities and equipment. Included also was the necessity for safety equipment. The accessibility of materials and consumables was also a point of contention. Also, assessors complained that funds were not allocated appropriately to the relevant departments to support the CVQ implementation, a point which the principal concedes. The desire for more human resources to facilitate the implementation of the CVQ was a common topic among school personnel. The NTA personnel agrees that the human resource element is deficient, but more toward the slant of attitude. Additionally, interviewees discussed the need for more training as they felt they were not sufficiently prepared and needed more in-depth and specific training. Time was also a very valuable resource which school personnel felt was not sufficient for completing both the CSEC and CVQ courses. Some expressed the desire for additional class periods while others lamented the need to use out of class time to

supplement the time allotted to complete the CVQ programme. Conversely, the NTA personnel thought the time allotted was sufficient. He suggested instead that the assessors learn to budget their time.

The topic of reward was identified by some assessors as an incentive needed to induce them to take on the additional workload required by the CVQ. They suggested compensation of some form such as money.

Many participants felt the implementation process was not satisfactory. The NTA personnel did not raise any issue with the implementation process but instead emphasized the role of the school personnel. The decision to implement the CVQ in the different occupational areas was treated as a subjective choice. The teachers were making the decision if they wanted to be trained as an assessor or to begin the CVQ. It was not treated as a mandate. The school principal attributes these implementation issues to teachers' apathy, his lack of effort, funding issues and poor guidance and information from the ministry responsible for the implementation of the CVQ in schools initiative. There is little evidence of development of policies and procedures for implementing and sustaining change (Robbins, 2003) which aligns to Lewin's refreezing stage. (Lewin, 1947)

Perceptions of TVET as a second-choice area of study appear to be a significant factor in the acceptance and implementation of the CVQ in this school. Similar to the experience described in India (Tilak, 2002), many interviewees subscribe to the notion that TVET is for certain students, usually those who are not 'academically inclined'. They believe students who are capable should pursue

the CSEC course rather than the CVQ. Many believed pursuing the CVQ would be a disadvantage to students and the school because of a lack of recognition at the institutional and the national level.

Finally, the issue of communication was raised. This issue was apparent at various levels. Some complained that there was a lack of communications altogether. Information was not being disseminated to all stakeholders. Another complaint by school personnel was that communication between the NTA and MOE personnel often took the form of one-way communication. There was little or no interaction and feedback was often not forthcoming.

Research question 2. Are school personnel sold on the CVQ approach: do they believe it to be an appropriate way to certify skill?

Generally, many school personnel indicated that the CVQ may be a good way to certify skills however they do not appear to be sold on the CVQ approach in secondary schools. One reason highlighted for this belief is the lack of information. Many school personnel are not aware of the CVQ or what it signifies. The second step in Lewin's change model (Lewin, 1947) which discusses buy-in is lacking. Participants stressed the need for buy-in since they were not convinced that the CVQ offered any advantage over the CSEC. The interviewees were all still dedicated to teaching the CSEC and saw no need to change. Additionally, school personnel are unfamiliar with the benefits the CVQ may present to the student. Approximately two-thirds of the participants of the survey either did not believe or were unsure of any advantage to students.

Comparing these findings to the case study in the Philippines (de Guzman, 2007) we can see a deficit in the efforts to develop acceptance of the programme. Little effort has been made to include stakeholders and encourage partnerships for implementation.

Research question 3. Is there evidence that the relevant Ministry has done enough to assure the adoption of the CVQ approach in the secondary school system?

The findings show inadequacy in the performance of functions necessary by the MOE to ensure successful adoption of the CVQ approach in this secondary school. It was suggested that there were insufficient communications between the stakeholders of this initiative. Furthermore, proper guidance and implementation practices were not forthcoming. The mandate was issued by the MOE, but there appears to be no follow up to monitor the stages of implementation or routes to gather feedback from the school. The findings show similarities to the case in South Africa where state's policy directives widely ignored the professional views of schools and teachers. (Harley & Wedekind, 2004)

Staff complained of not being properly trained to deliver and assess the CVQ in their areas of specialization. They assumed this to be the responsibility of the NTA; however the NTA representative identified this responsibility as being that of the relevant ministry. There was also no visible marketing plan. This shortfall was acknowledged by the MOE representative. He did however note that a more significant effort was being undertaken to promote the CVQ nationally.

Conclusions

It is clear that there are roadblocks which are impeding progress towards the CVQ implementation. These obstructions are evident at all levels of the implementation from top to bottom. Findings suggest major issues with the planning and execution of the implementation of the CVQ in schools programme starting at the initial stages. Findings of the research question three suggested that beyond the mandate issued by the MOE very little was been done to implement and monitor progress at the school. Most of the responsibilities were passed on to the NTA and the school personnel. There was little evidence of marketing of the programme or communications with school personnel to share information and feedback about the programme and its implementation.

Despite the opinion of the NTA personnel that the school personnel are trained, the findings show major shortcomings in training and the desire for more or rather more efficient training. School personnel do not feel confident that they are prepared and recommend further/modified training. This opinion it appears has been largely ignored.

Findings show that the success of the implementation of the CVQ in schools programme is dependent upon many variables at the school. Buy-in of the programme has not occurred and school personnel are asking for more information. They need to be convinced that the CVQ would provide some advantage. Additionally, it was found that issues present at the school such as the availability of resources - facilities, equipment, materials, time and human

resource, and the lack of the guidance or drive to actually implement the programme were major contributors to the present state of implementation.

Additionally, teachers/assessors felt the need to be compensated for the additional workload. They felt it unfair that they are receiving no reward for their increased workload and qualifications as a trained and certified assessor. This appears to be a contributing factor toward the perceived 'apathy' displayed by teachers.

Recommendations

In consideration of the findings of this study, the following suggestions are proposed for improving the success level of the implementation of the CVQ in schools programme.

It is established in the literature that implementation of educational initiatives must follow an implementation process. Indicators suggest that the relevant ministry need to take into consideration individual's concerns as outlined in the CBAM model (Fuller, 1969) as well as the various stages of implementation (National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools, 2010) required. Similarly, benefits may be derived from considering Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory. (Lippitt, Watson, & Westley, 1958) It is recommended that a more systematic approach be taken rather than the apparently improvised process currently in place

The results indicate many reasons why proper marketing and communication is necessary. It is recommended that a national marketing strategy

for the promotion and recognition of the CVQ be launched to encourage buy-in by all stakeholders.

The role of the change agent requires him/her to demonstrate commitment to change, power, training and endurance. (Lippitt, Watson, & Westley, 1958) At this school, it is recommended that the principal assume this role as the key person responsible for enacting change at the school. Observational learning (Bandura, 1977) can occur under his guidance and example, and with his support the steps required to implement the CVQ can be accomplished

Inadequate training is a great concern of school personnel. To improve the self-efficacy of school personnel clear instructions, training and modeling desired behaviour is suggested by Kritsonis (2005). It is recommended that a more comprehensive training programme be developed for each of the occupational areas to be pursued at secondary schools. The relevant teachers/assessors should be appropriately trained to not only perform as an assessor but also in the content and delivery of the curriculum. This includes the sharing of best practices.

The findings for this study were noteworthy, and provided a great amount of information. This research however was limited to a single case study. It is suggested that multiple case studies be attempted for a more extensive account of the issues faced which may substantiate or even augment the findings.

It is important to inquire about the issues faced in the implementation of this or any new educational programme since the demands on education is always changing. The findings are very illuminating when searching for possible

roadblocks which can then be used to formulate possible solutions for implementation issues of the CVQ.

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Appendix A

Permission to Conduct Research at a Government Secondary School



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL PLANNING DIVISION
CHEPSTOW HOUSE, 56 FREDERICK STREET, PORT-OF-SPAIN
TEL/FAX: 625-0806

May 5th 2014

Ms. Shareeda Mohammed



Dear Ms. Mohammed,

Your request to conduct your research entitled "**Implementation Issues of CVQ's in the Secondary School: A case study**" has been approved.

Attached is a letter of confidentiality, which is to be completed and returned to the Educational Planning Division of the Ministry of Education by the person conducting research through the Ministry.

Yours Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Mrs. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons".

Mrs. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons
Director
Educational Planning Division
Ministry of Education

Appendix B
Survey Interview - Questionnaire

THESIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

2014

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES OF CVQS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL:
A CASE STUDY

Good day participant

My name is Shareeda Mohammed and I am a TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) Teacher of Technical Drawing as well as a student at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. I am currently pursuing a M.A. in Leadership in TVET and Workforce Development. The research project I have undertaken is part of the requirements for the fulfillment of this degree. This project seeks to identify the issues involved in the implementation of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) in the secondary school system as directed by the Ministry of Education (MOE).

I kindly request your participation in the collection of data for this project by completing the attached questionnaire. I would like to assure you that your personal information will be kept confidential at all times. In addition, participants and the school will be assigned pseudonyms which will be used in my final report. The questionnaire is designed to collect data on experiences and views of the implementation of the CVQ. The completion of this data collection instrument is estimated to take 10 to 20 minutes. Please follow the instructions and answer questions in the spaces provided. Your participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at anytime if you so desire.

I thank you for your kind participation and again assure you of strict confidentiality for all personal information.

Respectfully

Shareeda Mohammed, AICB, B. Ed
sherry.mohammed7@gmail.com
Mobile contact: (868) 781-3568

Section A - PERSONAL:

PARTICIPANT #

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Age: 18-29 30 – 34 35 – 39 40 – 44
45 – 49 50 – 54 55 – 59 60 +

Section B - EMPLOYMENT:

3. Category: Administrator Teaching Staff Non-teaching Staff
4. Position/Subject Area: _____
5. Number of years employed at this school:
0- 5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21 – 25 26 – 30
6. Number of years employed with the Ministry of Education:
0- 5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21 – 25 26 – 30 30+
7. Are you involved in a TVOC or CVQ related area or directly/indirectly involved in the implementation of CVQ? Yes No

If yes, go on to Section C: if no, skip Section C and go directly to Section D.

Section C - Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ)

8. What is your role in the implementation of CVQs in your school? (*tick all which applies*)
- Administrator
 - Assessor
 - Internal Verifier
 - External Verifier
 - Head of Department
 - Assistant/Clerk in TVOC department/area
 - Procurement of materials and equipment
 - Handling resources
 - Planning/Timetabling
 - Not involved
 - Other _____
9. Have you received any training in preparation of the implementation of CVQ? Yes No

10. If yes, was the training completed while you were at this school? Yes No
11. Did you receive training for TTNVQ? Yes No
12. If yes, are you certified as an assessor for TTNVQ? Yes No
13. Did you receive training for CVQ? Yes No
14. If yes, are you certified as an assessor for CVQ? Yes No
15. Did you receive training as an Internal Verifier (IV)? Yes No
16. If yes, are you also certified as an Internal Verifier? Yes No
17. Approximately how many times have you been trained for TTNVQ and/or CVQ? _____
18. Rate your level of confidence to perform the duties of an assessor for a CVQ occupational standard?
Unprepared Poor Fair Good Very Good Not Applicable
19. Do you currently participate in training and/or assessment of students for a CVQ standard?
No Yes (state which standard) _____
20. How long have you been an assessor for an occupational standard?
0 -1 year 2-4 years 5 + years Not applicable
21. Rate the level of materials/resources available for CVQ implementation?
Poor Fair Good Very Good Not Applicable
22. Rate the time allocation for the implementation of the CVQ in terms of class periods?
Poor Fair Good Very Good Not Applicable

Section D – Experiences and views

23. Rate your level of knowledge about CVQ?
Never heard of it Poor Fair Good Very Good
24. Are you involved in subject choice counseling with students? Yes No
25. Do you offer career guidance information to students? Yes No
26. Do you believe attaining a CVQ occupational standard can offer any advantage to a student?
Yes No Maybe

27. What do you believe is the role of NTA in the implementation of the CVQ into secondary schools?

28. What are your views on the implementation of the CVQ into the secondary school curriculum?

29. Give your opinion on what can/should be done to improve the implementation of CVQs in your school by Ministry of Education, NTA, school administrators, assessors, etc.

30. Any additional comment(s)

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix C

Interview Questions - Teacher/Assessor Interviews

1. What is your area of specialization for CVQ?
2. Do you believe the CVQ is an appropriate way to certify skills? Explain.
3. In your opinion, does the CVQ provide any advantage/benefit to the candidate?
4. Has this CVQ (your area of specialization) been implemented at this school?
5. Do you believe you are adequately prepared for the implementation of the CVQ into the Secondary School? Please explain
6. Please describe the issues faced in the implementation of this CVQ or why it has not been implemented.
7. What do you require to allow/encourage the implementation of CVQ in your area of specialization?
8. What do you believe is needed to allow/encourage the implementation of CVQs in all areas of specialization at your school?
9. What is required of the NTA &/or MOE to ensure successful implementation of CVQs in Secondary Schools?
10. Do you believe that the CVQ will take hold as the national approach to certifying skill?

Appendix D

Interview Questions - School Administrator

1. What was or is your role regarding the implementation of CVQ at the school?
2. Do you believe the CVQ is an appropriate way to certify skills? Explain.
3. In your opinion, does the CVQ provide any advantage/benefit to the candidate?
4. Do you believe the CVQ has been successfully implemented at this school? Please explain.
5. Do you believe the administration, staff and school (facilities, resources, etc.) are adequately prepared for the implementation of the CVQ into the Secondary School? Please explain.
6. Please describe the issues faced in the implementation of the CVQ or why it has not been implemented.
7. What do you require to allow/encourage the implementation of CVQ in the school for the various areas of specialization?
8. What do you believe is needed to allow/encourage the implementation of CVQs in all areas of specialization at your school?
9. What is required of the NTA &/or MOE to ensure successful implementation of CVQs in Secondary Schools?
10. Do you believe that the CVQ will take hold as the national approach to certifying skill?

Appendix E

Interview Questions - NTA Trainer

1. What is/was your role regarding implementation of CVQ at the school?
2. Do you believe the CVQ is an appropriate way to certify skills? Explain.
3. In your opinion, does the CVQ provide any advantage/benefit to the candidate?
 - Would it also allow students to enter into higher education?
 - Do you think the higher education institutions would also recognize the CVQ?
4. Do you believe the CVQ has been successfully implemented at this school?
5. Do you believe the administration, staff and school (facilities, resources, etc.) are adequately prepared for the implementation of the CVQ into the Secondary School? Please explain.
 - School resources, facilities etc. Is it sufficient?
 - What is the recommended number of students in a class?
6. Please describe the issues faced in the implementation of the CVQ or why it has not been implemented.
 - Is it possible to complete the entire CVQ (ROS) given the time in form 4 and 5?
7. What do you require to allow/encourage the implementation of CVQ in the school for the various areas of specialization?

8. What is required of the NTA &/or MOE to ensure successful implementation of CVQs in Secondary Schools?
9. Do you believe that the CVQ will take hold as the national approach to certifying skill?
10. Any additional comments?

Appendix F

Sample of Completed Questionnaire

8

THESIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

2014 IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES OF CVQS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL:
A CASE STUDY


Good day participant

My name is Shareeda Mohammed and I am a TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) Teacher of Technical Drawing as well as a student at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. I am currently pursuing a M.A. in Leadership in TVET and Workforce Development. The research project I have undertaken is part of the requirements for the fulfillment of this degree. This project seeks to identify the issues involved in the implementation of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) in the secondary school system as directed by the Ministry of Education (MOE).

I kindly request your participation in the collection of data for this project by completing the attached questionnaire. I would like to assure you that your personal information will be kept confidential at all times. In addition, participants and the school will be assigned pseudonyms which will be used in my final report. The questionnaire is designed to collect data on experiences and views of the implementation of the CVQ. The completion of this data collection instrument is estimated to take 10 to 20 minutes. Please follow the instructions and answer questions in the spaces provided. Your participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at anytime if you so desire.

I thank you for your kind participation and again assure you of strict confidentiality for all personal information.

Respectfully



Shareeda Mohammed, AICB, B. Ed
sherry.mohammed7@gmail.com
Mobile contact: (868) 781-3568

1

QUESTIONNAIRE
Secondary School Participants

Section A - PERSONAL: PARTICIPANT # 8

1. Sex: Male Female

2. Age: 18-29 30-34 35-39 40-44
45-49 50-54 55-59 60+

Section B - EMPLOYMENT:

3. Category: Administrator Teaching Staff Non-teaching Staff

4. Position/Subject Area: Technical Vocational Teacher II / Office Administration; EDM

5. Number of years employed at this school:
0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-25 26-30

6. Number of years employed with the Ministry of Education:
0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-25 26-30 30+

7. Are you involved in a TVOC or CVQ related area or directly/indirectly involved in the implementation of CVQ? Yes No

If yes, go on to Section C: if no, skip Section C and go directly to Section D.

Section C - Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ)

8. What is your role in the implementation of CVQs in your school? (tick all which applies)

Administrator
 Assessor
 Internal Verifier
 External Verifier
 Head of Department
 Assistant/Clerk in TVOC department/area
 Procurement of materials and equipment
 Handling resources
 Planning/Timetabling
 Not involved
 Other _____

9. Have you received any training in preparation of the implementation of CVQ? Yes No

QUESTIONNAIRE
Secondary School Participants

10. If yes, was the training completed while you were at this school? Yes No
11. Did you receive training for TTNVQ? Yes No
12. If yes, are you certified as an assessor for TTNVQ? Yes No
13. Did you receive training for CVQ? Yes No
14. If yes, are you certified as an assessor for CVQ? Yes No
15. Did you receive training as an Internal Verifier (IV)? Yes No
16. If yes, are you also certified as an Internal Verifier? Yes No
17. Approximately how many times have you been trained for TTNVQ and/or CVQ? 2
18. Rate your level of confidence to perform the duties of an assessor for a CVQ occupational standard?
Unprepared Poor Fair Good Very Good Not Applicable
19. Do you currently participate in training and/or assessment of students for a CVQ standard?
No Yes (state which standard) _____
20. How long have you been an assessor for an occupational standard?
0 -1 year 2-4 years 5 + years Not applicable
21. Rate the level of materials/resources available for CVQ implementation?
Poor Fair Good Very Good Not Applicable
22. Rate the time allocation for the implementation of the CVQ in terms of class periods?
Poor Fair Good Very Good Not Applicable *unable to say*

Section D – Experiences and views

23. Rate your level of knowledge about CVQ?
Never heard of it Poor Fair Good Very Good
24. Are you involved in subject choice counseling with students? Yes No
25. Do you offer career guidance information to students? Yes No
26. Do you believe attaining a CVQ occupational standard can offer any advantage to a student?
Yes No Maybe

QUESTIONNAIRE

Secondary School Participants

27. What do you believe is the role of NTA in the implementation of the CVQ into secondary schools?

The role of the NTA in the implementation of the CVQ into secondary schools is to provide training ^{and carry out facilities audits.} However, I am not sure that the training provided is sufficient for the successful implementation of CVQ. Training is needed for specific CVQ areas and should not be generalised. ³⁰ Teachers are confused about how to implement CVQ.

28. What are your views on the implementation of the CVQ into the secondary school curriculum?

The Ministry of Education has mandated that schools implement CVQ into secondary schools. I do not believe that the Ministry of Education, School Supervisors, Principals, and some Heads of Departments, really know what implementation of CVQ entails for the teachers ^{who} have to deliver the curriculum and make it all happen.

29. Give your opinion on what can/should be done to improve the implementation of CVQs in your school by Ministry of Education, NTA, school administrators, assessors, etc.

Teachers need to know whether facilities audits have been carried out. Funds need to be provided for the resources needed and these monies must be spent on CVQ resources. Additional training for teachers is required, as well as, manpower to complete all the necessary paper work.

Principals, ministry officials and school supervisors need to be more involved in CVQ implementation. CVQ needs to be effectively managed.

30. Any additional comment(s)

For me, CVQ means uncertainty and I have not yet started to implement it. It is said that the occupational standards represent the syllabus, but it's still not clear. How do I get started? What if I don't have it right? When am I going to get the time to prepare all these activities for students? Thank you for your participation.