

**CARIBBEAN YOUTH AND RESILIENCE: EXPLORING LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT  
IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, LEADERSHIP TRAITS AND THEIR  
EFFECTS ON THE RESILIENCE OF GRENADIAN YOUTH**

by

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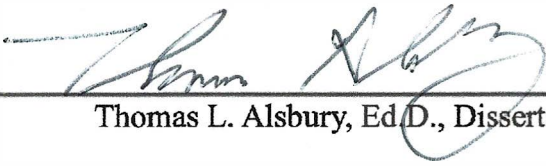
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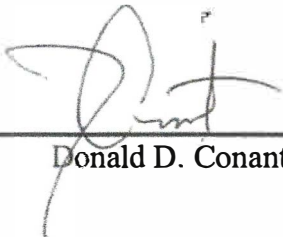


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## **DEDICATION**

For my precious daughter, Kaelyn Rai Noel.

### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to analyze the influence of extracurricular activity leaders on the resilience of secondary grade students. A large body of research has documented extracurricular activities for its compensatory and protective functions. As a result, youth living within socioeconomically disadvantaged communities can benefit from participating in extracurricular activities. The objective of this study was to explore levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and leadership traits' interactions in the explanation of students' resilience. The sample of this quantitative correlational study consisted of 150 Grenadian youth, ages 13 to 16. Participants completed the Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Trait questionnaire, Student Resilience Survey, and the Grenadian Youth and Resilience Study Demographic questionnaire collecting sociodemographic data. The results show a statistically non-significant effect of levels of engagement on students' resilience. However, this study found a statistically significant effect of leadership traits observation on the overall resilience of school-aged youth. These results support the study research question that an influential leader in extracurricular activities functions as a protective mechanism for positive youth development. This study is unique in its analysis of data collected on the trait theory of leadership and student resilience separately and provides invaluable information about the understudied population of school-aged Grenadian youth. Study conclusions support the significance of particular leadership traits impacting student resilience and the integration of extracurricular activities within schools and communities.

**Keywords:** resilience, leadership traits, leadership, extracurricular activities, Grenadian youth, positive youth development

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

Leadership is a highly desired and valued commodity (Northouse, 2019). It is argued that leadership convention has not advanced significantly, and as a result, our understanding of leadership continues to fascinate and puzzle (By, 2021). Researchers (i.e., Barker, 1997; Crevani et al., 2010; Raelin, 2016) claim that our cognition of leadership is limited and limiting because outdated paradigms are often solicited to address contemporary challenges. The array of lenses from which leadership is presently interpreted may indicate that Burns (1978) preposition that we know far too little about leadership still applies. For example, the leadership discourse is saturated with a focus on leadership as practice (Raelin, 2016), shared (Sweeney et al., 2019), and relational (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012); there is also continued discussion of collective leadership (Ospina et al., 2020; Quick, 2017) in the literature.

In spite of that, the general consensus is that the art of leadership is two-pronged. Kellerman (2016) suggests that the leadership industry is divided into two parts: leadership studies and leadership development. Leadership development relates to the practice of teaching or training people on how to lead and is the most dominant of the two components in this 40-year-old industry. Different approaches to leadership may focus on personality characteristics, cognitive/emotional abilities, relational influence, or an emphasis on self as opposed to collective interests (Karagianni & Montgomery, 2017). Hartog and Koopman (2001) also purport that the meaning of leadership may vary by its descriptive or normative appeals, and in other cases, distinguished by its relative focus on behavioral styles.

The nature and complexities of leadership were examined by researchers worldwide (Northouse, 2019). Consequently, there are perhaps the same amount of leadership definitions as

there are leadership scholars and practitioners (By, 2021; Kellerman, 2018; Rost, 1995). Despite the multiplicity of leadership definitions, the foundational role of leaders is to drive change and be adept at continually disrupting the status quo. While describing the usefulness of leaders, Kouzes and Posner (2012) claimed that “leaders get people moving” (p. 1). In addition, leaders cultivate a climate of trust to empower others to develop their confidence and competencies (DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Further, it is widely argued that leaders influence others (Crevani & Endrissat, 2016; Northouse, 2018) and enable others to act (Kouzes and Posner, 2018).

Leaders are instrumental. Their influence can be critical for the outcome of positive youth development initiatives. Karagianni and Montgomery (2017) assert that youth experience with leadership during the development period of adolescence may impact the types of leadership behaviors they exhibit later in the workplace. Leaders supporting youth are essential because the youth population was described as an at-risk group (World Bank, 2003; Jules, 2008). On October 31, 2011, when the world population reached seven billion, young people accounted for 1.7 billion of the world’s population, the largest generation in human history (United States Agency International Development [USAID], 2012). The youth generation is often the largest share of the population in developing countries, making them one of the most vulnerable to an abundance of risk factors. Risk factors can be interpreted as behavioral and social characteristics that intensify maladjustments and adverse outcomes (Himelfarb et al., 2014; Schoon, 2006). In education, for example, two common risk factors are failure in school, and substandard commitment to school (Jenson & Fraser, 2011), both rampant challenges plaguing youth across the globe. While risk factors confronting youth may inhibit their perception and realism of their capabilities, resilience may empower youth to flourish. Resilience research has gained the

attention of scholars for a long time. As a result, not a single definition encapsulates this construct.

In the early 1990s, the concept of resilience emerged as a favorable paradigm for human growth and development (Overhold & Ewert, 2015). Resilience is a personality trait that can be learned and developed over time with the backing of protective factors such as family support and peer mentors (Sun & Stewart, 2007). Essentially, resilience is an everyday trait that can be observed in everyday activities (Masten, 2009; Ruvalcaba et al., 2016). Additionally, resilience is often cited in relation to recovery from a high stressed life experience or as the ability to manage one's behavior, overcome obstacles and use experiences from adverse encounters to promote positive future development (Bonanno, 2004; Grotberg, 2003).

In a similar sense, resilience is conceptualized as a way of experiencing growth through a disorderly or unsettling event (Richardson, 2002). Philippe et al. (2011) posit that despite traumas experienced during childhood, some children can transition into adulthood with a level of psychological and emotional stability necessary for maturity. This ability is what Block (2002) cites as resilient or ego-resilient, which is concerned with adaptability - the ability to adapt to adverse situations (Block & Block, 1980). Similarly, according to Luthar et al. (2000), resiliency can be interpreted as how specific trauma results may impact a youth's attachment to others, mental stability, and academic performance. However, the foundation of the resilience construct governs that the individual would need direct exposure to an adverse circumstance that they exhibited positive adaptation to thereafter. Hence, Garmezy (1971) and Keyes (2004) contend that risk and resilience function as mechanisms liable for both negative and positive developmental outcomes, respectively. For example, risk spirals a low perception of self-worth, while resilience is a mechanism that propels a sense of purpose. Moreover, in a recent study,

youth participants described resilience as (a) the ability to adapt to different situations and pull through them, (b) bouncing back from tough situations or negatives, and (c) to stand up against repeated attacks or challenging times and be able to come through it and still be yourself, together and strong (Overhold & Ewert, 2015).

Short and Russell-Mayhew (2009) claim that primal views of the resilience construct paid close attention to the psychological and social relationships of youth who endured the hardships of abuse, poverty, neglect, mentally unstable parents, as well as community and family violence. Resilience studies concerning youth, particularly youth with a higher prevalence of being affected by disruptive events, surged in popularity across various disciplines. Dating back to the formation of what Richard (2002) coined as “metatheory of resilience and resiliency,” research and a conceptual understanding of resilience occurred within three waves or phrases (p. 307). The first wave emphasized the identification of characteristic traits of individuals who were labeled as resilient. The second wave concerned itself with a deeper understanding of resiliency, wherein the central focus shifted from description to a microscopic inquiry as to how resiliency is acquired. The third and final wave was grounded in exploring the relationship between specific experiences and their impact on creating and or enhancing resiliency (Overhold & Ewert, 2015; Richard, 2002). Most resilience studies are attentive to the applicability of the resilience construct. These studies are hinged on the second and third waves, fueling a growing understanding of human behavior with a strong emphasis on youth (Overhold & Ewert, 2015).

Young people are very susceptible to developmental drawbacks. Notably, one in nine teens and young adults are deemed vulnerable – that is, they are disconnected from people, systems, and specific experiences that may positively influence their capacity to develop skills and a sense of purpose (Dorger, 2020). Further, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic is expected

to increase the disconnection rates of young people dramatically. Lewis (2020) claimed that one-quarter of the youth generation is expected to be disconnected due to school closures and the economic downturn forced on by the pandemic. School closures posed detrimental consequences because, according to United Nations Child's Fund [UNICEF] (2021), most school children depend on school for peer interaction and support. School is also the place children from low socioeconomic backgrounds access food. High hospitalization and death rates were the driving rationales for school closures of 168 million schools (UNICEF, 2021). Sadly, marginalized school children continue to be disproportionately affected and pay the heaviest price as they fall further behind (Lang, 2021; UNICEF, 2021).

Ettekal and Agans (2020) denoted that the Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected millions of lives, including children and adolescents. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 98 million school children were affected by school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic (UNICEF, 2021). Overall, the pandemic brought about catastrophic health, education, and socialization emergencies worldwide. One such health emergency is poverty. Poverty is an environmental factor that impedes youth's positive development (Barbarin, 1993). In this regard, Irwin et al. (2021) reiterated that studies found that living in poverty is associated with poor educational outcomes such as low achievement scores, retention from grade-level advancement, and increased dropout rates among school children under the age of 18.

The outcome of poverty is felt by young people and their families in Grenada, a tri-island state situated in the Eastern Caribbean. Baksh (2014) reported:

Participants at the area consultations and focus groups . . . indicated that boys often drop out of school to follow their fathers into fishing, boatbuilding, seafaring. However, there also seems to be a direct correlation between male secondary school dropouts and

declining rates of male labour force participation, predominantly male drug addiction, violence and crime, arrests and imprisonment, psychiatric disorders, etc. Girls may be dropping out of secondary school due to pregnancy, as indicated by the high incidence of teenage pregnancy, the need to assist in the care of the home and family, to seek economic livelihoods (including transactional sex, as emerged at a focus group meeting in Carriacou), migration, etc. (p. 63)

The bleak reality of the risks encountered by Grenadian youth illuminates the valuable role of leaders. Educational and community leaders can be influential in helping youth to navigate challenges. And as a result, these leaders play an essential role in designing and implementing initiatives that are consistent with the multidimensional needs of young people.

### **Context of the Study**

#### **Leadership and Leadership Traits**

Leadership is a relationship between leaders and their followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Leadership within organizations, including educational institutions, is essential to achieve desirable outcomes. Leaders are instrumental in inspiring trust, building relationships, and creating strategic movements (Bennis & Nanus, 2007). In education, “the prime responsibility of all education leaders is to put in place learning that engages students intellectually, socially, and emotionally” (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004, p. 8). Educational leaders are central to student success. Similarly, community leaders are also influential. In a study relating to community leaders, Kellis and Ran (2015) discovered that effective leadership was linked to core values of inspiration, motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Leaders were perceived as effective when the people around them believed they had these values. Followers’ observation and perception of their leaders are significant for

leadership effectiveness. Bolman and Deal (2017) postulate that effective leaders support the articulation of a vision, establish standards for performance, and collaboratively create focus and direction.

Historically, leadership traits are linked to masculine characteristics. Hyde (2014) argued that some foundational characteristics of leadership are stereotypical masculine traits, including but not limited to strength, decisiveness, and aggression. But no evidence claims that leadership is inherently masculine. Hyde (2014) found no indication of gender difference in relation to leadership effectiveness. Comparably, Zaccaro et al. (2017) found non-masculine traits such as agreeableness, openness, intelligence, self-monitoring, and other traditionally masculine traits in individuals perceived as leaders. The exercise of leadership is not constrained by gender. Instead, effective leadership is an affair of the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) primarily concerned with “producing change and movement” (Northouse, 2019, p.12).

### **Risk and Resilience**

Risk and resilience are perhaps the most influential mechanisms determining the developmental outcomes in life (Garmezy 1971; Keyes, 2004). Risk is mainly associated with several factors, including social, cultural, and environmental factors. Resilience is manifested as a successful and healthy adaptation in an environment wherein risk prevails (Garmezy, 1986). Resilience can be fostered through a series of activities and may also be promoted by growth experiences (Luthar, 2003). The experiences of young people can be powerful. Grotberg (2003) posits that youth can develop their capacity to be resilient or buffer against school-related problems through engagement in activities that promote resilience directly and indirectly. Hence, engagement in youth activities may foster self-worth and self-belief and lead to positive growth experiences for youth.

## **Positive Youth Development**

Both a philosophy and a pragmatic approach, positive youth development (PYD) focuses on promoting the health, productivity, and engagement levels of adolescents during their journey to adulthood (Youth.gov., n.d.). There are many definitions of PYD; however, according to Youth.gov (n.d.):

PYD is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

(para. 1)

PYD is a strengths-based developmental approach that youth leaders adopt to promote healthy, productive, and engaged youth within their respective communities. PYD emerged specifically in response to the deficit perspective on adolescence transition to adulthood (Case, 2017). Youth are typically confronted with a series of physical and environmental changes during their adolescent years. Traditionally, adolescence has been associated with the exhibition of developmental vulnerabilities such as a high inclination to participate in risky behaviors: substance abuse and antisocial conduct, to name a few (Case 2017; Damon, 2004). Nonetheless, from a PYD perspective, the assumption is that every youth is a skilled and capable individual who has the capacity to thrive. For this reason, the central focus of PYD is to identify and cultivate thriving factors. Within the PYD discourse, these factors are variably defined as strengths, assets, or attributes that studies have found to moderate risky behaviors among young people (Case, 2017).

Lewis et al. (2016) conducted a study to examine the effects of a school-based program on PYD indicators with a sample of 1,170 students from 14 public urban schools. In assessing the impact of this school-based, socio-emotional, and character development (SECD) program, the researchers found a statistically significant difference between self-control, altruism, and social skills among participants and non-participants of the PA program. Accordingly, Lewis et al. (2016) offered that the results of their study indicate the benefits and contributions of incorporating PYD factors in school-based programs within a low-income urban context. Youth programs can be used as a tool to foster and develop PYD factors. Increased PYD assets can weaken the effects of environmental and social factors that hinder school-aged youth's development. Schools have a crucial social influence on youth and their development. School-aged youth spend a significant amount of time in the school setting, and for this reason, the socializing power of schools is substantial. Research shows that schools are an ideal environment for providing youth with access to programmatic experiences and opportunities designed to foster PYD (Lerner et al., 2009; Synder & Flay, 2012). School-based programs that integrate PYD strengths and resources can moderate the challenges youth encounter, and positively impact their development trajectory.

Furthermore, Freire et al. (2018) examined the outcomes of a youth development program. This program was designed to nurture positive peer relationships and individual development in youth. Results from this study indicated that youth who participated in the program reported higher life satisfaction and higher self-esteem scores than non-participants. In addition, Freire et al. (2018) found that engagement in the program fostered psychological development in youth. Evidence from this study also supports the idea that the integration of engagement techniques in the program was responsible for a better sense of self and a decrease

in drugs, oppositional behaviors, and violence (Freire et al., 2018). Both school-based and community-based programs are critical vectors for promoting positive youth development. These programs are pertinent for youth exposed to social and environmental challenges.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

The extent to which participation in organized activities perpetuates the development of psychological and behavioral mechanisms is widely debated. Extracurricular activities, sometimes referred to as “the third curriculum” (Haensly et al., 1986), may also be termed out-of-school time (OST) activities (Lerner et al., 2014) and EA (Balaguer et al., 2020). In literature, extracurricular activities can be grouped as school, community, and religious activities (Himelfarb et al., 2014). Within the scope of this research, this study focuses on school and community activities with a particular interest in leadership roles in promoting resilience in these programs.

A review of the literature reveals two prevailing perspectives on extracurricular activities. The first perspective views extracurricular activities as a waste of time or a major distraction destined to impede students’ academic achievement. In fact, according to Turner (2010) and Marsh (2002), the argument that the school’s role is to teach students reading and writing skills as opposed to encouraging their involvement in a club is still relevant today. The consensus from this lens is that participation in clubs is a distraction to students’ academic achievement.

The second perspective is more optimistic and views extracurricular activities as programs that can help to foster critical skills such as self-efficacy and responsibility (Himelfarb et al., 2013). Himelfarb et al. (2013) also noted that “extracurricular activities have been found to serve as a protective factor inside of school,” which indicates a key benefit of facilitating such programs (p. 83). Activities outside of the regular curriculum are, according to O’Dea (1994), an

extension to the educational program as opposed to a setback/mishap. Extending the school curriculum to include extracurricular activities is of grave importance, considering our current technological environments. The advancement of technology is a key contributor to the decrease in social interactions. Turner (2010) noted that “we are in a technologically advanced world where socialization and interactions with others is appearing to be a lost art” (p.1). Consequently, youth are interacting with people far less than they used to in the decades prior. Therefore, as technology exasperates the growing trend of less socialization, it becomes more relevant to promote activities that facilitate person-to-person interactions within schools and communities.

Extracurricular activities enable youth to develop several skills. For instance, skills typically developed by youth engaging in extracurricular activities are leadership, self-worth, values, sportsmanship, and the ability to deal with competitive situations (Turner 2010). Previous youth development literature extensively documents the resilient effects of extracurricular activities (Brown & Theobald, 1998; Camp, 1990; Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Fredricks and Eccles, 2006, Mahoney et al., 2007) on academic outcomes. Likewise, in their study, Bloomfield and Barber (2010) discovered that the occurrence of skipping school was higher amongst non-participants in sport-related extracurricular activities (e.g., athletics) as opposed to students who engaged in similar extracurricular activities.

Relatedly, social scientists established that community-based learning programs were a factor in “improved language acquisition, enhanced cultural intelligence, and community orientation” (Alsbury et al., 2020, p. 96). While this finding was specific to school-aged youth new to the United States, the researcher argues that these benefits of community-based learning can be generalized to other populations. On this account, Alsbury et al. (2020) contend that community-based learning is an educational reform movement that focuses on experiential

learning outside of the classroom. The expansion of this form of learning can positively influence the educational needs of school-aged youth.

Moreover, Alsbury et al. (2020) distinguished between work-based learning and service-based learning. Of particular interest in the current study is service-based community learning, which is a form of extracurricular activity that is separate from the formal curriculum or academic learning. This form of learning was championed by Jane Adams (1860-1935), who envisioned the establishment and sustainability of community-based learning programs “to provide education using a vehicle of service to society through authentic engagement with the community” (p. 96). The benefits of community-led extracurricular activities are evident. Outside of focusing on service and community development, these programs also offer school-aged youth the opportunity to engage and master critical thinking skills. The practical and real-world nature of these program designs can ascertain that “all individuals, not just an elite, can become competent thinkers” (Resnick, 1987, p.7). Youth who set out to “do good for others” as they engage in extracurricular activities may experience a stronger sense of belonging and responsibility; therefore, engagement in these forms of activities can encourage youth to reflect upon their personal responsibility for the development of their respective communities (Alsbury et al., 2020; Wade, 1997).

Participating in extracurricular activities is beneficial. Jenson and Fraser (2011) asserted that participation in extracurricular activities could support youth in developing protective psychological and behavioral mechanisms. Extracurricular activities are associated with moderating factors or a buffering effect against risky behaviors typically pursued by adolescent youth. Several studies found extracurricular activities to be a protective factor for youth (Bailey, 2009; Cooper et al., 1999; Dotterer et al., 2007; Fredricks et al., 2006; Vandell et al., 2007), yet

relevant discourse presents no current studies on Grenada's high school-aged youth population. From a theoretical standpoint, the relationship between extracurricular activities and youth development cannot be dismissed. As a result of the existing gap in the literature pertaining to Grenadian youth, further research is needed to investigate the influence of extracurricular activities and leadership traits on the resilience of school-aged youth.

### **Grenadian Youth Development**

Youth in Grenada are often confronted with environmental and social development factors that adversely impact their positive development. Poverty is one of the environmental factors that have a direct adverse impact on the positive development of Grenadian youth. Available data indicate that one in every two children (age 0-17 years of age) in Grenada lived in a poor household and accounted for 60% of the indigent population (UNICEF, 2017). Overall, Grenada has a 50.94% child poverty rate which is the highest in the region, according to UNICEF (2017). According to UNICEF (2017), of the 110,000 nationals of Grenada, adolescents represented as children 10-19 years of age were 23,243. Of the 23,243 adolescents in Grenada, 11,143 were determined to be poor. Also, data on adult and overall poverty rates approximated the highest amongst Eastern Caribbean area (ECA) countries UNICEF (2017). Additionally, almost two-thirds of poor children in Grenada live in female-headed households. Furthermore, research findings revealed that child poverty rates were more prevalent in female-headed households (58%) in comparison to male-headed households (44%) (UNICEF, 2017).

Social problems such as drug and alcohol usage also affect young people in Grenada. The Pan American Health Organization [PAHO], (n.d.) reported that 72% of secondary school students consumed alcohol, while 27% smoked cigarettes and 20% used marijuana PAHO (n.d.).

Despite all of this, Grenadian youths are strong and capable beings engaging in activities at school and in their communities.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

In Latin America and the Caribbean, youth account for 16.5 % of the regional population (United Nations, 2020). In addition, youth in the Caribbean region confront a series of challenges, including the high persistence of adolescent maternity, youth homicide, and deaths by violent acts (United Nations Youth, 2013). Grenadian youth are highly impacted by environmental factors such as low socioeconomic status and the agricultural sector's vulnerability. Yet, the buffering effects of extracurricular activities on the school-age youth population in Grenada have not been explored. Upon a thorough review of the literature, no previous studies investigated the effects of extracurricular activities on the resilience of Grenadian youth. Moreover, unlike previous youth development research, it examined the effect of observed leadership traits on the overall resilience of Grenadian youth who participate in extracurricular activities.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study explored the effects of engagement in extracurricular activities and leadership traits on the resilience of youth attending secondary school in Grenada. The first purpose was to investigate whether the level of engagement in extracurricular activities and leadership traits observability, collectively had a statistically significant effect on the overall resilience of Grenadian youth. The second purpose was to examine if extracurricular activities and leadership traits individually had a statistically significant relationship with Grenadian youth's perception of their resilience. Afro-Caribbean youth growing up in Grenada are all too familiar with the adverse outcomes of social, emotional, and environmental risk factors. However, current

discourse provides no evidence about the relationship between engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits in reference to Grenadian youth's abilities to withstand adversities.

### **Research Question and Hypothesis**

One research question guided the current study based on the intended research goals. The research question and hypothesis directing this study were:

RQ1: Does the level of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits, collectively or individually, have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of Grenadian youth?

$H_{01}$ : The level of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits, collectively or individually, does not have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of high school-aged youth.

$H_{A1}$ : The level of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits, collectively or individually, has a statistically significant effect on the resilience of high school-aged youth.

### **Research Methodology and Data Analysis Methods Summary**

The current study met methodological congruence, or the interconnection and alignment of the purpose, questions, and methods (Morse & Richards, 2012). Data necessary to explore the effects of extracurricular activities and leadership traits on the resilience of Grenadian youth was collected. This non-experimental quantitative study collected data from a sample of secondary school students enrolled in four public secondary schools in Grenada. The current sample was recruited through purposive sampling methods.

This study used a demographic questionnaire, and two validated Likert scale measures to collect original data from a sample of 150 Grenadian youth. The Student Resilience Survey (Appendix B) was used to collect data relating to student resilience. In addition, the Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Traits questionnaire (Appendix C) was utilized to collect data pertaining to engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits. Furthermore, the Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic questionnaire (Appendix A) was used to collect demographic data from the current sample. The three data collection measures were administered online and accessible through a secured link.

This study employed a predictive correlational research methodology to explore interactions between three ordinal variables. Specifically, an ordinal logistic regression model was used to examine the effects of extracurricular activities and leadership traits on students' resilience. Ordinal logistic regression is a statistical measure and may be considered one of two generalization models, multiple linear regression and binomial regression. Based on this study's design and statistical assumptions met by the current dataset, a binomial logistic regression model was employed for analysis (Laerd Statistics, 2015). "A binominal regression (often referred to simply as logistic regression) predicts the probability that an observation falls into one of two categories of a dichotomous dependent variable based on one or more independent variables that can be either continuous or categorical" (Laerd Statistics, 2015 p. 6). In this study, resilience was designated as the ordinal dependent variable and was measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Extracurricular activities and leadership traits were treated as two categorical independent variables. These two variables were also measured on 5-point Likert scales.

In this regression analysis, the significance level was established at a 95% confidence interval ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). The most frequently used alpha levels are 0.01., 0.05. and 0.1, but the 0.05

significance level has become standard in social research (Lavrakas, 2008). Regression analysis is a form of inferential statistics (Frost, n.d.). Therefore, the logistic regression coefficient  $\beta$  associated with a predictor  $X$  is the expected change in log odds of having the outcome per unit change in  $X$  (Choueiry, n.d., para.1). Moreover, the coefficients describe the mathematical relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable of the study (Frost, n.d.).

Previous studies employed ordinal logistic regression models and coefficient analysis. Ozturk and Mohler (2021) used a regression model to examine the moderating role of perceived resilience in early adulthood on childhood adversity and life satisfaction. Study results indicated that the predictor variables of child physical abuse (CPA) and child physical neglect (CPN) contributed to the ordinal logistic regression analysis model. In fact, odds ratios demonstrated that respondents who reported CPA were 58% less likely to attain a higher level of life satisfaction during their early adulthood than respondents who did not report CPA. Comparatively, results suggest that respondents who reported having experienced CPN were 83% less likely to score elevated levels of life satisfaction than respondents who did not report having experienced CPN. Moreover, results pertaining to the moderating effects of resilience showed that resilience has a strong effect on life satisfaction. The researchers noted that respondents with perceived resilience were more likely to perceive an elevated sense of life satisfaction than respondents who did not perceive themselves as resilient (Ozturk & Mohler, 2021).

Furthermore, recent studies used ordinal logistic regression to examine the resilience and overall health of children and adolescents (Fritz et al., 2020; Herman et al., 2021). These studies found that resilience functions as a protective factor for the healthy development of youth. As a

result of these findings, it was anticipated that a regression analysis of the current dataset would yield valuable information for scholars and practitioners in the fields of leadership, education, psychology, and public administration.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Two major theoretical frameworks were used in this study to explore the interactions between extracurricular activities, leadership traits, and resilience of Grenadian youth. The first framework was the risk/resilience framework. This conceptual framework is widely used to assess an individual's capacity to bounce back from aversive conditions. This model aims to foster resiliency and safeguard against stress by diminishing risk factors and increasing protective factors (Jenson et al., 2013). Resilience is defined as "a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity" (Luthar et al., 2000, p. 543). Historically, resilience was conceptualized implicitly or explicitly as a personality trait or set of characteristics possessed by an individual. This perception was later shifted to describe resilience as a process; it can be learned. From a theoretical standpoint, researchers have found that participation in extracurricular activities serves as a buffering factor against risky behaviors in adolescence (Chang et al., 2021; Nam et al., 2018; Powell et al., 2021).

Second, the trait theory of leadership served as the other major theoretical framework in the current study. The trait theory emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it was the earliest venture to study leadership from a systematic lens. The trait theory emphasizes the instrumental roles personality traits play in the process of effective leadership (Northouse, 2018). In an early study, Stogdill (1948) found ten characteristics positively associated with leadership. These include a leader's "ability to influence other people's behavior" and their "capacity to structure social interactions systems to the purpose at hand" (Northouse, 2019, p. 21). To this end, Northouse

(2019) posits that the trait approach imparts an in-depth understanding of the role of the leader in the leadership process. After a century of research on the trait approach, researchers identified five major leadership traits. These traits or characteristics were found to be central attributes of individuals who were perceived as leaders. The five major leadership traits are intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability (Northouse, 2019).

Leaders of extracurricular activities can positively influence youth, including Grenadian school-aged youth. As previously discussed, young people in Grenada are at times susceptible to several harmful social and environmental factors. Together, the resilience and leadership traits theoretical frameworks contributed to an exploration of the protective mechanisms of engaging in extracurricular activities. This study hypothesized that there was a statistically significant effect between extracurricular activities and leadership traits on the resilience of Grenadian youth.

### **Research Design**

A quantitative correlational research design was used for this study. Data were collected using the survey method. Jones et al. (2013) posit that surveys allow researchers to collect data with ease from a large population and tend to have higher statistical power. In addition, Ponto (2015) suggests that survey techniques are typically used to explore and describe human behavior. In this study, surveys were administered online. Jones et al. (2013) contend that electronic survey methods are advantageous for large targets, visual aids, quick response, and quick data compilation. Studies employing study methods should use validated instruments because data collected is only applicable when the information gathered is accurate and consistent with the topic under investigation (Jones et al., 2013). Moreover, according to Ball (2019), two essential elements of the survey methodology are sample selection and question

validation. Careful considerations of these factors are necessary to ascertain that the data collected is unbiased, robust, and replicable. In the current study, two validated surveys were used to collect data from a sample of school-aged youth in Grenada.

### **Anonymity and Confidentiality**

Anonymity is an integral aspect of quantitative research, and it is an essential ethical consideration for social researchers, primarily for the protection of human subjects. Several practical and security measures were used to protect participants. All participants in the current study received permission from their parents/guardians to participate. In addition, there was secure storage of all data collected. Further, survey responses were kept strictly confidential. Prior to analysis, all data collected was anonymized by deleting identifiable information. Alpha-numeric codes were used for the names of the four schools under investigation.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Before data collection, ethical approvals were granted by the Grenada Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Foreign and Religious Affairs Research Division, and the Northwest University Institutional Review Board. The next procedure was to email a Recruitment Letter to the principals of the four secondary schools under investigation. Principals were provided an electronic copy of the Parental Consent Form as well as the secured Google Form link to the same. Parental consent forms included information about the purpose of the study, measures to protect students, and the fully voluntary nature of students' participation in the current study. Principals were asked to distribute parental consent forms to all Form three students in their school. After receiving parental consent, a secured link containing the Student Assent form, the Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic questionnaire (Appendix A); the Student Resilience Survey (Appendix B), and the Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership

Traits questionnaire (Appendix C) were made available to all Form three students. All data were collected in February 2022 over the span of several days.

### **Student Resilience Survey (“SRS”)**

The Student Resilience Survey (“SRS”) was developed by Sun and Stewart (2007) and is a validated and reliable tool designed for collecting data pertaining to students' perception of resilience factors (Sun & Stewart, 2007). This instrument contains twelve subscales: communication and cooperation, empathy, self-esteem, school connection, family connection, community connection, goals and aspirations, problem-solving, autonomy experience (participation in home and school life), pro-social peers, meaningful participation in community activity (‘participation in community life) and peer support (CORC, n.d.; Lereya et al., 2016; Sun & Stewart, 2007). The SRS considers both the complexity of the concept of “resilience” and the intricacy of the multifaceted school environment (Sun & Stewart, 2007) and thus serves as a valuable instrument for the current study.

The twelve subscales of the SRS are self-reported scales comprehensible to children aged seven and older. Responses for each subscale were recorded on a rating continuum of one to five on a Likert scale, whereby one represents “never” and five reflects “always.” According to Sun and Stewart (2007), “the item reliabilities were all significant at the 0.01 level,” and each item for each subscale was a model fit and adequately defined (p. 12). Examples of the Self-esteem subscale items are: “I can work out my problems” and “I can do most things if I try,” which measured individual characteristics. In addition, for the subscale of Community connection, items include “Away from school, there is an adult who: “really cares about me;” “believes that I will be a success” (Sun & Stewart, 2007, p. 589). The SRS emphasizes the socio-ecological context in which students experience risk factors while simultaneously identifying the resources

typically relied on for coping (Sun & Stewart, 2007). In sum, the SRS examines a range of external supports and internal characteristics deemed as protective factors for positive youth development. This instrument was valuable and aligned with the goals of this study.

### **Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Trait questionnaire**

The researcher designed The Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Trait questionnaire (GYELT), a 14-item questionnaire (Appendix C). This instrument contained questions about youth engagement in extracurricular activities and their observation of five pre-determined traits displayed by their leaders. The section relating to engagement in extracurricular activities asked students to rate their engagement level. This section was measured on a 5-point Likert scale (“Very Disengaged” to “Very Engaged”). Additionally, the second section of GYELT asked students to rate their observability of the Five Major Leadership Traits (Northouse, 2019) as displayed by their leaders. This section was measured on a 5-point Likert scale (“Never” to “Always”).

### **Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic questionnaire**

The Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic questionnaire (GYRD) was used to collect demographic data from the current sample. Participations were asked to respond to six non-identifiable demographic questions that were deemed necessary for analysis. The information by the GYRD was used to determine if the current sample was representative of the general Grenadian youth population.

### **Secondary Data Collection**

Secondary data, including official reports from the Government of Grenada, the United Nations (UN) youth report, and the UN country (Grenada) report, were collected. These and other data were collected to elicit contextual information about the characteristics, opportunities,

and challenges faced by Grenadian school-aged youth. Moreover, these reports helped frame the education system and the socialization habits of Grenada, a British commonwealth country.

### **Analysis of the Data**

In the current study, a statistical test of prediction was applied to determine the effects of the two ordinal independent variables on resilience. Data gathered on students' resilience, students' engagement in extracurricular activities, and their observation of their leaders' traits was analyzed using the ordinal logistic regression. Ordinal logistic regression is the analytic method of choice for researchers interested in effects, as it provides a succinct and more powerful testing of the association at work (Warner, 2018). An ordinal logistic regression model allowed for an examination of the two independent variables to conclude which of them (if any) had a statistically significant effect on students' resilience. Ordinal logistic regression, according to Warner (2018), is a special type of multinomial regression that is particularly advantageous when the response or independent variables are ordinal. In this study, ordinal logistic regression was suitable because the current variables were all measured on an ordinal scale, and the effect of independent variables was linear. This statistical test also allowed for the interpretation of the odds of engagement in extracurricular activities having a higher or lower effect on students' resilience in comparison to leadership traits observation.

### **Limitations of the Study**

As with any form of social research, the current quantitative correlational study is not exempt from limitations. There were several limitations of the current study. The first limitation of this study pertains to the population and sampling methods employed. According to Babbie (2021), the term population defines the “theoretical specified aggregation of the elements in a study” (p.199). In the current study, the population under investigation is secondary school-aged

youth currently enrolled in four secondary schools in Grenada. Many of these students live within socioeconomically disadvantaged communities. For this reason, the parents of these students were confronted with a number of challenges when it came to providing consent for their children to participate in this study. In addition, lack of internet, disruption with connection, and rigid class schedules were potential factors influencing the overall response rate of the current study. The small sample size used in this study is one of the main limitations.

In addition, employing a non-probability sampling design in the current research was another limitation of this study. A Nonprobability sampling method such as purposive sampling limits the representativeness and generalizability of the research discoveries (Babbie, 2021). Nonetheless, this study incorporated a multi-site sampling technique, and statistical generalizability to the overall population was achieved. Furthermore, the current sample includes students from mixed-gender secondary schools, excluding students from the other public and private secondary schools in Grenada. These limitations accentuate the importance of interpreting the results within the scope of the current study.

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings and conclusions of this statistical study contributed to substantive and practical significance. Using the theoretical frameworks of risk and resilience and trait leadership theory, this study explored the effects of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits on the self-reported resilience of Grenadian youth.

#### **Substantive Significance**

The current study added to the existing discourse on the trait leadership theory, the resilience construct, and positive youth development. This study included multiple data sources and a suitable analytic method congruent with the research goals. As a result, this study added

relevant information about the development of Grenadian school-aged youth. Additionally, the current study contributed to the trait leadership theory by utilizing the five major leadership traits that have been found to corroborate leadership effectiveness and examine it within a socio-ecological context. Also, the current study contributes to the socio-ecological approach to resilience. Further, while several studies found extracurricular activities to be a protective factor for youth (Bailey, 2009; Cooper et al., 1999; Dotterer et al., 2007; Fredricks et al., 2006; Vandell et al., 2007), relevant discourse presents no current studies on Grenada's high school-aged youth population.

This study applied the resilience framework within a new and uncharted context characteristically different from previous resilience studies. In addition, no studies have been discovered linking extracurricular activities and resilience in the Caribbean region, including Grenada. Identifying the relationship between extracurricular activities and resilience in youth could equip leaders with a definitive understanding of the factors influencing youth's ability to bounce back from adversity in a healthy manner (Luthar et al., 2000; Yeh et al., 2015). Moreover, by examining the influence of leadership traits in enabling youth to bounce back from adversity, this study contributed to the current leadership discourse.

The study extends the application of the trait leadership theory by exploring its application within a school and community context. Upon reviewing the literature, current data and analysis of the trait leadership theory appear obsolete within the school and community context in the eastern Caribbean. Also, this study tested the applicability of the trait leadership theory in a region external to the North American continent. Moreover, this study contributed to the resilience discourse and confirmed the usefulness of the Student Resilience Survey.

## Practical Significance

Practically, this study provided valuable implications for extracurricular activities and the leaders of extracurricular activities. Results from this study demonstrated the significance of leaders' influence on Grenadian school-aged youth. Overall, findings from this study support the socio-ecological approach to positive youth development for Grenadian youth.

## Definitions of Research Terminology

The following variables and terms will be used generously throughout the current study. These definitions are operationalized to fit the context of this study with the sole purpose of providing clarity to research consumers. The definition of these terms may not be congruent with common perceptions and should be interpreted only for the scope of this study.

1. *Leadership Traits* –Leadership traits represent core abilities or competencies that have been strongly associated with leadership (Northouse, 2019).
2. *Extracurricular activities* – This term represents developmental activities that school-aged youth participate in within schools and their communities.
3. *School-based Extracurricular activities* – Adopting Forneris et al. (2015) definition, extracurricular activities would be defined as “developmental activities by students that fall outside of the normal school curriculum and are practiced outside of regular class hours” (p.48).
4. *Community-based Extracurricular activities* – The researcher has adopted Alsbury et al.'s (2020) definition, which asserts that community-based learning extracurricular activity “is a community activity in which school-aged students engage in an embedded experience tied to the school curriculum” (p. 99). For this study, these activities can be linked to the school

curriculum (i.e., related to grades) or disconnected from the formal academic curriculum (i.e., skills, social development).

5. *Risk factors* – Pertains to vulnerabilities or hazards to an individual, or their environment, that increases the likelihood of an adverse developmental outcome (Rutter, 1987).

6. *Protective Factors* – Pertains to factors within an individual's (core competencies) or the environment that increases the individual's ability to resist adversity and maneuver challenges in life in a healthy manner (Rutter, 1987).

7. *Resilience* - is conceptualized as a personality trait influenced by a combination of internal and external factors; this trait enables young people to overcome setbacks and experience positive youth development (Polomski et al., 2021; Ruvalcaba et al., 2017).

8. *Ecological Perspective on Resilience* – the current study adopts an ecological framework of resilience which claims that “wellbeing is affected substantially by the social contexts in which children are embedded and is a function of the quality of relationships among individual, family and institutional systems (Sun & Stewart, 2008, p. 576).

9. *Youth* - In the scope of the current study, the term youth will be used interchangeably with school-aged youth and students in reference to young people ages 11 to 16.

10. *Students* - The term “students” will be used interchangeably with school-aged youth. It represents students who are currently enrolled in an academic institution.

11. *Secondary school* – this term denotes compulsory education under the British education system for students ages 11 to 16. It designates the period between elementary and tertiary education. Although designated with a cut-off age of 16, secondary school students in Grenada may be over the age of 16 at the time of completion.

12. *Grenadian youth* - this term applies specifically to school-aged nationals from Grenada, located in the Eastern Caribbean.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided a brief overview of the research scope, its purpose, significance, and methodological approach. Chapter 2 provides a robust review of the research literature relevant to the topic focusing on seminal discourse pertaining to leadership, the resilience theoretical framework, and extracurricular activities. Subsequent chapters present and analyze results collected from the two Likert scale surveys and a demographic questionnaire. Moreover, a detailed description of the implications of the current study is highlighted.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and leadership traits on the overall resilience of Grenadian youth. This literature review focuses on four areas of research: (a) leadership, (b) resilience, (c) extracurricular activities, and (d) Grenadian youth. The first section examines the nomenclature and evolution of the leadership construct and youth leadership development initiatives. It also provides a status report on leadership in education. Secondly, this literature review highlights the risk and resilience theoretical framework by examining the current discourse on resilience from an education and community engagement lens. The third section analyzes definitions and types of extracurricular activities, including school-led and community-based extracurricular activities. The fourth part of this chapter presents a comprehensive review of Grenadian youth, including social challenges that threaten their resilience. Finally, the chapter ends with a summation of the literature review.

#### **Defining Leadership: Nomenclature and Evolution of Leadership**

The definition of leadership continues to evolve as scholars, researchers, and practicing leaders gain a better understanding of what this complex process entails (Winston & Patterson, 2006). Stogdill (1974) noted that "there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it" (as cited in Northouse, 2019, p.3). While the connotation of the importance of leadership is widespread, the interpretation of this phenomenon remains inconsistent. For example, Bass (2008) proposed pluralistic leadership dimensions, including leadership based on group processes, personality perspective, skills perspective, act or behavior, power relationship, and leadership as a transformational process. Conversely,

Northouse (2019) conceptualized leadership as a process wherein leaders influence a group to achieve a common goal. Scholars suggested that the leadership industry span several decades. And as aforementioned, the leadership industry consists of two parts, leadership studies and leadership practice (Kellerman, 2018). The implications of leadership studies and leadership practices are highly sought-after. Leaders play a critical role in organizations worldwide.

Organizations may exist to promote high commitment and high performance (Beer & Eisenstadt, 2009), solve problems (e.g., Kouzes & Posner, 2017), or impact the well-being and happiness of individuals while acting as an open system dealing with changing, challenging, and erratic environments (Bolman & Deal, 2017). However, organizations cannot perform well without influential leaders, teams, and collaborative efforts. Some studies concluded that trust is essential to create solid teams and leverage the benefits of collaboration (Maister et al., 2001; Martin, 2018). In reference to trust, Kouzes and Posner (2017) insisted that "trust comes from understanding each other's values and understanding our experiences and what we stand for" (p. 4). Essentially, trust is a function of character and competence. Covey and Merrill (2006) stated that character is related to integrity, motive, and intent, while competence pertains to capabilities, skills, and records of favorable results. Both character and competence are necessary for leaders to inspire followers and drive organizational success.

A popular lens from which scholars have interpreted organizational leadership is through a social psychological lens. From this standpoint, leadership is about influence and is necessary for setting direction and supporting desirable change (Flood, 2017; Gurr & Drysdale, 2020; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Kotter, 2012; McLeod, 2007). For example, Gurr and Drysdale (2020) explored the applicability of leadership within educational organizations. This study examined the elements of leadership that supported successful short-term and long-term change management

initiatives. As a result, Gurr and Drysdale (2020) identified seven domains of leadership, two of which were setting direction and developing people.

Consequently, Gurr and Drysdale (2020) affirmed that "leadership is about setting direction and often it requires the courage to take strategic risks (p. 28). Based on these discoveries, the researchers concluded that influential educational leaders were cognizant of their roles in influencing the behaviors of others. Additionally, Katz & Kahn (1978) viewed leadership as a human construct and claimed that the motives and the behaviors of organizational members dictate the environment of that organization.

While examining the social psychological perspective, McLeod (2007) explained that this approach looks at how humans behave in response to the influence of others, the social context of their behaviors, and their interactions. As a result, social psychology, or the bridge between psychology and sociology (Katz & Kahn, 1978), is often levied to understand organizations, including leadership functions and organizational members' behaviors. Similarly, Flood (2017) reiterated the interconnectedness of social psychology, confirming that elements of social psychology are also directly applicable to organizations. Moreover, Kotter (2012) posited that "leadership defines what the future should look like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles (p. 28). Therefore, leadership is a fundamental component to achieve the desired change. Change is a natural part of individuals and organizations, and the constancy and multiplicity of change are inevitable. Leadership within various organizations plays a vital role in determining where, when, and how far an organization will go. As a result, the role of leadership is crucial. Likewise, leaders are foundational in influencing and inspiring others to achieve desired goals amidst obstacles encountered.

### **Leadership Theory: Trait Leadership Theory**

The trait theory of leadership was one of the earliest conceptualizations, defining leadership as influential traits linked to leadership effectiveness (Edwards et al., 1989; Northouse, 2019; Yukl, 1998; Yukl, 1989). During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, researchers studied leadership traits to distinguish leaders from non-leaders (Northouse, 2019). In these studies, the goal was to examine what personal factors were associated with effective leaders. Consequently, researchers found that because of their traits (i.e., intelligence, responsibility, and confidence), many leaders serving within militia, social and political capacities were perceived as distinctively different from the people they led (Northouse, 2019; Zaccaro et al., 2017).

In addition, Edward et al. (1989) contended that the primitive inquiry of leader effectiveness started with investigating the characteristics, behaviors, and situations in which leaders act. Scholars classified these inquiries as the trait theory, behavioral theory, and situational theory, respectively (Edward et al., 1989). The trait theory is an extension of the Great man theory. Uslu (2019) noted that the great man theory suggests leadership characteristics are innate, whereas the trait theory assumes that leadership characteristics can be acquired at birth or developed later in life.

The trait approach played a pivotal role in guiding the preponderance of leadership research during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Zaccaro, 2007). Edward et al. (1989) also argued that most leadership research conducted from the 1900s through the 1940s utilized the trait approach. The trait approach focuses on the attributes of an individual's inherited or genetic makeup. Zaccaro et al. (2004) defined leader traits as:

.....relatively stable and coherent integrations of personal characteristics that foster a consistent pattern of leadership performance across a variety of group and organizational

situations. These characteristics reflect a range of stable individual differences, including personality, temperament, motives, cognitive abilities, skills, and expertise. (p. 104)

The trait approach provides a blueprint of several traits that set leaders apart from their followers. From this perspective, an effective leader is characteristically different from others (i.e., followers) because of their innate or acquired personality traits (i.e., charisma or intelligence). These traits amplify their ability to influence others.

### **Strengths and Criticism of Trait Leadership Theory**

Like Edward et al. (1989), Yukl (1989) sustained that the trait leadership theory is vital to studying leadership. As early as 1869, social researchers began exploring the concept of leadership by focusing on specific individual traits (Yukl, 1998). Yukl (1989) also posited that the original approaches to understanding leadership, including the trait leadership theory, have theoretical and methodological shortfalls. In highlighting the main criticisms of the trait theory, Northouse (2019) posited that the trait theory of leadership fails to provide a definitive list of leadership traits. The endless list of traits that emerged in trait research weakens its credibility as it is unknown what attributes precisely distinguish an effective leader from a follower. Harrison (2018) argued that the scarcity of empirical evidence on the trait theory makes this perspective speculative and unsubstantiated.

Correspondingly, Northouse (2019) claimed the trait theory does not consider the impact of a situation on leadership outcomes. On this note, Northouse (2019) asserted, "it is therefore difficult to identify a universal set of leadership traits in isolation from the context in which the leadership occurs" (p. 31). The inconclusive findings of trait research led to a focus on behaviors of leaders rather than personality traits (Edwards et al., 1989). Also, Stogdill (1948), upon analyzing and synthesizing 124 trait studies conducted between 1904 and 1947, concluded that

leadership effectiveness was not merely contingent upon the trait of leaders. Instead, Stogdill (1948) argued the situation in which leaders operated determined the extent of their success. On that matter, Northouse (2019) stated that the findings of Stogdill's (1948) research "implied that leadership is determined principally by situational factors" (p. 20). This assertion directly corroborates Stogdill's assumptions that an individual who may be a leader in one context may not lead effectively in another (Zaccaro, 2007).

Conversely, in a separate study, Stogdill (1974) discovered that leaders' traits, like the situation they operated within, were a crucial element of leadership. As a result, Bass (1960) and Stogdill (1974) attested that leaders had slightly different or more descriptive personality traits than their followers. There are distinctive differences between leaders and the people around them. To this end, Zaccaro et al. (2004) reiterated:

[Evidence from 15 or more studies indicates that] the average person who occupies a position of leadership exceeds the average member of his group in the following respects: (1) intelligence, (2) scholarship, (3) dependability in exercising responsibility, (4) activity and social participation, and (5) socioeconomic status.

[Evidence from 10 or more studies indicates that] the average person who occupies a position of leadership exceeds the average member of his group in the following respects: (1) sociability, (2) initiative, (3) persistence, (4) knowing how to get things done, (5) self-confidence (6) alertness to, and insight into, situations, (7) cooperativeness, (8) popularity, (9) adaptability, and (10) verbal facility. (p. 106)

The traits of an individual heavily influence their capability to lead in various contexts. House (1977, 1988) purported that while the situational factor of leadership is essential, personality

traits are equally weighted determinants of effective leadership. In essence, an individual's distal or foundational attributes influence their capacity to function as an effective leader.

Despite several criticisms of the trait theory, researchers established that intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability are influential traits that mold the development and behaviors of others (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Northouse, 2019; Stogdill, 1974;). Empirical studies on the trait theory revealed a curvilinear relationship between the leadership trait of intelligence and performance. Consequently, Zaccaro (2007) suggested that the growing body of studies highlights individual traits as necessary precursors to leadership effectiveness.

Yukl (1989) implied pitfalls of the trait theory are an indication that no one theory is sufficient. On this account, Yukl (1989) recommended merging different theoretical approaches. To Yukl (1989), researchers and practitioners should conceptualize leadership as a shared process rather than focusing on individual leaders. Nonetheless, Northouse (2019) insisted that the trait theory of leadership is still alive today and provides meaningful guidance to many organizational leaders. The contributions of the trait theory are significant, especially since studies found that leader traits are positively associated with the practice and process of leadership.

### **Major Leadership Traits for Effective Leadership**

Northouse (2019) proposed there are five major leadership traits, namely (a) intelligence, (b) self-confidence, (c) determination, (d) integrity, and (e) sociability. The trait of intelligence refers to the intellectual ability of the leader (Northouse, 2019). Zaccaro et al. (2017) found that leaders tended to have higher intellectual capacity than followers. Traits such as creativity and intellectual ability are essential to leadership success. In addition, Zaccaro et al. (2004) argued

that intelligence is linked to the indices of effective leadership. For example, Morrow and Stern (1990) found that “mental ability test scores were significantly and positively associated with rated probability of managerial success” (as cited in Zaccaro et al., 2004, p. 110). Essentially, managers who obtained high scores were perceived as more adept in their managerial roles.

The trait of self-confidence is concerned with the conviction of one's core competencies and skills. Northouse (2019) affirmed that a key part of leadership is influencing others. Hence, self-confidence is fundamental as it helps leaders feel certain that their efforts are appropriate and right. In the same vein, Locke (1991) and Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) declared that self-confidence is predictive of leader effectiveness. A self-confident leader is more likely to move forward with completing tasks despite the challenges they may encounter.

The trait of determination is central because it has to do with a strong drive and desire to move from the status quo. Northouse (2019) avowed that many leaders who exhibit the trait of determination also showcase initiative, persistence, and dominance and have a high proclivity to persevere amidst obstacles. Additionally, integrity is the fourth trait and is concerned with trustworthiness. Finally, the leadership trait of sociability pertains to the leaders' capability to be sensitive toward others' needs and demonstrate concerns for their well-being (Northouse, 2019).

Each of the five traits is central to effective leadership. Moreover, the trait theory enables leaders to utilize their innate and extraordinary abilities, personality, motives, and values to engage in effective leadership (Uslu, 2019; Yukl, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2004). Uslu (2019) claimed the trait theory has its basis in physical, psychological, and personality traits, and its foundation is embedded in what constitutes the makeup of effective leaders. Thus, despite the shortcomings of the trait theoretical framework, individual traits remain relevant in the lexicon of scientific leadership studies (Zaccaro, 2007).

Leadership effectiveness is invaluable. The underlying premise of effective leadership pertains to how well leaders can influence their followers to achieve collective and desirable goals. Organizations depend on leaders for success. Influential leadership traits help organizations move forward due to leaders' abilities to influence others. Consequently, leaders can use their traits to help them explicitly showcase and communicate their motives and values. Traits, as defined by Locke (1991), are "patterns of observable action" or "habitual ways of thinking" (p. 23). Therefore, leaders can effectively influence school-aged youth within the school and community context. As young people engage in extracurricular activities, observing their leaders' traits can influence them in an impactful way.

### **Leadership and Positive Youth Development**

Youth experience dynamic changes during their transition to adulthood and are dependent on influential leaders to help them develop protective attributes (Konopka, 2012; Shek et al., 2017; Tsang et al., 2013). Shek et al. (2017) asserted that the transition from childhood to adulthood consists of physical changes and social transformation. These changes are often too complex for young people to manage independently. Konopka (2012) explained that these changes are drivers of tensions, emotional conflicts, and engagement in risky behaviors. In their longitudinal study of Chinese youth in Hong Kong, Shek et al. (2017) found evidence indicating that students' participation in a youth program promoted positive development. However, they also claimed one in every five youth is likely to require psychosocial problems support. In this regard, Shek et al. (2017) insisted that leaders help youth develop their psychological competencies.

When young people engage in activities that promote positive developmental attributes, they can develop many skills. Researchers identified that social, affective, behavioral, and

cognitive are the four major dimensions of engagement (Fredricks et al., 2016; Sjogren et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2016). Together, these dimensions constitute students' overall commitment or investment during their participation in an activity. Social engagement defines the quality of interactions students have with peers and adults (Fredricks et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2016). Affective engagement relates to students' interests, values, and emotions that students experience while participating in a specific activity. These positive and negative emotions play an integral role in cultivating an environment where students feel like they belong (Sjogren et al., 2021). Cognitive engagement represents motivation, effort, and persistence and relates to students' willingness to master complex ideas and challenges while participating in extracurricular activities (Fredricks et al., 2017). Finally, behavioral engagement encompasses students' active participation in extracurricular activities and includes their attendance, efforts, on-task behaviors (Bartko, 2005; Sjogren et al., 2021). This dimension of engagement is considered the first step students must take to unlock the positive outcomes of engagement in extracurricular activities. This study viewed student engagement from both behavioral and active engagement dimensions. Youth engagement fuels the development of several personal qualities. For example, engagement in activities promotes the acquisition and development of psychosocial competencies such as confidence, competence, connection, character, and compassion (Shek et al., 2017). In addition, earlier studies suggested youth civically engaged in their communities were more likely to serve within leadership capacities as adults (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Flanagan, 1998; Youniss et al., 1997). Taken as a whole, the benefits of youth engagement are fundamental for their positive development.

Further, in a study examining the perceptions of youth and adults who engaged in different relationships (i.e., youth-adult partnerships, youth-led collaborations), Perkins (2006)

found that adults' support played a vital role in the different types of relationships. Perkins (2006) also noted that youth had a more positive outlook on their capacity to serve as community leaders when they engaged in youth-led collaborations. Similarly, Jones (2006) discovered that youth became more positive toward working with adults after their involvement in a youth leadership program. As a result, Smith (2018) claims "the highest level of engagement is when youth, community members and institutions, are in it together, pooling knowledge and sharing responsibility to address challenges" (p.137).

Correspondingly, Tsang et al. (2013) recommend that adults from the community serve as mentors for youth to demonstrate and stimulate their adoption of self-efficacy resources and skills. Community leaders are especially important because young people may choose to join a youth group or a gang during their formative years (Tsang et al., 2013). However, the guidance and mentorship from trusted adults may offset youth's proclivity to engage in risky behaviors. Overall, the roles of family, community, and educational leaders are paramount during the teenage years, a turbulent stage of human development. For this reason, Konopka (2012) postulated that "practical learning opportunities are essential" because healthy development is attainable through youth's participation in family and other societal units (p.137). Succinctly, community and educational leaders should encourage and facilitate growth experiences for young people. Leaders within schools have dynamic roles that they must fulfil. School is a youth-centered environment (Monkman & Proweller, 2016), and as a result, effective school leadership is quintessential for positive youth development. For example, Bush (2009) avowed that while classroom teaching is the first influencer of student outcomes, leadership is the second critical factor. Similarly, Hallinger (2003) and Liethwood et al. (2006) argued that effective

leadership, mainly within schools, is fundamental because of its beneficial effects on students and overall school success.

School and family influence are crucial for youth development (Tsang et al., 2013). In their study, Tsang et al. (2013) concluded that young people's academic performance (the behavior) was predicted by their beliefs (cognitions) which are heavily influenced by their family, peers, and community (environment). Furthermore, the researchers articulated that self-efficacy, or young people's belief in their capabilities to achieve desired results, functioned as a protective factor of youth development. Notably, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1992) specified that young people have various needs essential for their positive youth development. Youth need resourceful opportunities such as (a) socializing with peers and adults, (b) belonging to a valued group, (c) extending feelings of competency, (d) contributing to the community, and (e) developing skills that are relevant now and, in the future, (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992). These developmental needs can be satisfied during participation in extracurricular activities. Similarly, Konopka (2012) claims that youth are important contributors to society, and although they possess specific abilities, they rely on ecological support (i.e., family, peers, school, community) for their positive development. In fact, "youth are socialized through major institutions in society, most notably family, school, church, and government" (McBride et al., 2010, p. 34). In sum, leaders of school-based or community-based activities are fundamental vectors of youth development. These leaders play a significant role in shaping the perceptions and, ultimately, youth behaviors. Hence, leaders of extracurricular activities are positioned to positively influence young people to thrive.

### **Extracurricular Activities and Positive Development**

As previously mentioned, the class “extracurricular activities,” often abbreviated as EA, represents a positive youth developmental asset (Balaguer et al., 2020; Durlak et al., 2010; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Eisman et al., 2016; Farb & Matjasko, 2012; Mueller et al., 2011). Although student participation is voluntary in extracurricular activities, “adolescents often develop meaningful relationships with their peers and institutions” when they are involved in extracurricular activities (Balaguer, 2020, p. 1). Similarly, researchers (i.e., Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012; Simpkins et al., 2012) posited that the structure of EA facilitates high-quality peer interactions and enables young people to develop prosocial friendships. Moreover, Hansen and Larson (2007) argued that engagement in extracurricular activities provides practical learning opportunities for young people to participate in activities that pique their interests.

Engagement in extracurricular activities is beneficial for youth. Young people may engage in these activities within their communities or at school. Extracurricular activities are separate from the compulsory school curriculum. Characteristically:

These activities are generally voluntary, have regular and scheduled meetings, maintain developmentally based expectations and rules for participants in the activity setting (and sometimes beyond it), involve several participants, offer supervision and guidance from adults, and are organized around developing particular skills and achieving goals.

(Mahoney et al., 2005, p. 4)

Youth development research indicates that engagement in extracurricular activities is linked with positive developmental, social, and educational outcomes (Camp, 1990; Haensly et al., 1986; Irvin et al., 2010; McNeal, 1999). For example, McNeal (1999) found that high school students who participated in extracurricular activities were more likely to develop interpersonal skills,

have improved self-esteem, attain high academic achievements, and have fewer delinquencies. In their study, McNeal (1999) also explored high school as a place of structure for students to attain positive developmental assets. Findings suggested that the school's structure and context directly propelled or derailed students from having access to participate in extracurricular activities. Consequently, McNeal (1999) stated that extracurricular activities provide high school students access to human, cultural, and social capital. Since schools foster development, their structures should not hinder students from participating in extracurricular activities. The findings of McNeal's (1999) study were supported by Urban et al. (2010), who discovered that individual youth's strengths and the availability of resources within their context contributed to their attainment of positive developmental assets.

Previous studies demonstrate that participating in extracurricular activities is positively associated with positive developmental outcomes such as academic achievement and a reduction in adverse outcomes such as school dropout and problematic behaviors (Cooper et al., 1999; Zaff et al., 2003). In addition, extracurricular activities are positively correlated with a higher GPA (Akos, 2006; Eccles et al., 2003; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). Studies documenting the benefits of extracurricular activities were conducted as early as 1975. One such study found that student participation in high school extracurricular activities is positively linked to higher education achievements (Otto, 1975, as cited in Haensly et al., 1986). Students who participated in high school activities were more likely to pursue a college degree. These findings were replicated by Mahoney et al. (2003), who also found that students who participated in extracurricular activities during their high school years were more likely to enroll in college.

Extracurricular activities support responsible citizenship, moral and ethical values, and mental and physical health goals (Konopka, 2012). Thus, Haensly et al. (1986) posited that

extracurricular activities, whether in a band or club, play a crucial role in young people's lives. In their study, students provided a list of benefits attributed to their participation in extracurricular activities. These included (a) meeting other people, (b) increasing responsibility, (c) making school more enjoyable, (d) developing leadership abilities; (e) broadening interest (becoming more well-rounded), (f) developing self-confidence, (g) preparing for a career, (h) enhancing time management, and (i) maintaining physical condition or health (keeping in shape). The list of benefits was presented in order of frequency based on students' responses (Haensly et al., 1986). In reverse, Haensly et al. (1986) also found that five underperforming students (based on grades reported) stated that extracurricular activities hindered them to a certain extent as it was challenging for them to make up assignments that they missed due to participation. However, students from the achievement spectrum (A-C) provided positive affirmations of the benefits of extracurricular activities to them. For instance, one student noted that extracurricular activities "put a spark in my life" (Haensly et al., 1986, p. 118). Extracurricular activities provide many benefits to young people. For students challenged by unfavorable environmental factors, belonging to a group and participating in extracurricular activities can positively impact their lives. In fact, several studies have investigated types of EA such as service clubs, sports, and performing arts (Vandell et al., 2015) and their contribution to the development experiences of young people (Denault & Poulin, 2009; Fredricks & Eccles, 2008; Gootman, 2002). Overall, engagement in EA can enhance the overall well-being of youth, including Grenadian youth.

Researchers recognize extracurricular activities such as arts or sports-oriented afterschool programs for their academic, social, and developmental benefits (Little et al., 2008; Monkman & Proweller, 2016). In their study, Monkman and Proweller (2016) found that students became more active participants in school and other aspects of their lives due to their

engagement in an afterschool program. Extracurricular activities in school and the community can promote healthy developmental assets in young people.

Additionally, Camp (1990) examined the influence of participating in school activities on overall student success. In their study, Camp (1990) found that student activity level had a positive, significant effect on academic achievement. Similarly, Irvin et al. (2010) study revealed that engagement in several extracurricular activities was associated with better grades. Students involved in school and religious activities had higher grades than students who were not involved. These findings collectively substantiate the benefits of extracurricular activities. Research findings from Camp (1990) and Irvin et al. (2010) do not support alternative research evidence suggesting that engagement in extracurricular activities prohibits academic achievement. Overall, there is substantial evidence indicating that extracurricular activities positively influence youth.

### **Criticism of Extracurricular Activities on Positive Youth Development**

Conversely, extracurricular activities were deemed detrimental to school success, and many sociologists view participation in extracurricular activities as a culprit for the reproduction of social inequalities (Camp 1990; Coleman 1961; Coulangeon, 2018). According to Camp (1990), many critics label extracurricular activities as diminishing factors of student achievement. In addition, Camp (1990) noted that despite conclusive evidence suggesting a symbiotic and important positive causal relationship between participation and achievement, further research is needed to explore the extent to which school system policies (i.e., academic success as a prerequisite for participation) impede student achievements.

Relatedly, Coulangeon (2018) claimed a direct link between participation in extracurricular activities and cognitive skills necessary to propel academic achievement. Results

of this study suggested that participation in extracurricular activities had positive and significant impacts on students' French, Mathematics, and non-cognitive skills. Nonetheless, Coulangeon (2018) asserted that participation in extracurricular activities did not provide these students with skills that they can reinvest in school. Moreover, extracurricular activities, by nature, tend to propel social inequalities in school achievement as participation varies depending on social and cultural background (Coulangeon, 2018). Because these activities are not compulsory, these activities may not be readily available to all students. Therefore, the impacts of extracurricular activities are expected to be unequal, negatively affecting students based on their social and or cultural backgrounds.

### **Role of Leadership Traits and Extracurricular Activities on Youth Development**

In the present study, the general problem is whether engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits support the positive developmental factor of resilience in young people while they participate in extracurricular activities (Hodgkinson et al., 2021; Lerner et al., 2019; Mahoney et al., 2014). Extracurricular activities are an avenue for positive youth development. Positive youth development is a strength-based model of development which focuses on understanding and enhancing the lives of young people through engagement in their environment; these environments include family, school, and out-of-school programs (Lerner et al., 2014). The positive youth development movement emerged in the 1990s, explicitly identifying the assets and resources needed for young people to experience a healthy and productive life (Blythe & Leffert, 1995; Cargo et al., 2003; Lerner, 1995; Pittman et al., 2000). After that, however, the positive youth development movement transitioned its focus to encouraging young people to contribute to their communities actively and not merely have access to the resource they need for positive development (Hughes & Curnan, 2000; Lerner,

2004, 2007; Pittman, 2000; Perkins et al., 2001). Since then, positive youth development has become the central focus for attaining desired developmental outcomes for youth (Jones, 2007).

Clonan-Roy et al. (2016) explained the PYD model initially included five competencies essential for healthy youth development. These competencies are competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring. Later, PYD social scientists added contribution as the sixth competence to emphasize the importance of youth engaging in developmental activities (Clonan-Roy et al., 2016). Overall, PYD research and practice highlight each young person's talents, strengths, interests, and potential (Merrick et al., 2013). Consequently, the positive youth development approach emphasizes how young people learn, grow and change.

Most of the PYD research has focused on how community-based development programs result in the positive development of youth (Lerner et al., 2014). One of the most significant findings of their study was that higher participation levels in a 4-h program were associated with decreased levels of risky behaviors and an increase in the levels of protective assets (Lerner et al., 2014). Additionally, Lerner et al. (2014) discovered that individual assets were among the most potent for positive development in youth. Influential adults play a crucial role in contributing to young people's growth. Hence, the present study explored whether the traits of extracurricular program leaders in Grenada contribute to youth's resilience, a developmental asset.

Engagement in youth programs increases youth resilience. As a result, Noam and Bernstein (2013) noted that student-centered engagement is necessary for young people to thrive. Ruvalcaba et al. (2017) found that youth who were involved in a group (i.e., arts, sports and, scouts) also reported higher levels of emotional intelligence and resilience that were found to be significantly different from youth who were not involved in a social group. Similarly, in a study

relating to the developmental asset of psychological resilience and its moderating effects on risky behaviors (re-offending), Hodkinson (2021) found that interventions increased youth's resilience. Scaffolding by program leaders and environmental factors were found to positively moderate risky behaviors. As youth participated in programs designed to support their development, they became more resilient and less inclined to be susceptible to risky behaviors. Hodkinson (2021) also found evidence indicating that resilience and resistance led to a series of positive repercussions. These findings imply that the developmental asset of resilience can be beneficial for young people who are susceptible to risky behaviors. In the same vein, Mahoney et al. (2014) concluded that when youth have access to influential leaders, they are given an opportunity to learn life skills and have access to leadership opportunities. Leaders of extracurricular activities can directly influence young people to thrive. In this sense, it is presumable that leaders and ecological resources are essential for youth development.

Additionally, these programs provide many benefits, including leadership development and life skills. For example, Wingenbach and Kahler (1997) postulated that "Agricultural students at the secondary level could increase their leadership skills in communication, decision making, getting along with others, learning, management of self, understanding self and working with groups, by participating in school and/or community activities" (p. 25). In essence, participating in youth programs has continuously been found to promote the positive development of youth. Wingenbach and Kahler (1997) claimed that youth program leaders play an integral role in the development of these programs and thus urge collaborative efforts between youth and their leaders.

Studies suggest that in addition to developing leadership skills, educational and community leaders play a pivotal role in enabling youth to transform into resilient adults (Chan,

2003; Gregoric & Owens, 2008; Karagianni & Montgomery, 2017; Wingenbach & Kahler, 1997). In a review of the literature on youth programs, Karagianni and Montgomery (2017) evidenced that most schools immersed students in leadership roles; however, the lack of appropriate support or structure reduced the positive impacts of the programs. While several programs are designed to promote youth development, youth programs require structure and support. Proper support and structure can include influential leaders and program elements specifically focused on youth development. For example, Chan (2003) conveyed that students who participated in leadership programs reported improvements in their divergent thinking and a slight increase in self-efficacy. In addition, Chan (2003) asserted that self-confidence and improvement in students' perception of their competencies in communication and public speaking were among the program's outcomes. As educational leaders provide opportunities for youth to develop their leadership skills, youth stand a better chance of molding into resilient beings despite the developmental and ecological challenges they may encounter.

Moreover, Gregoric and Owens (2008) affirmed that schools support the development of social skills through the incorporation of peer programs. Their mixed method study involving 28 students revealed that students who engaged in peer leadership training demonstrated improvement in several social skills. The improved social skills were cooperation, communication, helping others, empathy, belonging to the school, belonging to the community, relationships at home, ability to make new friends, decision making, and conflict resolution (Gregoric & Owens, 2008). To this end, the researchers argued that resilience and social skills are assets for helping students cope. Social skills may also protect young people from the full impact of challenges they encounter. Some of the common problems that affect young people are alcohol and drugs, bullying and emotional abuse, coping with stress and suicide/ self-harm which

can be mediated by social skills (Gregoric & Owens, 2008). These problems can have drastic effects on the well-being of young people. Nevertheless, educational leaders can cultivate an environment that promotes positive developmental experiences.

### **Resilience and Positive Youth Development**

Resilience is viewed as a protective mechanism that should be promoted in many environments, including schools. Dosil (2019) exclaimed, “in short, the school, as a promoter of well-being, should favor the strengthening of resilience so that teenagers can develop behaviors associated with it and become responsible, committed, and happy citizens” (p. 57). In addition, Dosil (2019) suggested resilience comes into maturity when risk factors such as engagement in drug use or school violence have been outweighed by protective factors such as family support, peer group, or school. Young people are confronted with many challenges. For instance, Lipowski et al. (2015) stated that young people experience dynamic physical, mental, and social changes, which consequently slows down their rational thinking and ability to control emotions. Due to these changes, youth become more susceptible to risky behaviors. Turchick et al. (2010) postulated that mental health problems, sexually transmitted diseases, and violence are three results of engaging in risky behaviors. All of these problems can negatively affect the futures of youth. In human development, the constancy of change is inevitable, but programs that foster resilience can alleviate the adverse effects of the changes young people face.

Ruvalcaba et al. (2017) defined resilience as a combination of internal and external protective factors that help a person triumph over adversity without sustaining permanent damage to their development or psychological condition. Using a sample of Mexican youth, Ruvalcaba et al. (2017) hypothesized that youth who participated in a social group would have better mental health than youth who were not involved in a social group. In this study, Ruvalcaba

et al. (2017) findings corresponded with the results of Broche et al. (2012), who also found that participating in sports enhanced participants' use of proactive coping skills. They concluded that engagement in extracurricular activities was beneficial.

Studies indicate that resilience or the development of coping skills towards disruption is vital for youth development (Ángeles-Donayre, 2017; Dosil et al., 2019;). In a correlational study examining the relationship between resilience and the development of social skills, Ángeles-Donayre (2017) asserted that resilience is relevant mainly because it enables young people to respond to adverse challenges in a healthy manner. On this note, Ángeles-Donayre (2017) reiterated that resilience is not about ignoring the reality or even the severity of a problem; resilience has to do with facing the problem, overcoming it, and even transforming the problem into a positive experience. In the study, Ángeles-Donayre (2017) did not find a statistically significant relationship between resilience and social skills; however, their findings confirmed a statistically significant relationship between empathy and global social skills. Social skills are often developed while young people participate in extracurricular activities. Social skills are protective factors that yield many benefits. In fact, Dosil (2019) noted that teenagers who developed several social skills such as resilience had demonstrated higher academic achievements.

### **Developmental Relationships and Resilience**

Other studies have specified that positive developmental relationships and youth's personal coping mechanisms are protective factors linked to overall positive development (Carbonell et al., 2002; Li & Julian, 2012; Pekel et al., 2018; Ruvalcaba et al., 2017).

Relationships such as those established from belonging to a social group are essential parts of healthy youth development. Seligman (2012) posited that healthy interpersonal relationships are

fundamental assets for human development and their capacity to thrive. Pekel et al. (2018), in a longitudinal study, found that youth who reported stronger developmental relationships with their program leaders also displayed increased developmental outcomes. Moreover, Pekel et al. (2018) reiterated that the “higher the number of developmental relationships young people reported, the higher their academic motivation, socio-emotional skills and personal responsibility; and the lower their self-reported high-risk behaviors” (p. 498). Positive relationships in OST programs or extracurricular activities have a dynamic impact on youth development. To this end, program leaders should possess traits congruent with effective leadership. Influential leadership traits can help leaders cultivate an environment wherein young people leverage the benefits of developmental relationships. Pekel et al. (2018) also suggested that investing in relationships with young people from marginalized communities is perhaps the first meaningful step to changing cultural counters and progress to a desirable civic and social life. The role of leaders is immeasurable.

Leading and leadership are critical (Bush & Coleman, 2000; Ferber et al., 2002; Northouse, 2018; Schon, 1984). Ferber et al. (2002) argued that leading is about developing positive civic attitudes, behaviors, and skills. Similarly, Bush and Coleman (2000) posited that leadership is associated with the development and communication of a vision. In support of Coles and Southworth's (2005) assertion that leadership is crucial for the overall success of schools, Bush and Colman (2000) added that the development and communication of a school's vision are dependent on the effectiveness of its leadership. Moreover, Schon (1984) contended that leadership is symbolic in nature, and hence a leader's responsibility revolves around inspirational, educational, and normative functions. Leaders in schools and community organizations are important contributors to success. Leithwood et al. (2006) stated, “there is not a

single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership” (p. 5), underscoring the significance of leaders within a school context. Consequently, examining the influence of program leaders in schools and communities can provide some pertinent information as to the extent of their impact on students' capacity to cope with adversity. Schools are designed to foster the development of all their members, and therefore the functions of leaders are pertinent. The complex and important work of fostering resilience is at the forefront of educational leaders' tasks within Grenadian schools. The exhibited traits of leaders can influence and support Grenadian youth in many ways.

### **Leadership and Positive Youth Development**

Educational leaders play a pivotal role in engaging students on intellectual, social and emotional levels, all of which are essential for adolescent youth positive development (Arnold, 2020; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004; Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2020; Noam & Bernstein, 2013). According to Hargreaves and Fink (2004), “The prime responsibility of all educational leaders is to put in place learning that engages students intellectually, socially, and emotionally” (p.1). To do so, leaders must put in place sustainable measures that will enable them to support the positive development of youth. Hargreaves and Fink (2004) postulated seven principles that form the foundation of sustainable leadership, a prerequisite for leadership success in schools. These principles premise that sustainable leadership is resourceful, promotes diversity, and takes a systemic approach to educational leadership and student success. Notably, research has shown that negative and unfulfilling school experiences, work and employment opportunities, and severe home and welfare problems were the three factors driving incompletion rates among secondary school students (Alexander et al., 2001; Lamb et al., 2004; Smyth & Hattam, 2004; Teese & Polesel, 2003). Nonetheless, protective factors such as leaders' influence

can curtail trends in school dropout. Effective school leadership can be amplified by collaborating with community leaders. Collaborations with out-of-school time (OST) programs leaders are required to fulfill the developmental needs of young people (Harvard Business School Review, 2020). Both school and community leaders must work together to support the social, emotional, and cognitive needs of youth. Leaders of extracurricular activities stand a better chance of creating warm and supportive relationships with young people because there is less academic accountability at stake within OST programs and extracurricular activities (Noam & Bernstein, 2013). The impact of these leaders is extraordinary. Noam and Bernstein (2013) purported that because of youth mentoring relationships, students voiced severe tragedies or complexities they were dealing with in their personal lives.

Arnold (2020) advanced that the youth generation is in peril and claimed that school and program leaders must provide adequate support to maintain engagement in the present and post-Covid-19 environments. In the same vein, Bartlett and Virette (2020) argued that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has the potential to dictate the lifelong development of youth. With school closures and limited access to take part in developmental activities, young people have been denied opportunities to grow and are more prone to the effects of risks. For instance, despite the infancy of empirical evidence, scholars have contended that the Covid-19 pandemic has confined young people to the risks of psycho-social effects (Liang et al., 2020; National 4-H Council, 2020). Moreover, Cohen and Bosk (2020) asserted that the gravity of the pandemic's impact is more devastating to young people who are vulnerable and marginalized. Young people who were vulnerable before the pandemic are now more predisposed to developmental setbacks. The multiplicity of the societal impact of the pandemic on young people's lives is perhaps the biggest test of their capacity to cope and navigate the turbulent transition into adulthood (Arnold,

2020). Moreover, Arnold (2020) posited that current evidence underscores the relevance of schools, and programs in facilitating the social, emotional, and cognitive development of youth.

The concept of the positive youth development movement came into fruition in the 1990s, specifically focusing on the resources and assets that young people need to experience a life that is healthy and productive (Blythe & Leffert, 1995; Cargo et al., 2003; Lerner, 1995; Pitman et al., 2000). Other scholars argued that positive youth development is obtained by engaging youth as active contributors within their communities (Hughes & Curnan, 2000; Lerner, 2007; Pitman, 2000). Blythe and Leffert (1995) discovered that the health of the community where young people reside was a contextual factor that heavily influenced their developmental outcomes. In addition, Cargo et al. (2003), in their longitudinal qualitative study, found that empowerment opportunities in a community program enabled youth to become more socially integrated into their respective communities. One interesting element of this program is that it focuses on facilitating, teaching, mentoring, and providing youth with feedback. As a result, students who participated in the program experienced self-actualization (Cargo et al., 2003). As young people engage in extracurricular activities and other forms of community activities, they grow and thrive.

### **Characteristics and Risk Factors Impeding Positive Development of Grenadian Youth**

The growing trends in risky behaviors of school-aged youth in Grenada pose a significant threat to the future of the local and regional communities of the Caribbean (Alexander & Japal 2020; Economic Country Assessment [ECA] Grenada, 2017). These risks include crime, anti-social behavior, and delinquencies. Based on qualitative evidence obtained from interviews, ECA Grenada (2017) reported that the high persistence of risky behaviors of Grenadian youth was attributed to the factors of (a) poor parenting- lack of care and control, (b) increasing

number of female single-parent household, (c) unemployment, (d) drug use - alcohol and cannabis, (e) teenage pregnancy, (f) suspension/expulsion/dropout from school, (g) child abuse and exposure to violence, and (h) general poverty. Grenadian youth engagement in risky behaviors is exasperated by many factors that are outside of their control. Quite notable, ECA Grenada (2017) noted that although Grenada was the first of only two Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) countries to pass a legislative child justice bill (the Juvenile Justice Act of 2012), the country has been slow to implement programs, including those that focus on restorative justice for Grenadian youth, due to limited financing and the lack of human resource capacity. As such, it is imperative that they receive support from leaders who are attuned to enabling them to thrive.

Further, upon conducting a regional analysis of country-submitted data in 2015, ECA (2017) highlighted the following statistics underscoring the situation in Grenada:

- .....(a) Cumulative total of juvenile arrests (person 9 to 17 years): 1,326; (b) highest number of children charged on an annual basis among the 10 reporting countries: nearly 325 in 2012, 250 in 2013 and just under 205 in 2014; (c) one of the highest number of children charged per capita: 225 per 100, 000 (d) more boys (700) than girls (120) charged with offenses in 2014; boys were 5.8 times more likely to be charged than girls;
- (e) Top three offenses: (1) stealing; (2) obscene language and (3) causing harm. (p. 7)

Evidence illustrated by this report underscores some of the challenges encountered by young people in Grenada. For example, juvenile arrests of 1,326 young people between the ages of 9 and 17 are troubling. Such a social problem warrants a collective effort. ECA (2017) acknowledged that the scarcity of reliable disaggregated data and the dearth of research on juvenile justice impedes the implementation of programs.

Evidence suggests that less than 20% of secondary school students obtained five or more subject passes in the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations between 2009 and 2013 (ECA, 2017). Furthermore, the dropout rate for secondary school students in Grenada was 0.09 percent in the 2012-2013 school year. Douglas (2019) provided evidence indicating that for the 2015/2016 academic year, 65% of students who dropped out of school were males and only 35% were females. Additionally, Douglas (2019) claimed that for the 2016/17 school year, 50% of students enrolled in secondary school were males and the other 50% were females. Moreover, UNICEF (2021) reported that in 2018, secondary school enrollment rate was higher for boys (93) than girls (83%). The implications of this data are critical for youth leaders. In sum, low school completion rates and academic achievements impede positive development. For this reason, extracurricular activities at school and in the community can function as an essential antidote.

In a report created from data obtained from secondary sources, Alexander and Nepal (2020) noted that teenage drinking is problematic on the island of Grenada. The most popular form of alcoholic beverage consumed by teenagers is beer, especially during social gatherings (Alexander & Nepal, 2020; Douglas, 2019). Additionally, based on data collected, records show that two youth under the age of 15 were arrested and charged for drug offenses in 2017, 2018, and 2019 (Alexander & Nepal, 2020). However, for the 2017 to 2019 period, youth between the ages of 15 to 19 that were charged were 35, 32, and 23, respectively. Despite a steady decline in the number of young people arrested and charged for drug offenses in Grenada, this data raises much concern for the developmental trajectories of Grenadian youth. Moreover, it is important to note that three youth between the ages of 15 and 19 were sentenced to prison in 2017 for drug offenses (Alexander & Nepal, 2020). The positive development of Grenadian youth is at high

stakes. Time is of the essence for educational and community leaders to find ways to counteract the risk factors and risky behaviors that are potentially detrimental to the long-term well-being of Grenadian youth.

### **Poverty and its impact on Grenadian Youth**

Several social challenges affect Grenadian youth. The most common of them all is poverty. Poverty, coined as a “silent killer” is cogitated as one of the world’s most intractable problems (Finley, 2018, p.1). It is defined as a shortage of sufficient money necessary to afford basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter but varies in measurement across individual countries. The historical onset of poverty can be traced back to the development of mass agricultural systems that endorsed people to harvest and sell mass quantities of goods (Finley, 2018). Prior to this, people typically relied on their communities to provide not merely enough but an abundance of food and resources for their collective needs. In addition, poverty literature posits that the development of industrialization and capitalism further exasperated the gaps between the rich and the poor. In developing countries, colonialism is identified as one of the root factors that have historically driven the plight of poverty. Alarming, as of 2018, the United Nations estimates that 2.6 billion people lack basic sanitation, while 815 million people go hungry and lack access to sufficient nutrition (Finley, 2018).

Today, poverty persists as a global challenge, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups: children, the elderly, women, and minorities (Nandy, 2008). For instance, based on the US national poverty threshold for 2012, Schultz (2016) affirmed that “American children living in poverty represented 34.6 percent of all Americans in poverty, and accounted for 35 percent of Americans living in deep poverty” (p. 89). Furthermore, The World Bank Group (2020) suggested that because of the Covid-19 Pandemic, global poverty reduction will not only slow

down but, instead, much of the world will experience a reversal in progress made to combat poverty. Moreover, reports from the World Bank Group (2020) suggest that “by 2030, at least half of the world’s poor people will be living in fragile and conflict-affected settings” (p. 2). This prediction is of critical concern for smaller developing countries such as Grenada. By definition, “poverty is not, after all, a cultural aberration or a character flaw. Poverty is a shortage of money” (Ehrenreich, 2012, p. 4). The cyclical nature of poverty can be combatted with deliberate efforts to enhance core characteristics of individual resiliency in youth. Several adverse outcomes are associated with poverty (Kim, 2018; Nandy, 2008). Nandy (2008) suggested that individuals and communities who experience continued poverty may be confronted with significant developmental problems such as undernutrition and child mortality. Moreover, Kim (2018) argues that poverty can cause a lack of access to education, inadequate housing, and an absence of freedom that economic stability can provide.

According to Lawrence (2020), poverty affects almost one-third of the population in Grenada, with 13% of the population considered extremely poor. Inadequate defense against natural disasters, educational barriers, and unpreparedness are Grenada’s three leading cause of poverty. Poverty is exceptionally high in rural areas of the country where residents lack access to the drivers of the mainstream economy: tourism and spice exportation. Douglas (2019) postulated the poor families in Grenada are having more children than affluent families on the island. Additionally, in discussing the socioeconomic status of Grenadian youth, Douglas (2019) asserted that “there is a higher percentage of poverty among Grenada’s rural youth” (p. 22).

One-fourth of the country’s population is under the age of 14, and a report shows that 66.4% of impoverished residents of Grenada are under the age of 24 (Lawrence, 2020). Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, 32% of Grenada’s population lived in poverty, accounting for the

highest poverty rate in the Eastern Caribbean (Jubilee Caribbean, 2021; Lawrence, 2020).

However, due to the financial downturn caused by the pandemic, extreme poverty rates, and unemployment rates are expected to increase. In sum, Grenadian youth are heavily affected by poverty, exasperated by the pandemic.

### **Extracurricular Activities as a Protective Factor**

Research shows engagement in extracurricular activities as a protective factor for youth (Bailey, 2016; Bailey et al., 2009; Cooper et al., 1999; Dotterer et al., 2007; Fredricks et al., 2006; Vandell et al., 2007). Bailey (2016) claimed that evidence points to the positive impact of physical activity and sports on reducing harmful behaviors during adolescence. Due to psychological adjustments in young people, they have a higher tendency to engage in risky behaviors such as early drug and alcohol usage and adolescent pregnancy (Bailey 2016). Nonetheless, sports and physical activities have been found to promote constructive alternatives to risky behaviors in young people. Further, Bailey (2016) concluded that there are ample reasons to believe that engagement in physical activities and sports can promote success at school. The impact of physical activity on the physical, mental, and cognitive health of young people should not be underestimated and thus take more precedence in schools, the societal vehicles where young people can engage on several levels.

In their study, Fredricks et al. (2006), involving a sample of 1,500 youth, found that students who participated in school clubs and sports achieved higher grades and educational outcomes than nonparticipants. The researchers used data from the Maryland Adolescent Development in Context Study (MADICS) and employed random sampling methods to select 1,500 families from 23 schools. Data from the original longitudinal study were collected in five waves to include 7<sup>th</sup> grade and one year after high school completion. Moreover, results from this

study also predicted that students who participated in extracurricular activities were more likely to be civically engaged and participate in social causes. Similarly, findings alluded that involvement in student clubs predicted a notable decrease in externalizing behavior and alcohol use for both boys and girls and lower marijuana use among boys only. Finally, the study found that students involved in extracurricular activities experienced psychological benefits such as forming relationships with supportive adults and obtaining a sense of belonging.

### **Leadership, Extracurricular Activities, and Resilience**

Little is known about the influence of the protective factors of leadership traits and engagement in extracurricular activities of Caribbean youth (Gonzalez, 2020; Hull, 2020; Washington, 2021). Young people in the Caribbean are disproportionately affected by many barriers, including low income and a shortage of developmental opportunities (Hull, 2020). Also, Hull (2020) claimed that in the Caribbean region, a collection of data points to risky or problematic behaviors of young people but there continues to be a scarcity of implementation of corresponding positive developmental measures. Hull (2020) postulated that in recent years, PYD interventions have been a key mechanism used to address challenges related to youth in the Caribbean region. Nonetheless, little is known about how leadership traits influence positive youth development factors, such as resilience, in Caribbean youth. The development of interventions, such as PYD programs, relies on a crossover between youth development practitioners and researchers so that they can utilize culture-relevant findings to help youth establish the competencies they need for navigating their journey to adulthood (Hull, 2020).

Washington (2021) conducted a study designed to understand if and how social factors influenced positive youth development (PYD). Results of this study suggested that youth empowerment programs counteract the challenges and developmental trajectories of youth who

live in low socioeconomic conditions and experience poverty in Jamaica. Additionally, Washington (2021) observed that mentorship, learning soft skills, and life skills were among the top social factors influencing young adult development. As a result, it was concluded that positive youth development interventions equate to the social, educational, and emotional growth of young people.

Gonzalez (2020) conducted a study to examine how young people of Grenada experienced development by attending "second chance" training and educational organizations (p. 229). The study's findings demonstrated diverse experiences of youth during the developmental process. Moreover, results from the qualitative study with 21 interviews and two focus group sessions led Gonzalez (2020) to conclude that young people who participate in second-chance education are given an opportunity to identify, navigate and enact prospects of their own development as they transition into adulthood. These organizations were part of the non-formal education sector (NFE). According to Gonzalez (2020), in 2012, Grenada achieved universal secondary education, focusing on the number of students who attend secondary school instead of the quality of education they receive to be fully prepared for secondary education. Also, dropout and repetition rates continue to be of significant concern. Consequently, Gonzales (2020) postulated that the formal education system is current faces challenges with engaging students.

This study provides educational and civic engagement leaders with important information about how leadership traits influence young people to “bounce back” from adversity in a healthy manner (Luthar et al., 2000; Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Yeh et al., 2015). The essential yet challenging task of promoting positive developmental factors such as resilience in youth is crucial in our current environment. Yeh et al. (2015) argued that previous research found

students who are low-income ethnic minorities tend to have more exposure to risk and lower access to resilience-promoting conditions than their European American counterparts. Therefore, investigating the influence of leadership traits is relevant because such inquiry can inform the strengths of youth group leaders as they direct, motivate, and guide young people. Luthar and Cicchetti (2000) contend that resilience is concerned with two constructs: adversity and positive adaptation. Adversity, also referred to as risk, has been found to promote maladjustment difficulties when individuals are exposed to negative life experiences.

On the other hand, Luthar and Cicchetti (2000) purport that positive adaptation pertains to the manifestation of behavioral and social competence, such as academic achievements and developmental milestones. Grenadian youth are confronted with various challenges beyond their control, most of which can have a severe long-term impact on their healthy transition to adulthood. Vulnerability factors such as impoverished living conditions can exasperate the harmful effects of risk or maladjustments of Grenadian youth. However, protective factors, which according to Luthar and Cicchetti (2000), "modify the effects of risk in a positive direction," can be attained from various levels of influence, including positive relationships with adults, community, or family (p. 3). The presence of protective factors is significant as research has shown that young people who have them fare better than young people who do not (Masten et al., 1990, 1999; Rutter, 1999). While Grenada's secondary school-aged population is spread across 21 public secondary schools and three private secondary schools (Federman, 2017), positive relationships with extracurricular or community-based learning activities can be fruitful in supporting them.

This quantitative correlational study examines the effects of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits on the resilience of school-aged

Grenadian youth. Gonzalez (2020) argues that Caribbean youth engagement in both formal and informal learning requires further inquiry. Non-formal learning, such as participating in extracurricular activities, takes a pragmatic approach to education, promoting the acquisition of skills and a better sense of self in young people as they transition to adulthood (Gonzalez, 2020; Polidano et al., 2015). The discourse on youth positive development, including the protective factor of resilience, encapsulates the severity of the unmet development needs of young people. Teen drinking in Grenada, among other risky behaviors, warrants an investigation into how youth programs such as extracurricular activities can support their positive development. Exploring the influence of exhibited leadership traits on school-aged youth in Grenada may lead to recommendations on how educational and community leaders encourage and inspire youth resilience. Resilience is a powerful tool to combat hardships.

Moreover, exploring the benefits of participating in extracurricular activities in developing countries such as Grenada may provide evidence for a paradigm shift pertaining to the benefits instead of the shortfalls of engagement in these activities. The purpose of chapter 2 was to illuminate salient advantages of youth development programs. The current study contributed to the nascent research fields of positive youth development in the Caribbean with a particular focus on the island of Grenada.

### **Summary**

Chapter 2 provided a thorough review of the literature on leadership, leadership characteristics, positive youth development initiatives such as extracurricular activities, and resilience. Chapter 3 details the methodological approach selected for this study. A quantitative correlational study was employed to examine the effects of observed leadership traits and levels of engagement in extracurricular activities on the resilience of Grenadian school-aged youth.

## CHAPTER 3

### Introduction

Studies about influential traits of leaders dominated leadership research during the first half of the twentieth century (Northouse, 2018). The trait theory suggests that personality traits influence leader emergence or the degree to which an individual is perceived as leaderlike (Hogan et al., 1994) and, leader effectiveness, or the degree to which an individual is seen as effective in influencing and guiding the activities of the group (Stogdill, 1950). Based on the findings of this theory, it has been determined that the trait theory of leadership provides important information necessary to support overall leadership effectiveness (Northouse, 2018). However, there are limited studies demonstrating how leaders' traits influence the outcomes of teams or groups within an organizational setting (Northouse, 2018).

To date, many studies have examined engagement in extracurricular activities and its moderating effect on students' well-being. For example, Deutsch et al. (2017) posited that participation in extracurricular activities significantly contributes to young people's positive development. Youth participate in EA within diversified contexts (e.g., school, home, communities, neighborhoods, and peer groups) that mold their values, motivation, behaviors, competencies, and views of self and the world (Im et al., 2016). The settings of EA are deemed an important context for development, mainly because within these contexts, young people are exposed to setting and monitoring goals and confronting and overcoming challenges, both of which are proximal drivers of positive youth development (Fredricks & Simpkins, 2013). Students' ability to overcome challenges is mainly due to supporting factors, including their overall resilience. Polomski (2021) stated that "student resilience refers to the ability to reduce the negative effects of hardship and to bring about positive change in negative circumstances" (p.

8). As students participate in EA, they may be positively impacted by the traits exhibited by their leaders and perceive themselves as more resilient.

This study employed a parametric statistical analysis design to explore the relationship between extracurricular activities, leadership traits, and resilience of youth enrolled in four secondary schools in Grenada. Specifically, an ordinal logistic regression with a proportional odds model was used to forecast the current study dependent variable given one or both of its independent variables. Ordinal logistic regression is commonly used in correlational studies that contain a binary, nominal, or ordinal dependent variable (Ghasemzadeh et al., 2018).

Correlational research is a quantitative research method that examines the relationship between variables of a study. The basis for selecting a quantitative approach is because, unlike qualitative research, which focuses on exploring and understanding meaning, this approach is particularly significant for examining the relationship among variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Mixed-method research is typically used when the inductive style of qualitative research and the deductive style of quantitative research are not individually sufficient to inform the goals of a study. However, because “building in protections against bias, controlling for alternative and being able to generalize and replicate findings” are central to the current study, a quantitative correlational study was selected (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 4).

Afro-Caribbean youth in Grenada are often confronted with several challenges that may prevent them from realizing their full potential. These challenges include but are not limited to poverty, drug and alcohol usage, violence, and juvenile delinquency (Douglas, 2019). The repercussions of these high-persistence problems may impede youth from triumphing over adversities and experiencing positive development during their transition to adulthood. Nonetheless, engagement in school-led and community-based extracurricular activities can

promote resilience in youth. Similarly, the displayed traits of their program leaders may also contribute to students' perception of their capacity to bounce back from adversity. Analyzing the effect of two variables, namely extracurricular activities and leadership traits, on student resilience can provide valuable information for educational and community leaders in Grenada, surrounding Caribbean countries, and perhaps other communities at large.

This chapter presents a description of the research design and methodologies used in this study. In addition, this section will reiterate the purpose and hypotheses guiding this inquiry, review research methods, procedure, data collection, data analysis, variables and instrumentation, inherent limitations, and ethical considerations. Subsequent chapters will present the results of the regression model used, followed by a discussion of the findings and implications for future research.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study is to determine if extracurricular activities and leadership traits, collectively or individually, have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of school-aged youth enrolled in four secondary schools in Grenada between 2018 and 2021. No recent EA studies involving the Grenadian youth population have been identified; however, several studies drawing from an alternative sample population have found that involvement in extracurricular activities positively correlates with healthy development factors (e.g., academic achievement) and can moderate the influence of several risk factors (Hsu et al., 2019; Sergeevitch, 2021). Similarly, upon a review of the relevant discourse, studies relating to the effects of observed leadership traits on the resilience of Grenadian youth were sparse. Consequently, the goal of the current study was also to investigate the influence of observed leadership traits on Grenadian youth resilience. This study explored the interactions

between levels of engagement in extracurricular activities, leadership traits, and overall student resilience using a predictive statistical test.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

In correlational studies, the null hypothesis is typically first established. The null hypothesis is abbreviated as  $H_0$  and assumes that there is no relationship between the variables. Alternatively, an alternative hypothesis,  $H_A$ , is later formulated to express the assumption that a relationship exists between the variables (Asamoah, 2014). The null hypothesis of a study employing ordinal logistic regression assumes that the probability or odds of the response taking a particular value, or an event occurring, is equal to zero. When using cumulative odds and binomial logistic regression, the probability of an event occurring is divided by the probability of it not happening (Laerd Statistics, 2015). One research question formed the foundation of this study. The research question and hypothesis that guided the current study were:

RQ1: Do extracurricular activities and leadership traits, collectively or individually, have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of Grenadian youth?

$H_01$ : Extracurricular activities and leadership traits, collectively or individually, do not have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of high school-aged youth.

$H_{A1}$ : Extracurricular activities and leadership traits, collectively or individually, do have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of high school-aged youth.

### **Research Design**

A quantitative research design using regression analysis framed this study. This correlational research study was not employed to determine causal relationships between the study's variables. Asamoah (2014) asserted that correlational research is also known as "associational research" because the "relationships among two or more variables are studied

without any attempt to influence them” (p. 46). Correlation does not imply causation; it examines the covariance (or relationship) among naturally occurring variables. In addition, Gupta and Gupta (1993) posited that correlation is a bivariate, not a univariate statistical measure and therefore is appropriate for supporting research questions in which variables can be quantitatively measured and numerically expressed. Moreover, Badu-Nyarko (2011) affirmed that correlation is valuable because it permits researchers to determine the strength and direction of two or more variables. In correlational studies, depending on the research goal, research paradigm, and the statistics needed for data analysis, the researcher may utilize surveys, rating scales, or a compilation of previous research studies conducted to gather data (Asamoah, 2014).

A survey design was adopted for this study. This method was chosen primarily because of the advantages of survey designs which include low cost and quick turnaround time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Further, Creswell and Creswell (2018) postulated that “a survey approach provides a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, and opinions of a population, or test for associations among variables of a population, by studying a sample of the population” (p. 147). Overall, the survey design supports the research purpose of identifying the relationship between the variables of the current study. Hence, an experimental design was not used due to several constraints that precluded implementing such a design. For example, because of time constraints and access to the relevant sample, it would be prohibitively difficult to randomly select and exercise ethical considerations for the human subjects involved in this social inquiry (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A survey method was also chosen to safeguard methodological congruence. Methodological congruence (Creswell & Poth, 2018) or the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of a research study’s purpose, questions, and methods are essential. To this end, Creswell and Creswell (2018) also suggested that the specific selection of a research approach

should be based on the research problem, the researcher's experience, and the intended audience for the study. With these considerations, data for the current study was collected through a survey method.

### **Variables**

Three ordinal variables were investigated in this study. Extracurricular activities, consisting of both school-led and community-based activities, constituted the first independent variable. Secondly, observed leadership traits were examined as the second independent variable. Resilience was distinguished as the dependent variable and was measured from an ecological resilience lens. Together, these variables were analyzed to acquire invaluable information relating to the positive development of Grenadian youth.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of this study is school-aged youth currently enrolled in secondary schools in Grenada. In the current study, population stratification did not occur before selecting the sample. Stratification is useful and highly recommended for quantitative researchers drawing a random sample from their target population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fowler, 2014). This quantitative study did not randomly select a sample from the population due to limitations related to time, money, and access. Random sampling is an optimal sampling approach in quantitative research because "each individual in the population has an equal probability of being selected" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 150). Probability samples provide two major benefits. First, probability sampling is typically more representative of the population as its procedure safeguards against sampling biases. The second and most important influence of probability sampling is that this sampling technique permits researchers and research consumers to determine the accuracy or representativeness of a sample drawn from a population for

investigation (Babbie, 2021). Nonetheless, based on the before mentioned limitations of the current study, this study obtained a sample using a nonprobability sampling measure.

As its name entails, nonprobability sampling is any sampling technique that is not congruent with the probability theory. Nonprobability sampling is commonly used in social research, especially when probabilistic sampling is not feasible. There are several types of nonprobability sampling. These include (a) reliance on available subjects, (b) purposive or judgmental sampling, and (c) snowball sampling (Babbie, 2021). Each of these sampling designs has both advantages and drawbacks. For example, researchers using the reliance on available subjects sampling (also referred to as "convenience" or haphazard" sampling) design may choose to stop individuals walking on the street from whom to collect their data. The ease and frugality of this sampling design are perhaps the main factors influencing its popularity, yet this sampling design "seldom produces data of any general value" (Babbie, 2021, p. 192). In this study, a purposive or judgmental sampling technique was used.

Purposive or judgmental sampling is justifiable based on the researcher's knowledge of the population, the characteristics of the population, as well as overall purpose of the study (Babbie, 2021). The principal investigator of this study is culturally and contextually knowledgeable about the target population from which the current sample was drawn.

### **Participants**

Participants of the current study included 150 secondary school-age Grenadian youth. They were recruited from four mix-gender comprehensive schools serving students residing in neighboring areas. Participants were enrolled in Form 3, one out of the five secondary-school-year groups in the Caribbean, including Grenada. Special consideration was given in selecting the target youth population for the current study. First, it was determined that students between

the ages of 13 to 16 would be better able to inform the goals of this research inquiry. And in Grenada, students in Form 3 are generally between the ages of 13 and 16. In the current study, students currently assigned in Forms 1 and 2 were excluded because they would have had limited opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities at the secondary school level due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Lang (2021) suggested that young people have been deeply affected by the Covid-19 pandemic as they have had to contend with school closures and its effect on their ability to engage in extracurricular activities.

Further, students in Forms 4 and 5 were also excluded because those two groups are typically more focused on preparing for their exit examination administered by the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), the main certifying body for secondary and postsecondary education in the region (Douglas, 2019). Hence, the rationale for using the Form 3 student population has to do with the unique experiences and capacity of these students to provide meaningful information that aligns with this study's goal. Grenadian youth in Form 3 would have had the opportunity to engage in extracurricular activities and observe their leaders' traits within the last three years. As a result, this makes them ideal candidates to include in exploring how the level of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits relate to overall resilience.

The timeline (2018-2021) was selected because it captures the experiences of students who would have participated in extracurricular activities before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. While the current study did not specifically observe differences in student engagement before and during the covid-19 pandemic, this timeline allowed for a more accurate portrait of Grenadian youth's engagement in extracurricular activities. Data collected in this

study accounted for student engagement in extracurricular activities during two distinct time periods. Participant demographics were collected and are included in the subsequent chapter.

### **Generalizability**

Generalization is a crucial element of quantitative research. It is concerned with the applicability of a study's finding to a larger group other than the group sampled (Polit & Beck, 2010). There are three models of generalizability: classic sample-to-population (statistical) generalization, analytic or theoretical generalization, and case-to-case transfer (transferability). Each of the models of generalizability is valuable. Polit and Beck (2010) posited that these models are germane to both qualitative and quantitative research studies.

In quantitative research, statistical generalizability is a central tenant often used to evaluate the quality of a study (Polit & Beck, 2010). Statistical generalization is a vital component of research findings, particularly when the goal of the study is to extend or apply the results to the overall population from which the sample was drawn or beyond. It is argued that sound representativeness is mainly limited to probability samples such as simple random samples. And as a result, generalizability is one of the primary features that differentiate probability sampling from nonprobability sampling techniques (Principles of Sociological Inquiry, n.d.). Nonetheless, studies employing nonprobability sampling techniques to conduct exploratory or evaluative research can enhance the generalizability of results by using several strategies. In this study, several measures were taken to improve the statistical generalizability of the study's findings to the larger population of secondary school-age youth in Grenada.

First, multi-site sampling was used. Collecting data from four secondary schools was a predetermined technique to enhance the generalizability of the current study results. Polit and Beck (2010) postulated that employing a replication strategy, such as replication of participants

by increasing the sample size, enhances generalization and increases statistical power. Second, the geographical locations of schools played a factor in the site selection. The four schools from which the sample was drawn are located in Grenada's rural and urban areas. These schools are demographically comparable to the other public schools on the island in terms of size, students' age, sex, and socioeconomic status. Also, it is important to note that all Form 3 students within each school were given an opportunity to participate in the current study.

Because the current study relied on voluntary participation, generalizability was, to an extent, compromised. It is argued that results from a voluntary participation-based study are only reflective of the willing participants. Babbie (2021) postulated that the exclusion of unwilling participants from the data collected threatens the scientific goals of generalizability in social research (Babbie, 2021). To this end, the findings of this study should be cautiously interpreted. It is impossible to investigate an entire population to explain a phenomenon or make predictions, so sampling is necessary. Hence, it was anticipated that the results of the current study would provide a sound forecast of secondary school students in Grenada at large.

### **Data Collection**

In this study, both primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data refers to original data collected for a specific research goal (i.e., this study). Conversely, secondary data is data that was originally collected for a different purpose but reused for a separate inquiry (Hox & Boeiji, 2005). Both primary and secondary data are invaluable in social research.

#### **Primary Data**

Due to the goals of this study, original data were collected utilizing an electronic survey. Like other modes of observation in social research, surveys have strengths and weaknesses that should be considered. Although surveys may appear inflexible, superficial in relation to complex

topics, susceptible to the problem of artificiality, and are classified as being strong in reliability but weak in validity, surveys have several benefits (Babbie, 2021). Babbie (2021) also claimed that surveys are beneficial to social researchers interested in determining the characteristics of a large population. The current study design involves investigating a large sample of the Caribbean youth population in Grenada. And as a result, this salient design element substantiates the relevance of selecting a survey as the most suitable mode of observation. Finally, Babbie (2021) argued that surveys are particularly apt for providing accuracy. It was anticipated that this study would produce practical significance for educational and community leaders, so data accuracy was crucial.

### **Secondary Data**

Secondary data (i.e., reports, documents) were collected to provide a better foundation for the interpretation and implications of the study's findings. The collection of reports such as the Economic Country Assessment, Grenada (2017) and the Situational Analysis of Children in Grenada (UNICEF & Government of Grenada, 2017) afforded rich contextual details about the social challenges encountered by Grenadian youth. In addition, the UNICEF (2021) Generation Unlimited: The Well-Being of Young People in Grenada document offered recent demographical and other essential information related to the young people of Grenada. These and other reports and documents contributed to the current study's goals and allowed for an ecological exploration of Grenadian youth.

### **Survey Instrumentation for Primary Data Collection**

Two quantitative Likert scale instruments were used to collect original data from the sample of Grenadian school-aged youth. Students' demographic information was also collected. These measures were combined and administered electronically through a single secured link.

### **Design and Pre-testing of Survey Instrument**

One survey instrument, the Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Traits (“GYELT”) questionnaire, was explicitly designed for the current study. This observer-rating instrument was designed and piloted by the researcher. The GYELT was reviewed by educational administrators of Grenada and age-appropriate students to ensure its validity and reliability. Using Harris (2014)’s guidelines for writing effective questionnaires, the questions on the GYELT were formulated with precise words and phrases and clearly indicated the unit of measurement when applicable. In addition, each question was designed so that the question stem and the answer choices matched each other. Although two of the questions on the GYELT were ‘check all that apply’, most of the questions by design were forced choices.

To determine whether the questions were created using the vocabulary of the intended participants, one round of pretesting was conducted. A group comprising five students whose characteristics match those of the target population for the current study was identified. Each student was between the ages of 13 to 16, four of whom were school-aged youth living in Grenada. The fifth student lives in a Grenadian household located on the east coast of the United States. Each student in this pilot was given the entire questionnaire the same way the questionnaire was administered to the current study sample. This group of students was asked to complete the questionnaire and comment on whether the questions made sense. There were also informed that their participation in pretesting would contribute to the development of the questionnaire. During pretesting, it was discovered that the individual guide associated with some of the questions contained difficult to understand or unclear words. Therefore, the questionnaire was reconstructed to remove vagueness and ambiguity. For example:

### ***Sample Guide/Question before Pre-Testing***

Sociability is a leader's ***inclination*** to seek out a pleasant social relationship. Leaders who show sociability are friendly, outgoing, courteous, tactful, and diplomatic. They are sensitive to others' needs and show concern for their well-being.

12. From my observation, my group leader \_\_\_\_\_ exhibits sociability.

1. Never      2. Rarely      3. Sometimes      4. Frequently      5. Always

### ***Sample Guide/Question After Pre-Testing***

Sociability is a leader's ***tendency*** to seek out a pleasant social relationship. Leaders who show sociability are friendly, outgoing, courteous, tactful, and diplomatic. They are sensitive to others' needs and show concern for their well-being.

12. From my observation, my group leader \_\_\_\_\_ exhibits sociability.

2. Never      2. Rarely      3. Sometimes      4. Frequently      5. Always

As indicated above, the word 'inclination' was replaced with the word 'tendency' to make this particular question clear. The questionnaire was revised by incorporating students' feedback and the researcher's judgment.

At the end of pretesting, it was perceptible that questions were clear, answerable, easy, and unbiased. In addition, the under twenty-five words question stem guideline was met, and labels (i.e., Participation in EA and Non-Participation in EA) were included to guide students as they answered questions within the respective categories (Harris, 2014). Overall, the GYELT was considered equipped to retrieve the right data needed for the current study.

### **Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Traits questionnaire**

To measure levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and the frequency in which the five major leadership traits were observed, students were asked to complete the

GYELT questionnaire. The approximate time to complete this 14-item instrument was 8 minutes. A sample question on the GYELT relating to engagement in extracurricular activities was: “How would you rate your levels of engagement in your club activities” (Appendix C). For this question, students were asked to choose from the following options: (1) Very Disengaged; (2) Disengaged; (3) Neutral; (4) Engaged, and (5) Very Engaged. The categories of responses were numerically coded with the following numeric values: 1 = Very Disengaged, 2 = Disengaged, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Engaged, and 5 = Very Engaged. Furthermore, students were asked five questions related to their leaders’ traits.

### **Student Resilience Survey**

The overall resilience of Grenadian youth was measured using the revised version of the Student Resilience Survey (“SRS”). The SRS was designed to investigate student resilience from a socio-ecological perspective. This instrument focuses on the students’ perception of their individual characteristics as well as their protective resources, which includes family, peer, school, and community (Sun & Stewart, 2007). The Child Outcome Research Consortium (CORC) (2021) asserted that SRS measures students’ perception of their individual characteristics and other protective factors embedded in their environments. This instrument was originally developed by drawing on a sample of 2794 from twenty primary schools in Queensland, Australia (Sun & Stewart, 2007). At the time of development, Sun and Stewart (2007) found that strong reliability ( $\alpha=0.92$ ) was achieved for the scales. No preapproval or authorization is needed to use the SRS; the SRS is free to use and only requires a reference (CORC., 2021).

The original SRS is a 47-item measure comprising 12 subscales. The subscales are:

*Problem-solving.* Problem-solving was a measure using three items. An example item is “I try to work out problems by talking about them.”

*Empathy.* Empathy was measured using two items. One of the items is “I try to understand what other people feel.”

*Self-esteem.* Self-esteem was measured using three items. An example item is “There are many things that I do well.”

*Peer support.* Peer support was measured using thirteen items. Two example items are “Are there students at your school who would tell you you’re good at doing things” and “Are there students at your school who would ask you to play if you are all alone”?

*Family connection.* Family connection was measured using four items. An example item is, “At home, there is an adult who listens to me when I have something to say.”

*School connection.* School connection was measured using four items. One example item is, “At school, there is an adult who believes that I will be a success.”

*Community connection.* Community connection was also measured using four items. An example item is, “Away from school, there is an adult who really cares about me.”

*Participation in community life.* Participation in community life was measured using two items. One of the items is “Away from school, I am a member of a club, sports team, church group, or other group.”

*Participation in home and school life.* Participation in home and school life was measured using four items. An example item is “I do things at school that make a difference (i.e., make things better).”

*Goals and aspirations.* Goals and aspirations were measured using two items. One of the items was, “I have goals and plans for the future.”

*Communication.* Communication was measured using three items. An example item is “I enjoy working with other students.”

*Peer relationship.* Peer relationship was measured using two items. One of the items is “My friends try to do what is right.”

The SRS was revised and validated by Lereya et al. (2016). The validity of the SRS was confirmed by a psychometric validation and association study, including a sample of 1967 primary school students and 5696 secondary school students across 90 schools in England (Lereya et al., 2016). In their study, Lereya et al. (2016) investigated the psychometric properties of 10 of the 12 subscales of the SRS, drawing on a sample of 7,663 students ages 11-15. Utilizing confirmatory factor analysis, differential test functioning, and Cronbach’s alpha, Lereya et al. (2016) found favorable internal consistency for all 10 scales. The reported Cronbach alpha for each of the subscales were as follows: “Problem-solving” subscale: .83; “Empathy” subscale: .77; “Self-esteem” subscale: .80; “Peer support” subscale: .93; “Family connection” subscale: .80; “School connection” subscale: .89; “Community connection” subscale: .79; “Participation in community life” subscale: .93; “Participation in home and school life” subscale: .74; and lastly, the researchers found Cronbach alpha of .73 for the “Goals and aspirations” subscale. In their study, Lereya et al. (2016) found important correlations, including random effect linear regression models that indicated that Self-esteem, Peer support, Family connection, and Problem-solving subscales were negatively associated with mental health outcomes. These discoveries and other findings indicate that the Student Resilience Survey is a valid measure for assessing protective factors in children and older youth.

In the current study, the researcher employed a Likert rating system to allow students to report their perceptions of the 40 statements of the revised SRS. In this study, student responses

were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale. Responses on this scale included “Never,” “Rarely,” “Sometimes,” “Mostly,” and “Always.” The categories of response were numerically coded with the following numeric values: 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Mostly, and 5 = Always. The total time needed to complete this scale was approximately 15 minutes. The SRS was written at an elementary comprehension level. In addition, it was presented in an age-appropriate and user-friendly online format allowing for easy accessibility by Grenadian youth.

The Student Resilience Survey was selected for the current study because it was developed for children aged 7 and up and was recently revised and validated for older youth. Overall, this inventory was designed to measure individual characteristics and ecological protective factors that enable youth to thrive. Another rationale for utilizing the SRS is because it is a quantitative measure that was found to be a valuable tool for conducting resilience research (CORC., 2021). In essence, the SRS is a reliable and valid measure used by researchers to understand the determinants and correlates of resilience (Lereya et al., 2016).

### **Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic questionnaire**

Additionally, the Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic (“GYRD”) questionnaire was used to collect demographic information for the study sample. In this study, students were asked to respond to six demographic questions. These questions were related to their gender, age, household structure, and family unit. A sample question of the GYRD was, “how would you describe your family unit?” Students had the option of selecting (1): Single parent household headed by a mother, (2) Single parent household headed by a father, (3) Traditional (mother and father) nuclear family or two-parent household, (4) Extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncle), or (5) “other” to indicate that none of the provided options reflect

their current family unit. The GYRD collected rich contextual information pertaining to the sample of Grenadian youth. Participant demographics are presented in the subsequent chapter.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations for human subjects are strongly emphasized in social research. Creswell and Creswell (2018) implied that ethical issues for consideration apply to qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method research at all stages of the research process. Comparably, Punch (2015) suggested that prior to selecting the research topic, the researcher should select a topic that has the potential to benefit research participants and research consumers. The current study has the potential to yield both individual and societal benefits. While individual students did not benefit immediately from participating in the study, participants and other youth can benefit in the future from initiatives designed with information obtained from this study. Additionally, educational and community leaders may gain new knowledge about promoting resilience among secondary school-aged youth in Grenada from a societal standpoint. Local and international leaders can leverage important discoveries pertaining to the effects of engagement in extracurricular activities, observed leadership traits, and overall student resilience. Ethical considerations were incorporated in this study to safeguard the well-being of study participants.

### **Anonymity**

Data anonymization and numeric codes were used to ascertain that all participants' identities remained protected. Anonymity is essential to protect the identity of research participants. Anonymity is critical because it helps to increase the probability and accuracy of responses drawn from research participants. By definition, anonymity refers to not knowing – that is, both the researcher and the research consumer are unable to link study responses to a specific study participant (Babbie, 2021). In this study, complete anonymity was not guaranteed

as parents were asked to write the first name and the first letter of their child's last name on the Parental Consent form. Students were also asked to do the same on the Student Assent form. This measure was used to confirm that students who completed the survey were, in fact, permitted by their parents to participate in the study.

### **Confidentiality**

In the absence of anonymity, strict adherence to confidentiality was applied. Confidentiality in social research pertains to a researcher's promise to withhold identifiable information of participants from the public or research (Babbie, 2021). This ethical consideration differs from anonymity and is especially relevant when anonymity cannot be guaranteed because of the approach and purpose of the study. Data collection and storage was handled with utmost care and security in the current study. Before data analysis, all identifiable information was obliterated and replaced with a unique numeric code. As a result, a fully de-identified report of the current dataset was used for analysis and reporting.

In survey research, there are two main ethical considerations. Babbie (2021) asserted that failure to maintain the norm of confidentiality and the likelihood of psychological injury of respondents are the two most serious challenges that can strongly affect survey respondents. Considering these challenges, limited identifiable information was requested, all data was securely stored, and all identifiable information was coded to protect participants. When using a survey research design, it is difficult to protect survey respondents from psychological injury or emotional discomfort. However, Babbie (2021) proposed that every effort must be made to prevent psychological injury from happening and escalating. On that account, the following measures were taken to safeguard the welfare of Grenadian youth participants: (1) parental consent and student assent forms were obtained without coercion and before any demographic

and research data were collected; (2) participants were informed that they could decline to answer any specific questions that make them feel uncomfortable or stressed; (3) participants were advised that they reserve the right to discontinue their participation in the overall study at any time and for any reason without penalty; and (4) participants were informed that their parents were provided with support resources that are available to them. These resources were made available to alleviate emotional discomfort that may have come about while students were responding to survey questions.

### **Data Storage Safety and Integrity**

Safety and integrity were other important ethical considerations that guided this study. The master list linking any identifiable information with respondents was stored separately from other research data in an encrypted file. In addition, only the principal investigator had access to this master list and all non-coded research data. In this study, all data were anonymized so that no individual dataset or survey was identifiable. Moreover, Babbie (2021) postulated that respecting the privacy of participants as well as abstaining from falsifying findings are necessary considerations in research. Neuman (2014) added that falsifying, suppressing, or inventing findings of a study constitutes scientific misconduct and should be avoided. Hence, as demonstrated in Chapter 4, suitable statistical software and statistical analyses were used to present, interpret and accurately report the findings of the data collected for this study.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The Grenada Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Foreign and Religious Affairs, and the Northwest University support protecting the rights and well-being of research participants. To this end, ethical approval was requested. Approval was granted by Grenada's Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, and Foreign and Religious

Affairs Research Division. In addition, this study was approved by Northwest University's Institutional Review Board. Shortly after ethical approval was granted, the principals of the four secondary schools were contacted to initiate the data collection process. For data collection, group administration (Fowler, 2014) was selected as it allows for the collection of data all at once. An alternative form of data collection of such personal interviews was not adopted, as it would have been exceedingly difficult to accurately collect data considering the large sample size and design of the current study (Babbie, 2021).

For the current study, data were collected with several guided steps. First, a Recruitment Letter was emailed to the principals of the four schools separately. Working initially with school principals and then with the designated point of contact (i.e., IT teacher, Form teacher) for each school, the Parental Consent form was made available to parents (electronically and, in some cases, print) of all Form 3 students in the sampled schools.

It is crucial that the purpose of the study be disclosed to participants (Sarantakos, 2005). Consequently, the recruitment letter and parental consent form included sufficient information about the purpose of the study, its entirely voluntary nature, and the student's ability to participate or withdraw at any time and for any reason without penalty. Babbie (2021) declared that the primary purpose of informed consent is to accurately inform intended participants of the nature or purpose of the study and to obtain their written or verbal consent to participate. A written signature or electronic acknowledgment from parents (and, later on, students) were required for students to take part in this study.

Once parental consent was received, the students whose parents permitted them to participate in the study were provided a secured Google Forms link. Most students accessed this secured link during a scheduled class period at school, while a few students participated in the

study while at home. The Google Forms link contained the Student Assent form, the Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic questionnaire (Appendix A), the Student Resilience Survey (Appendix B), and the Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Traits questionnaire (Appendix C).

The secured link to the study was generated by the Google Forms survey administration software. Prior to administration, this Google Forms survey was designed with specific controls. First, students had two response options on the student assent form. Students who indicated that they do not assent or agree to participate in the study were automatically guided to the 'Submit Form' option to exit the survey. However, students who specified that they do agree to participate in the study were allowed to proceed to the next section, the demographic questionnaire. Second, the GYELT questionnaire was created with two separate labels (Participation in Extracurricular Activities and Non-Participation in Extracurricular Activities). The first question on the GYELT required students to report whether or not they participated in EA between 2018 and 2021. Students who selected 'yes' in response to the first question were able to continue to the 'Participation in EA' section. However, students who selected 'no' were automatically directed to the 'Non-Participation in EA' section, where they were asked two follow-up questions.

A reminder that Grenadian youth's participation in the study is completely voluntary was reiterated throughout the data collection process. Parents were informed that their children would not be compensated for their participation in the current study. At the time of participating in the study, students had the opportunity to ask clarifying questions or relay concerns. Overall, while working closely with the designated teachers, students who assented to participate in this study after receiving permission from their parents submitted all their responses electronically.

### **Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28) predictive analytic software. A cumulative odds logistic regression with proportional odds was employed to determine the effects of levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and leadership traits on the overall resilience of a sample of Grenadian youth. Ordinal logistic regression is a statistical prediction test. When carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics, this test enables the researcher to assess covariate patterns and overall model fit, overall parameters estimate, predictions, and model fit. These assessments, in turn, allow the researcher to (a) determine which of the independent variables (if any) have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable, and (b) determine how well the ordinal logistic regression model predicts the dependent variable (Laerd Statistics, 2015).

The proportional odds assumption, also known as the parallel regression assumption, assumes that the relationship between each pair of outcome groups is the same. The coefficients that describe the relationship between the lowest versus all higher categories of student resilience are expected to be the same as those that describe the relationship between the next lowest category and all higher categories. In ordinal logistic regression, there is only one set of coefficients because the relationship between all pairs of groups is the same (Laerd Statistics, 2015). Further, this type of predictive statistical test also has several assumptions that must be met.

### **Verifying Assumptions of Ordinal Logistic Regression**

There are four assumptions of ordinal logistic regression. The first two assumptions of ordinal logistic regression are related to the study design, particularly the variables of the study. To use ordinal logistic regression, the study must: (a) contain one ordinal dependent variable;

and (b) have one or more independent or predictor variables that are continuous or categorical (Laerd Statistics, 2015). The current study has one ordinal dependent variable, resilience. In addition, this study has two independent variables, extracurricular activities, and leadership traits. All three variables are categorical and were measured using 5-point Likert scales. The collection of ordinal data made it possible to assess whether leadership traits and engagement in extracurricular activities have a significant effect on the resilience of Grenadian youth.

The third and fourth assumptions are concerned with how well data fits the ordinal regression model. Violating one or both assumptions can be problematic in understanding which of the independent variables contributes to the explanation of the dependent variable, resilience. Furthermore, any such violations can present technical difficulties with accurately calculating an ordinal logistic regression. The third assumption that must be met to analyze the data using ordinal logistic regression is the expectation that there should be no multicollinearity. Laerd Statistics (2015) posited that “multicollinearity occurs when you have two or more continuous independent variables that are highly correlated with each other” (p.6). This assumption did not apply to the current study because the independent variables were categorical.

Categorical values are different from continuous values. According to Laerd Statistics (2021), categorical variables are also called qualitative or discrete variables, which can be further categorized as nominal, ordinal, or dichotomous. In this study, the two independent variables are ordinal variables as they have two or more categories that can be ordered or ranked (i.e., low, medium, high). On the other hand, continuous variables are named quantitative variables, which are typically further categorized as interval and ratio variables. Categorical and continuous variables are distinctively different because categorical variables contain a finite number of

categories or distinct groups, whereas continuous variables are numeric values with an infinite number of values between any two values (Minitab, 2019).

The fourth assumption that must be met to use ordinal logistic regression correctly for data analysis is the presence of proportional odds. Drawing on Laerd Statistics (2015), this assumption holds that each independent variable has an identical effect on each cumulative split of the ordinal dependent variable. In this study, a full likelihood ratio test to compare the fit of the proportional odds model to a model with varying location parameters was conducted to test for proportional odds. As presented in Chapter 4, the current dataset met the four assumptions necessary to use the ordinal logistics regression statistical test.

### **Level of Significance**

Generally, the dataset of quantitative studies is analyzed using null hypothesis significance testing or hypothesis testing. This is done to determine whether to reject the null hypothesis. Prior to performing a null hypothesis significance test, a significance level ( $\alpha$ ) is set to assess the statistical probability of the test result, the p-value (Bhandari, 2021). In the current study, the significance level was set at 0.05 because it is one of the most common significance levels in social research (Benjamin, 2018).

There is a high risk of making one of two errors when interpreting the result of a hypothesis test. The first error is called Type I error and is related to rejecting the null hypothesis when the null hypothesis is actually true. In such an event, the result of the hypothesis test is concluded as statistically significant, even though the observed effect between the variables of the study may be a result of chance or some other unrelated factors (Bhandari, 2021). The likelihood of committing a Type I error is related to the significance level.

The second decision error is called Type II error. This error is concerned with not rejecting the null when in fact, the null hypothesis is false. This error occurs when the conclusions of a hypothesis test indicate that there was no effect, even though there was a significant effect between the studied variables (Bhandari, 2021). Type II is strongly associated with the statistical power of the study. Statistical power is the overall probability of a significance test accurately detecting an effect that exists. In quantitative research, statistical power is influenced by the sample size of the study, the significance level used, and the effect size of the dataset (Bhandari, 2021). Hence, it was expected that the statistical power of this study would be influenced by many factors, including the sample size and the significance level.

In this study, upon calculating the p-value of the current dataset and comparing it to a predetermined cutoff value, 95% confidence interval ( $\alpha = .05$ ), the following evaluations were made: (a) if the p-value is equal to or less than the significance level ( $p \leq \alpha$ ), reject the null hypothesis, and (b) if the p-value is greater than the significance level ( $P\text{-value} > \alpha$ ), then fail to reject the null hypothesis. Failing to reject the null hypothesis is an indication that there is not sufficient statistical evidence that the difference in the groups is not due to chance (Benjamin et al., 2018). Therefore, findings that aligned with the former ( $p \leq \alpha = 0.05$ ) were reported as statistically significant and findings that aligned with the latter ( $p > \alpha = 0.05$ ) were reported as statistically non-significant results (Greenland et al., 2016).

### **Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the measures, ethical considerations, and procedures employed in the current study. This study aimed to examine whether extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits, collectively or individually, have a statistically significant effect on student resilience. This study collected ordinal data from a sample of 150

Grenadian youth. Data were analyzed using an ordinal logistic regression model. Chapter 4 includes a presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the research findings.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present both a description of the study participants and the findings of the study as they relate to the research question. This study sought to determine the statistical relationship, individually or collectively, between engagement level in extracurricular activities, observed leadership traits, and resilience of 100 Grenadian school-aged youth. Engagement in extracurricular activities plays an integral role in positive youth development (Oberle et al., 2019). Similarly, leaders of EA can play an important function in guiding the trajectory of young people's development. Martin et al. (2015) found that positive trusting traits (i.e., caring, competence and honesty) coincided with the outcomes of motivation, respect, communication, security, and students' connection to their leaders. Considering that EA is generally supervised by competent leaders and typically includes a high volume of peer-to-peer and leader-peer interactions, this study explored whether student resilience was conditioned by their levels of engagement in EA and the observed frequency of their leader's exhibition of the five major leadership traits.

The data for this study were collected from two main sources: surveys and document collection. The Student Resilience Survey and the Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Trait Questionnaire are two validated survey measures utilized for the collection of quantitative data. In addition, the researcher collected anecdotal data, which consisted of published reports, a local book, and other documents to aid with crafting a 'big picture' view of the sampled population, Grenadian youth. The time span for all anecdotal data in the study was a ten-year period. However, all quantitative data were collected in the year 2022.

The data analyses were made employing a cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression model. Constrained cumulative ordinal models, such as the proportional odds model, are a popular parsimonious method for analyzing ordinal outcomes (Aitchison & Silva, 1957; Capuano et al., 2016). This model was selected because it was the most appropriate fit for the current study variables, student resilience, engagement in EA, and observation of leadership traits, three ordered categorical variables. In addition, both surveys collected ordinal data through 5-point item Likert scales. It is important to analyze Likert outcomes using methods designed for ordinal data (Capuano et al., 2016). The cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression model is designed for this type of data; it is an extension of the binary logistic regression for ordinal outcomes with more than two levels (Capuano et al., 2016; Laerd Statistics, 2015).

In this model,  $\beta$ =coefficient, where  $\beta_{k,1}$  is the parameter connected with the log odds ratio at each level of the outcome  $Y$  for predictor variable  $X_1$  (Capuano et al., 2016). The proportional odds model builds on the assumption that all coefficients for the predictor variables are represented by a common coefficient, that is,  $\beta_{1,x} = \beta_{2,x} = \beta_{3,x}$  (McCullagh, 1980). The proportional odds assumption asserts that the odds of being above any given level are the same. Thus, the ordinal logistic regression model calculates a single odds ratio for a given independent variable. In this type of proportional odds model, the cumulative odds ratio is associated with an independent variable  $X_1$  through a linear function. Moreover, the study used this model as it is theoretically justified by the underlying logistic distribution (Capuano et al., 2016).

The process of interpreting the output of the cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression model (OLR) is best understood by comparing it with the multiple linear regression model (MLR). The MLR model consists of intercept and slope coefficients for each independent variable. In the MLR model, the intercept represents the value of the dependent variable when

the independent variables equal zero. In the OLR model, each value of the ordinal dependent variable has its own threshold (intercept). In the OLR model, the threshold represents the value of the dependent (threshold) variable for each category. If the categories were 1 = high, 2 = average, and 3 = low, the model would provide a threshold value for the high category (1) and the average category (2). The coefficients for the independent variables remain the same for all values of the dependent (threshold) variable.

In the MLR model, the intercept plus the value of each independent variable times its corresponding coefficient yields the model forecast. Similarly, in the OLR model, the threshold value for a selected category plus the value of each independent variable times its corresponding coefficient yields the change in the log odds. However, measuring changes in the log odds does not have an intuitive meaning. Therefore, the important value in the OLR model is  $\exp(B)$  or the odds ratio. The odds ratio provides the increase (or decrease) in the probability of scoring higher in the dependent (threshold) variable with respect to the other independent variables.

The overall analysis is guided by one research question, does engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits, collectively or individually, have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of Grenadian youth? The single research question comprises of two parts. First, this study explored if there is a statistically significant relationship between the level of engagement in extracurricular activities on overall student resilience. Secondly, the study examined if there is a statistically significant relationship between the frequency of observed leadership traits on the overall resilience of Grenadian school-aged youth.

Chapter four is divided into four major sections. The first section of the chapter provides a description of the overall sample of Grenadian youth who participated in the current study. Within this section, there is a discussion on the reliability of the study's sample. The second

section of this chapter presents a description of the portion of sampled Grenadian youth who participated in the study but indicated that they did not engage in extracurricular activities between 2018 and 2021. The students who did not participate in extracurricular activities between 2018 and 2021 were not included in the ordinal logistic regression analysis. Data are presented to examine the self-reported reasons for Grenadian youth's inability to participate in extracurricular activities.

The third section of this chapter includes a description of the research data collected from students who participated in the study and who also specified that they engaged in extracurricular activities between 2018 and 2021. Data are presented to determine the effect of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits on overall student resilience. Hence, within this section, employing a cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression model, data analysis explores whether extracurricular activities and leadership characteristics, collectively or individually, have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of Grenadian youth. This is then followed by an interpretative analysis of the null hypothesis. The final section of this chapter includes an overall summary of the data results and interpretation of the data as it relates to the theoretical framework of risk and resilience and the trait theory of leadership.

### **Study Sample**

A single secured link containing the combined quantitative measures of the current study was made available to all Form three students of the four secondary schools under investigation. As mentioned earlier, Form three students are post-primary students presently enrolled in the third year of compulsory secondary education in Grenada. Students whose parents provided consent for them to participate in the study were provided the secured link to complete the survey. A total of 174 students among the four secondary schools responded to the survey. Of the

174 students who accessed the secured link to the survey, 17 students declined to participate in the current study. Upon reviewing the 157 student responses to the survey, the researcher deemed that only 150 responses were usable data. The other seven student responses were removed from the study. The researcher deliberately removed these responses as each of the seven surveys had a total of three or less questions answered.

The current study utilized data from 150 Grenadian youth aged 13 to 16. Of the 150 youth who participated in the current study, 100 students indicated that they participated in extracurricular activities between the period 2018 and 2021. Table 1 provides a summary of the sociodemographic characteristics of the 100 Grenadian students who participated in the current study and indicated participation in extracurricular activities:

**Table 1**

*Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 100)*

Characteristic	Male		Female		Total	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Age (years)						
13	1	2%	1	2%	2	2%
14	25	50%	29	58%	54	54%
15	10	20%	17	34%	27	27%
16	14	28%	3	6%	17	17%
Family structure						
Two-parent household	19	38%	12	24%	31	31%
One-parent household (mother)	13	26%	18	36%	31	31%
One-parent household (father)	4	8%	3	6%	7	7%
Extended family as HoH	7	14%	9	18%	16	16%
Other	6	12%	7	14%	13	13%
No response	1	2%	1	2%	2	2%
Number living in household						
2	2	4%	5	10%	7	7%
3	4	8%	4	8%	8	8%
4	15	30%	13	26%	28	28%
5 or more	29	58%	28	56%	57	57%

Have enough food and money to meet daily needs

Always	27	54%	22	44%	49	49%
Sometimes	18	36%	23	46%	41	41%
Rarely	1	2%	3	6%	4	4%
Never	2	4%	0	0%	2	2%
Other	2	4%	1	2%	3	3%
No response	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
Overall student resilience						
High	27	54%	26	52%	53	53%
Average	19	38%	24	48%	43	43%
Low	4	8%	0	0%	4	4%

Table 1 shows that the majority of students who participated in the survey were male. As indicated, 56% of students self-identified as male, and the remaining 44% of student participants indicated their gender as female. 76 or roughly fifty-one percent of students were age 14. In addition, 48 students were 15 years of age, while 24 students were age 16, accounting for 32% and 16%, respectively, of the total number of study participants. Furthermore, there were only two 13-year-old students, accounting for 1.3% of the total number of students who participated in the current study. Overall, the age of the total number of students in the study can be used as an indicator of the students' progress within Grenada's educational system.

Table 1 summarizes the family structures of the current study's participants. 31% percent of students reported that their family structure comprises of a single-parent household with a mother or female guardian as the breadwinner. Roughly seven percent of students responded that they live within a family unit that consists of a single-parent household headed by a father or male guardian. However, 10.7% of respondents selected 'other,' indicating that none of the provided options accurately depicted their family unit. Last but not least, as showcased in the table above, two students left this question unanswered.

Although 31% of students indicated that their family structure comprised of a single-parent household headed by a mother, Table 1 indicates that 57% of student participants are living within a household with five or more individuals. Such evidence suggests that students are more likely to have either older or younger siblings, or family members other than their parent and sibling, living at home. In addition, the above table reveals that 7% of students reported that they live alone with a parent or guardian. Overall, the data presented above suggest that the current sample is similar to the overall youth population of Grenada.

Table 1 shows that most students believe that their families always have enough food and money to meet their daily needs, with 49% of students reporting that they have sufficient food and money. However, 41% of the sampled population reported that they sometimes have enough money and food to meet their daily needs. 4% percent of students reported that they rarely ever have enough money and food for their daily needs, while 2% of students indicated that they do not have enough money or food. Four students selected the 'other' option, which may indicate that none of the presented choices was an accurate depiction of their socioeconomic status. This group of students may perceive that they have sufficient food but not sufficient money to meet their daily needs. In the Caribbean island of Grenada, the two are not mutually exclusive. For example, students who reside within the country's rural areas may have enough food; they may have access to fresh vegetables and provisions obtained from their family 'garden' or perhaps from a local farmer or neighbor. However, these students' families may not have monetary commodities (i.e., cash) to pay for transportation, purchase clothing, etc., to meet their daily needs.

Table 1 indicates that most students of the sampled population perceived themselves as resilient, with 53% of students regarding themselves as having high resilience. While 43% of

students perceived themselves as having average resilience, only about 5% of students perceived themselves as having low resilience.

### **Study Sample (N = 100) Extracurricular Activities Participation Profile**

In this study, a total of 100 students indicated that they participated in extracurricular activities during the period of 2018 to 2021. And as previously specified, the current sample was drawn from four secondary schools in Grenada. Of these schools, three are situated in the rural area of Grenada, while one is an urban secondary school. Table 2 provides extracurricular activities location and time summary of the participants.

**Table 2**

*Extracurricular Activities Location and Time Summary for Participants (N = 100)*

Extracurricular Activity	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4		Total	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Location</b>										
School-based only	7	41%	18	46%	11	50%	5	25%	41	42%
Community-based only	0	0%	6	15%	3	14%	2	10%	11	11%
School and community	10	59%	15	38%	7	32%	11	55%	43	44%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	2	10%	3	3%
<b>Time (per week)</b>										
1 to 2 hours	8	42%	23	59%	11	50%	10	50%	52	52%
3 to 5 hours	10	53%	12	31%	8	36%	4	20%	34	34%
6 to 10 hours	1	5%	1	3%	1	5%	3	15%	6	6%
More than 10 hours	0	0%	1	3%	1	5%	2	10%	4	4%
No response	0	0%	2	5%	1	5%	1	5%	4	4%
<b>Time (months/years)</b>										
Under 6 months	5	26%	11	28%	5	23%	8	40%	29	29%
Roughly 6 months	0	0%	4	10%	3	14%	2	10%	9	9%
About 1 year	4	21%	7	18%	5	23%	5	25%	21	21%
About 2 years	3	16%	8	21%	0	0%	3	15%	14	14%
About 3 years	7	37%	9	23%	9	41%	2	10%	27	27%

According to the data in Table 2, most students from School 1 participated in both community-based and school-based extracurricular activities for 3-5 hours per week. The largest

group of students indicated that their involvement in extracurricular activities was for a period of three years. Table 2 also demonstrates that 41% of students from School 1 participated in school-based activities only, for 1-2 hours per week and for a period of under 6 months. Of note is the indication that none of the sampled students from school 1 reported participating in community-based extracurricular activities only. Such evidence may indicate a strong emphasis and integration of extracurricular activities within the overall curriculum of this particular school.

Table 2 shows that the largest group of the sampled population from School 2 reported participating in only school-based extracurricular activities for 1 to 2 hours per week for a period under six months. Interestingly, of the overall sample drawn from School 2, 38% of students reported participating in both school and community-based activities, and 31% reported spending 3 to 5 hours participating in these activities.

In regards to School 3, Table 2 indicates that half the sampled population from School 3 reported participating in only school-based extracurricular activities. In addition, 50% of students sampled from this school indicated that they were participating in these activities for 1 to 2 hours per week and 41% of the overall sample from School 3 reported that their participation was for a period of about three years.

Furthermore, from the data provided in Table 2, there is strong evidence to indicate that the majority of students sampled from School 4 participated in both school-based and community-based extracurricular activities. In addition, the data shows that 50% of the total sample drawn from this school reported participating in extracurricular activities for 1-2 hours per week, and 40% of them reported participation for a period of less than six months. One interesting point from this data is that only 10% of students in School 4 reported that they have

participated in extracurricular activities for about three years. These results may suggest previous barriers that may have hindered students from engaging in extracurricular activities.

Based on the data provided in Table 2, 44% of the overall study sample participated in school and community-based extracurricular activities. However, 42% of students from the four schools indicated that they participated in school-based activities only. The majority of the study sample reported engaging in extracurricular activities for 1 to 2 hours per week. While 29% of the current sample reported participating for a period of under six months, 27% of the overall sample indicated that they had been engaging in extracurricular activities for about three years.

#### **Study Sample (N = 50) Excluded from the Ordinal Logistic Regression Model**

As previously mentioned, students who specified that they did not participate in extracurricular activities were not included in the inferential statistical analysis of the current study. Students who did not participate in extracurricular activities would not have had an opportunity to observe the frequency of their leader exhibiting the five major leadership traits. Upon completing the SRS and conveying that they did not participate in EA between the years of 2018 and 2021, Form three students were directed to the final section of the survey, which asked them to report on factors influencing their enrollment status. Of the 150 students who participated in the current study, 50 students specified that they did not engage in extracurricular activities within the given time frame. Table 3 provides a description of the characteristics of the current sample reporting non-participation in extracurricular activities.

**Table 3***Characteristics for Youth Reporting Non-Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

Characteristics	Male		Female		Total	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Age						
14	10	29%	12	75%	22	44%
15	17	50%	4	25%	21	42%
16	7	21%	0	0%	7	14%
Total						
Student Resilience Overall Score						
High	12	35%	5	31%	17	34%
Average	19	56%	10	63%	29	58%
Low	3	9%	1	6%	4	8%
Reasons given for non-participation						
Don't know leader	7	14%	1	4%	8	11%
No friends/peers in club	6	12%	3	13%	9	12%
No money	4	8%	1	4%	5	7%
No support from mentor/guardian	3	6%	3	13%	6	8%
No interest in club activities	14	27%	11	48%	25	34%
Other barriers	17	33%	4	17%	21	28%

In reference to Table 3, of the 50 students who reported that they did not participate in extracurricular activities between 2018 and 2021, 34 students (68%) were males and only 16 (32%) of those students self-identified as females. It is evident that the majority of sampled Grenadian youth reporting non-participation were males. Also, according to the data presented in Table 3, the largest age group (44%) of students reporting non-participation were 14-year-old Grenadian youth. Similarly, 42% of the total number of students who reported non-participation were age 15. Only 14% of the 50 students who reported non-participation in extracurricular activities were 16 years of age. Additionally, Table 3 showcases that 34% of this sample of students reported high overall resilience scores, while 58% reported average overall resilience scores. Table 3 also indicates that 8% of students reporting non-participating reported low overall resilience scores.

Moreover, to gain a general insight as to why students did not participate in EA, the current sample was given a list of options from which to select. Based on their selection, 34% indicated that they were not interested in the activities. Previous studies (i.e., Akiva & Horner, 2016; Fredricks et al., 2010; Sjogren et al., 2021) found evidence that the program content is one of the main drivers of students' participation in youth programs. Similarly, in their study, Green et al. (2013) found that students participated in youth programs if they believed the programs offered skill-building experience and exposure to new content. Moreover, two other drivers of students' participation were related to the opportunities and support youth believed they had access to while participating in youth programming (Akiva & Horner, 2016).

Additionally, in reference to Table 3, 12% of students reported non-participation in extracurricular activities due to a lack of peers or friends in the club/program. This observation is similar to the findings of other studies. For example, in a mixed-methods study exploring student engagement in afterschool programs, Sjogren et al. (2021) found that having friends was a positive indicator for students to engage in the program. In essence, many students reported that they continued to engage in the program due to their peers. This result was consistent with a study conducted by Akiva and Horner (2016), who also found that relationships with peers were a crucial factor in students' decision to join and continue participating in youth programming. Further, Sjogren et al. (2021) found that students' families contributed to their engagement. For example, students reported that a parent or sibling encouraged them to join the program, so they began participating in the afterschool program.

Data presented in Table 3 also highlight that 11% of Grenadian youth did not participate in extracurricular activities because they did not have a relationship with the club leaders. This observation is important because Green et al. (2013) discovered students' relationship with

program leaders was critical to their participatory decisions in youth programs. Moreover, 28% of students reported having ‘other barriers’ influencing their engagement in extracurricular activities. This evidence is suggestive of the need for an inductive approach or qualitative inquiry into the challenges hindering Grenadian youth from engaging in extracurricular activities.

Recommendations will be discussed in chapter five.

Previous research has demonstrated that age, family structure, and family income heavily influence students' participation in extracurricular activities (Eccles, 1999; Guèvremont et al., 2008; Harrison, 2003). In addition, Guèvremont et al. (2008) also found that urban and rural places of residence and regions were associated with students' participation in extracurricular activities. For example, students ages 14 to 17 from the Eastern provinces of Canada were significantly less likely than students from Western Canadian provinces to participate in sports-related extracurricular activities. Additionally, other studies found that programming and family obligations prevented students from continued engagement in youth programs (Fredricks et al., 2010; Fredericks et al., 2019). Nonetheless, of the current sample, most students (66%) who reported non-participation in extracurricular activities indicated that they would have participated in extracurricular activities if the barriers were removed.

### **Description and Summary of Quantitative Data**

All quantitative data were collected through an online survey link accessible through Google Forms survey administration software. The two surveys were combined into a single secured link that was sent to four of the 21 secondary schools in Grenada (Douglas, 2019). The sampled schools were mixed-gendered public schools located in Grenada's urban and rural areas. Upon receipt of the student's response, the researcher analyzed the data.

### **Report for Multiple Imputation**

The Multiple Imputation function on IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28) was used to analyze patterns of the missing data from the Student Resilience Survey. The SRS is comprised of a total of 40 questions, and based on the missing data analysis, it was apparent that 64 % of the 150 participants responded to all questions on the SRS, leaving 36% who did not provide a response to one or more questions. Hence, although 92.1% percent of all values were accounted for, 7.85% of all the values of the SRS were missing. In an investigation of the frequently occurring patterns in the current dataset, the researcher confirmed that the most common pattern of the current dataset is that there are no values missing across variables. Thus, these pieces of evidence suggest that values were missing at random. As a result of these findings, multiple imputations were conducted using the Series Mean function on IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28). Moreover, the Series Mean function was also used to correct the missing values on the Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Traits questionnaire, which had a total of seven missing values missing at random. There were no missing values for students' self-rating of their engagement level.

### **Coding and Scoring of Survey Data**

In the current study, data were collected from 150 students on five variables: Gender, Age, Engagement in Extracurricular Activities, Leadership Traits Observation, and Overall Student Resilience. Only the latter three variables were used to perform an ordinal logistic regression test. In the cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression with proportional odds model utilized in this study, level of engagement was an ordered, categorical variable indicating students' self-reported engagement level in their participation in extracurricular activities. To measure students' engagement in extracurricular activities, students were asked, "How would you

rate your level of engagement in your club activities" and were given the following options: 1) Very Disengaged; 2) Disengaged; 3) Neutral; 4) Engaged, and 5) Very Engaged. For scoring engagement in extracurricular activities, 'very disengaged' and 'disengaged' were categorized as low engagement, 'neutral' was categorized as medium engagement, while 'engaged' and 'very engaged' were categorized as high engagement. In addition, this independent variable was coded 1=low, 2=medium, 3=high engagement in extracurricular activities from 2018 to 2021.

Leadership traits observation was also an ordered, categorical variable in the current study. This variable measured the frequency of students' observation of their leaders exhibiting the five major leadership traits. This variable was measured on a 5-point Likert scale and comprised of five questions, one to correspond to each of the five major leadership traits. The lowest rating score on this measure was 5, and the highest score was 25. For the purpose of scoring to perform an ordinal logistic regression, a mathematical formula was employed to create three equalized groups. This was completed by first subtracting the lowest possible score (5) from the highest possible score (25). The difference between the highest score of 25 and the lowest score of five is 20. Twenty was then divided by three, which yielded an output of 6.67; therefore, each group contained roughly 7 points in total. Students' whose leadership traits observation scores ranged from 5 to 11 were categorized as low observation; scores ranging from 12 to 18 were categorized as medium observation, while scores from 19 to 25 were categorized as high observation. This independent variable was coded as 1=low, 2=medium, 3=high observation of students' observation of their leaders exhibiting the five major leadership traits.

Finally, the dependent variable, students' resilience, was examined using a 5-point Likert scale. This instrument contains ten subscales and a total of forty questions. The lowest score on each subscale is one, and the highest score is five. However, since the goal of the study was to

determine students' overall resilience, the total score on the SRS was calculated. In its totality, the lowest resilience score for any one student was 40, and the highest score attainable was 200. For the purpose of scoring to perform an ordinal logistic regression, a mathematical formula was also employed to create three equalized groups. This was achieved by first subtracting the lowest possible score (40) from the highest possible score (200). The difference between the highest SRS score (200) and the lowest SRS score (40) is 160. 160 was then divided by three, which yielded an output of 53.33; therefore, each group contained roughly 53 points in total. Students whose overall resilience scores were from 40 to 93 were categorized as low resilience. In addition, students' overall resilience scores that range from 94 to 147 were categorized as average resilience, while student resilience scores ranging from 148 to 200 were categorized as high resilience.

This variable was also treated as an ordered, categorical variable indicating the sum of students' self-reported responses to the ten subscales of the Student Resilience Survey. Higher scores on the SRS indicate higher overall resilience. In this study, students' overall resilience was coded as 1= low, 2= average, and 3=high levels of resilience.

### **Testing Assumptions**

Four assumptions must be met before using ordinal logistic regression as the statistical test to analyze a dataset. The first two assumptions are related to the study design and require the study to use one ordinal dependent variable and one or more independent variables that are continuous, ordinal, or categorical. All independent variables must be treated as categorical or continuous (Laerd Statistics, 2015). These two assumptions were met as a result of the current study's design which comprised of two independent categorical variables.

Assumptions three and four are related to how well the data fits the ordinal logistic regression model. These two assumptions must also be met in order to provide a valid result (Laerd Statistics, 2015). The third assumption is concerned with multicollinearity. Since multicollinearity occurs when a study has two or more continuous independent variables that are highly correlated with each (Laerd Statistics, 2015), there was no need to test this assumption because there is no continuous variable in the current study.

The fourth assumption is concerned with proportional odds of the independent variable having an identical effect on each cumulative split of the ordinal dependent variable (Laerd Statistics, 2015). Proportional odds assume that the relationship between each pair of outcome groups is the same. Thus, the relationship between the lowest and all higher categories is the same as the relationship between the next lowest and the highest category. If this assumption holds, it is feasible to describe the relationship between the pairs using one model. If it does not hold, then multiple models are required. The null hypothesis is that there is no difference in the coefficients between models. A non-significant result would support using a single model to describe the relationship between the pairs. Using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28), a full likelihood ratio test or test of parallel lines and a separate binomial test were performed to test the fourth assumption. The results of the test of parallel lines,  $X^2(4) = 1.92, p = .751$ , were not significant. This indicates that the slope coefficients are the same across response categories and supports the use of a single model to describe the relationship between the pairs. A separate binomial logistic regression test was conducted to further investigate the proportional odds assumption mainly because the full likelihood ratio test may provide an inaccurate report of the proportional odds assumption (Laerd Statistics, 2015). The results from the separate binomial logistic regression reveal that the odds ratio for the leadership traits variable is similar. However,

it can be argued that the assumption of similar odds of the engagement level variable is not tenable, and hence it should be treated with caution in the final ordinal logistic model (Laerd Statistics, 2015). Overall, the current study dataset did not violate all four assumptions necessary to run ordinal logistic regression.

### **Determining the number of Covariate Patterns**

Covariate patterns refer to the unique combinations of values of the independent variables. These patterns exist only between independent variables and do not include the dependent variable (Laerd Statistics, 2015). In the current dataset, covariate patterns will exist between the engagement level variable and the leadership trait observation variable. A test of covariate patterns was performed to examine the number of covariate patterns in the main dataset. Table 4 presents the covariate patterns of the current dataset:

**Table 4**

*Covariate Patterns Between the Predictor Variables*

EA Engagement Level	Observed Leadership Traits		
	Low	Medium	High
High	1	13	41
Medium	3	11	20
Low	1	7	3

As reflected in Table 4, the main dataset contained a total of nine covariate patterns. A covariate pattern does not equate to a case or student participants. Instead, it reflects a unique combination of values of the engagement level and leadership traits observation variables. Laerd Statistics (2015) asserted that it is possible to have more than one case per covariate pattern. Based on the information provided in Table 4, there were 41 cases that accounted for the covariate pattern between high engagement and high frequency of observed leadership traits.

Similarly, there were 20 students who shared the same covariate patterns between medium engagement and high observation of leadership traits. Conversely, based on the data in Table 4, there was one covariate pattern between high engagement and low observation of leadership traits, as well as one covariate pattern between low engagement and low observation of leadership traits.

### **Determining the Number of Cell Patterns**

Cell patterns are quite similar to covariate patterns, but they have one key distinction. Unlike a covariate pattern which is only connected to the independent variables, cell patterns incorporate the dependent variable (Laerd Statistics, 2015). Therefore, a cell pattern is defined as a unique combination of the values of the independent variables (engagement level and leadership traits observation) and the dependent variable (resilience). A test of cell patterns was conducted to evaluate the cell patterns of this study's dataset. Table 5 portrays the cell patterns of the current dataset:

**Table 5**

*Cell Pattern Analysis Indicating Dependent Variable Frequencies by Predictor Variables.*

EA Engagement Level	Observed Leadership Traits	Resilience		
		Low	Average	High
High	High	0	8	33
	Medium	1	11	1
	Low	0	1	0
Medium	High	0	7	13
	Medium	1	7	3
	Low	0	2	1
Low	High	1	1	1
	Medium	0	6	1
	Low	1	0	0

According to Table 5, 33 students reported high engagement, high leadership traits observation, and high overall resilience. In addition, Table 5 also highlights that one student reported low engagement in extracurricular activities, low observation of leadership traits, and low overall resilience. The total number of possible cells is needed in order to accurately interpret the cell patterns and cell size of a dataset. The number of covariate patterns was multiplied by the number of levels of the dependent variable to obtain the overall number of possible cells (i.e., 9 covariate patterns times 3 categories of the dependent variable results in 27 cells). Of the 27 cells, 19 do not have zero frequencies. This means that there are 8 cells with zero frequencies. The percentage of cells with zero frequency is 29.6%, which corresponded with the ordinal regression cell frequency warnings output presented to the researcher in IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28).

Given the information provided in Table 5, the current dataset has a relatively low percentage of cells with zero frequencies. This is important because Laerd Statistics (2015) noted that it is problematic to trust the reliability of an overall goodness-of-fit measure when the dataset includes a large number of cells with zero frequencies. While this is not the case for the current dataset, it is best practice to examine the size of the cell frequencies further. Laerd Statistics (2015) suggested that cell frequencies above 5 are desirable, and hence expected cell frequencies below 5 should be treated with caution. In the current dataset, most of the cells (12) have small frequencies. However, the remaining seven cells exceeded the expected cell frequencies of 5. The current dataset does not have many cells with zero frequencies (29.6%), but it contains only 36.7% of the expected cell frequencies. To this end, it is suitable to interpret the goodness-of-fit measures with caution (Laerd Statistics, 2015).

### Overall Model Fit

The reliability of ordinal logistic regression results is contingent upon the overall fit of the model. Based on the results of the covariate and cell patterns presented in Table 4 and Table 5, respectively, it was appropriate for the researcher to interpret three model fitting measures. The first measure that the researcher examined was two goodness-of-fit tests, Pearson and Deviance. The Pearson goodness-of-fit test indicated that the model was not a good fit for the observed data,  $\chi^2(12) = 22.655, p = .031$ . However, the Deviance goodness-of-fit test implied that the model was a good fit to the observed data,  $\chi^2(12) = 15.945, p = .194$ . These tests assess how poor the model is and for this reason, a statistically non-significant output is desired. A statistically non-significant result indicates that the model is a good fit (Laerd Statistics, 2015).

Since the Pearson and Deviance goodness-of-fit tests yield contradictory results (Laerd Statistics, 2015), the researcher then examined Nagelkerke, a Pseudo R-Square test that measures the model fit. Nagelkerke demonstrated that the model accounted for 35.9% of change. Finally, the researcher performed a likelihood-ratio test to determine the reliability of the model in terms of fitting the current dataset. The likelihood-ratio test is designed to compare the full model with the intercept-only model. And as such, the smaller the -2 log-likelihood value, the better the fit of the ordinal logistic regression model (Laerd Statistics, 2015). The result of the likelihood-ratio test established that the final model statistically significantly predicted the dependent variable over and above the intercept-only model,  $\chi^2(4) = 34.308, p < .001$ . According to this result, it can be inferred that one or more of the independent variables add statistically significantly to the model. Hence, the current dataset fits the regression model.

### **Results of Cumulative Odds Logistic Regression Model**

The process of interpreting the results of a cumulative odds logistic regression is dependent on the types of variables in the model: dichotomous or polytomous. In the model incorporated, there were no dichotomous variables. All variables were polytomous variables meaning that they are categorical variables with three or more categories. The overall test of significance of variables can be assessed by one of two measures: a test of model effects and parameter estimates. The parameter estimates (the slope coefficient) represent the change in the log odds of being in one category as opposed to any of the others (Laerd Statistics, 2015). Unlike dichotomous variables (i.e., exam results: pass or fail), whose ratio of the odds between the two categories (i.e., odds ratio) can be analyzed from the Parameter Estimates table, the parameter estimates of polytomous variables are best evaluated by examining the Test of Model Effects table. That is because the Parameter Estimates table presents the results of the dummy (indicator) variables used for the two polytomous variables, engagement level, and leadership traits, but it does not provide the result of the overall omnibus statistical test for both variables. Hence, the overall significant test for each variable was first determined by the Test of Model Effects results.

The current study used an alpha level of .05 for all statistical tests. The Test of Model Effects test presented the omnibus test results for the engagement level and leadership traits variables using the Wald test statistic. First, the Test of Model Effects revealed that the overall effect of the levels of engagement variable is not statistically significant,  $\chi^2(2) = 2.856, p = .240$ ; that is, levels of engagement have a statistically non-significant effect on the dependent variable. Thus, based on the current dataset, levels of engagement in extracurricular activities do not appear to have a statistically significant effect on the prediction of students' overall resilience,

Wald  $\chi^2(2) = 2.856$ ,  $p = .240$ . However, the omnibus test result for the leadership traits variable indicated that the overall effect of the leadership traits variable is statistically significant,  $\chi^2(2) = 20.829$ ,  $p < .001$ ; that is, leadership traits have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable. Thus, based on the current dataset, the frequency of leadership traits observation has a statistically significant effect on the prediction of students' overall resilience. The omnibus test results presented in the Test of Model Effects do not explain which levels or how the levels of engagement and the levels of leadership traits observability differ. Therefore, the examination of the coefficients presented in the Parameter Estimates, Table 6, is included.

**Table 6**

*Parameter Estimates for Predictor Variables (N = 100)*

	Parameter	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Wald</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Exp(B)</i>
Threshold	[Resilience Level = Low]	-0.99	1.16	0.72	1	0.395	0.37
	[Resilience Level = Average]	2.95	1.25	5.54	1	0.019	19.00
	[Engagement Level = High]	1.30	0.77	2.84	1	0.092*	3.67
	[Engagement Level = Medium]	1.12	0.78	2.02	1	0.155	3.07
	[Leadership Traits = High]	2.76	1.10	6.27	1	0.012**	15.80
	[Leadership Traits = Medium]	0.47	1.09	0.18	1	0.670	1.59

\* $p < .10$ . \*\* $p < .05$ .

According to the data presented in Table 6, for students who indicated high observed leadership traits, the odds of scoring higher for resilience are more than 15 times greater than for students who indicated low observed leadership traits. In addition, at the 90% CI, students who indicated high levels of EA engagement, the odds of scoring higher for resilience are more than 3.5 times greater than for students who indicated low EA engagement.

### **Interpretative Analysis of the Null Hypothesis**

As previously mentioned, the purpose of the study was to explore the following research question to test the null hypothesis:

RQ1: Do levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits, collectively or individually, have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of Grenadian youth?

*H<sub>01</sub>*: Levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership characteristics, collectively or individually, do not have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of secondary school-aged youth.

Based on the dataset, for students who indicated high levels of engagement in extracurricular activities, the odds of scoring higher resilience were more than 3.5 times greater than students who reported low engagement in extracurricular activities. In addition, for students who indicated medium engagement in extracurricular activities, their odds of scoring higher resilience were roughly 3 times greater than those who reported low engagement in extracurricular activities. Based on these results, it is inferred that all effects were not statistically significant at the .05 significance level (95% CI). Hence, the decision was made to fail to reject the null hypothesis. However, it is important to note that at a .10 significance level (90% CI), these results illustrate that engagement in extracurricular activities appears to have a statistically significant effect on the overall resilience of Grenadian youth.

Furthermore, for students who reported high observed leadership traits, the odds of scoring higher resilience were more than 15 times greater than those who reported low leadership traits observation. For students who reported medium leadership traits observation, the odds of scoring higher resilience were more than 1.5 times greater than those who reported low observation of leadership traits. Hence, it is evident that high observation of leadership traits is statistically significant at the 95% CI, and therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The null hypothesis of this study stated that levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits, collectively or individually, have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of high school-aged youth. As evidenced by the cumulative odds ordinal regression model used in the current study, engagement in extracurricular activities does not have a statistically significant effect on student resilience at a 95% CI. However, at the 95% CI, leadership traits observation has been found to have a statistically significant effect on the overall resilience of Grenadian youth. Given these results, the decision was made to fail to reject the null hypothesis related to the first part of the research hypothesis; however, the decision was made to reject the null hypothesis for the latter part of the research hypothesis.

### **Summary of Main Findings**

A cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression with proportional odds was run to determine the effect of level of engagement in extracurricular activities and observation of leadership traits on a sample of Grenadian school-aged youth's perception of their overall resilience. There were proportional odds, as assessed by a full likelihood ratio test comparing the fitted model to a model with varying location parameters,  $\chi^2(4) = 1.919$ ,  $p = .751$ . The deviance goodness-of-fit test indicated that the model was a good fit to the observed data,  $\chi^2(12) = 15.945$ ,  $p = .194$ ; most cells were filled with zero frequencies in only 29.6 of cells. In addition, the final model statistically significantly predicted the dependent variable over and above the intercept-only model,  $\chi^2(4) = 34.308$ ,  $p < .001$ .

The odds of students who reported high engagement in EA scoring high on the SRS was more than 3.5 times greater than students who reported low engagement in EA, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 2.84$ ,  $p = .092$ . The odds of students who reported a medium level of engagement scoring high on

the SRS were similar to that of students who reported a low level of engagement Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 2.02, p = .155$ .

The odds of students who reported high observation of leadership traits scoring high on the SRS was more than 15 times greater than students who indicated low observed leadership traits, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 6.27, p = .012$ . The odds of students who reported medium observation of leadership traits scoring high on the SRS were similar to students who reported low observation of leadership traits, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 0.18, p = .670$ .

### **Summary**

Chapter 4 provided a detailed presentation and analysis of the data in the current study. The data were comprised of quantitative data and analyzed using predictive statistical tests. Chapter 5 provides a summary and conclusions of the study. Chapter 5 also provides implications and recommendations for future research into the risk and resilience framework, extracurricular activities, and the trait theory of leadership.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Introduction**

Numerous studies popularized the resilience construct contributing to the multiplicity of analyses and concepts regarding psychological resilience, dating back from the 1950's (Polonski et al., 2021). As described in detail in Chapter 2, two approaches dominate the resilience discourse. The first perspective considers resilience as a process of positive adaptation that an individual undergoes after experiencing a traumatic event (Connor, 2006; Polonski et al., 2021). From this view, resilience is concerned with the activation of personal competitors and capabilities that mobilize an individual's ability to thrive.

The second approach considers the concept of resilience as a personality trait or a psychological resource that supports a person in coping with everyday life and traumatic events (Polonski et al., 2021). This perspective originally stems from Block's (1993) theory of ego-resiliency, a structural aspect of personality. From this perspective, resiliency is an enduring personality trait that allows an individual to effectively make certain alterations in their personality and behaviors, all while being able to exercise control over their emotions (Block & Kremer, 1996). Polonski et al. (2021) posited that "ego-resiliency is the ability to restore good functioning of an individual, participate in social life, and cope with difficulties" (p. 2). While a large volume of research examined resilience as a process, some studies investigated resilience in children and adolescents as a personality trait. Polonski et al. (2021) argued that the personality trait of resilience prevents young people from engaging in risky behaviors. Oshio et al. (2002) found that resilience was positively correlated with self-esteem and mental well-being in Japanese teenagers.

Moreover, research shows that “resiliency plays an important role in the functioning of children and adolescents” (Polomski et al., 2021, p. 2). For example, studies revealed that resilient children demonstrated more interpersonal skills and consequently formed and nurtured positive relationships with others (Chaung et al., 2006; Klohn, 1996). Other studies discovered that non-resilient children exhibited more depressive symptoms and higher susceptibility to risky behaviors such as drug usage than resilient children (Block, 1991). The latter approach served as the frame of the current study, and student resilience was interpreted from a socio-ecological perspective. In this context, resilience may be harmonious with a positive outlook on life, emotional stability despite disruptions, and the perception that adversities are opportunities to learn and grow, as opposed to succumbing and failing (Polomski et al., 2021).

Additionally, the five major leadership traits derived from the trait theory of leadership (Northouse, 2018; Stodgill, 1974) were the second major framework guiding this quantitative inquiry. The trait theory of leadership suggests that personality traits influence leader emergence and leader effectiveness and is one of the first attempts towards the scientific study of leadership (Zaccaro et al., 2005). Zaccaro et al. (2005) posited that the earliest empirical study of leadership was conducted by Terman (1904), who used a sample of schoolchildren to investigate qualities that differentiated leaders from non-leaders. Since then, several studies have supported the importance of leadership traits on organizational effectiveness (Caruso et al., 2002; Gilbert & Zaccaro, 1995; Rickers, 2001). The trait theory of leadership was employed within the current study to examine the effect of leadership traits’ observability on the overall resilience of secondary school children who participated in extracurricular activities.

This chapter aims to present the conclusions from the data analysis. Chapter five is divided into three sections: (a) a summative discussion of the conclusions from the data, (b)

implications of the overall conclusion of this study, and (c) recommendations for future research as it pertains to the risk and resilience framework and the trait theory of leadership.

### **Summative Discussion**

The goal of this study was to explore the relationship between the level of engagement and observability of leadership traits on the overall resilience of Grenadian youth who participated in extracurricular activities between 2018 and 2021. The quantitative data collected for each study's variables were examined individually and collectively.

Considering the research scope and limitations, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution. As previously established, a single research hypothesis containing two parts served as the foundation of this quantitative inquiry. The first part of the research hypothesis proposed that the level of engagement in EA and observed leadership traits collectively have a statistically significant effect on the overall resilience of Grenadian youth. In the current study, the results of the null hypothesis test indicate that EA and observed leadership traits do not collectively have a statistically significant effect on Grenadian youth's perception of their resilience. As signified by the regression analysis results, engagement in extracurricular activities had a statistically non-significant effect on students' overall resilience. Thus, the first part of the research hypothesis was not supported by the data in this study.

Given the wealth of research documenting the compensatory function of extracurricular activities on youth living within socioeconomically disadvantaged communities (Eisman et al., 2016; Mahoney & Eccles, 2008), it was anticipated that higher engagement in extracurricular activities would account for higher youth resilience. While the cumulative ordinal logistic regression results suggest that students who reported a higher level of engagement were slightly more likely to score higher on the Student Resilience Survey than students who reported a lower

level of engagement, this observed effect was not statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval. Therefore, the findings of a statistically non-significant effect between levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and student resilience could not confirm previous research discoveries by Im et al. (2016), Oshio et al. (2002), and Shorter and Elledge (2020).

There are several contributory factors that could have impacted the results of the current dataset. The non-significant statistical results for the level of engagement in EA and student overall resilience could have derived from this study's lack of statistical power. By definition, statistical power is the probability of avoiding a Type II error or failing to identify an effect that exists. The elements that constitute the statistical power of a study relate to the sample size, effect size, and alpha level (Bhandari, 2021). The findings from the current study were not consistent with findings from previous studies (i.e., Im et al., 2016; Ruvalcaba et al., 2016), perhaps due to the small sample size. Prior studies had a much larger sample than 100 participants. Also, the demographic characteristics of the current study sample are different from previous studies. Shorter and Elledge (2020) found evidence suggesting that contextual factors may influence the compensatory benefits of extracurricular activities, and as a result, the lack of demographic consistency may be a reason for the contrasting results.

Additionally, another contributor to the inconsistent or differing results may be related to the adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on students (Ilari et al., 2022; Lang, 2021; Ramos & Scarpetta, 2020). For example, Lang (2021) noted that school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic have been significant and research evidence suggests that the pandemic has disproportionately negatively affected students from socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. Further, in reference to the engagement profile of the current sample, the majority of students from two of the four schools reported that they have been participating in EA for less than 6

months even though they are enrolled in their third year of secondary school. This observation may be suggestive of barriers to engagement caused by lockdowns, school closure, social distancing requirements, and other obstacles imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Eisman et al. (2016) asserted that the amount of years students participate in EA could increase the benefits for youth development as they are exposed to more opportunities for growth. As a result, the limited length of time that students participated in EA may explain the non-significant statistical results.

Finally, the significance level used in the current study ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) could have impacted the results. Bhandari (2021) claimed that increasing the significance level (e.g., from 5% to 10%) increases the statistical power of a study because a lower significance level is less sensitive to detecting true effects. Therefore, increasing the significance level may reveal that there is, in fact, a statistically significant effect of student engagement in EA on their overall resilience. Based on the data presented in Table 6, it was evident that at the 90 CI, EA had a statistically significant effect on the overall resilience of Grenadian youth, thus supporting the Bhandari (2021) assertion that a higher significance level may be able to accurately detect true effects between variables. Furthermore, a test of the effect size may demonstrate that the magnitude of the effect warrants strong practical significance.

The second part of the research hypothesis presumed that engagement in EA and observed leadership traits individually have a statistically significant effect on the resilience of school-aged youth in Grenada. The results from hypothesis testing in this study indicate that individually, leadership traits observation had a statistically significant effect on student resilience. Conversely, as previously stated, levels of engagement had a statistically non-significant effect on student resilience. In retrospect, the second part of the research hypothesis was supported by the current dataset, specifically regarding leadership traits observation.

The manifestation of the traits of intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability by leaders of extracurricular activities positively influenced Grenadian youth's perception of their resilience. This study confirms findings by Martin et al. (2015), who also found that leadership traits such as confidence had a positive effect on students. For example, positive relational effects (i.e., team cohesion, thriving environment) were qualitatively reported by sophomore students who interacted with their leaders (Martin et al., 2015).

The findings of this study emphasize important implications for leaders and extracurricular activities programming. First, the findings accentuate the theoretical underpinning that leaders' traits are important to the leadership process. One of the strengths of the trait theory of leadership is that it provides a catalog of traits that are consistent with effective leadership. These traits include but are not limited to intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability (Northouse, 2018). Leadership traits are influential. In fact, Northouse (2018) posited that leaders who desire to be effective must be mindful that their traits are part of their leadership.

Both community and school leaders are meaningful contributors to overall youth resilience. With respect to the aggregated school reports, data from the four schools shows that most students from School 1 and School 4 participated in both community-based and school-based EA. Conversely, the largest group of the students from Schools 2 and School 3 reported that they mainly participated in school-based EA. This evidence suggests that both community and school leaders play an important role in positive youth development. While the largest group of students from two schools (School 1 and School 3) reported that they had been participating in EA for about three years, the largest group of students from School 2 and School 4 indicated that they had participated in EA for less than six months. These discoveries are relevant because not

only are students continuing to participate in EA, some students in Grenada are now beginning to participate in EA. School and community leaders should continue to engage in the complex yet crucial work of providing new experiences for youth. These formative experiences are capable of molding these youth to the extent of amplifying their core characteristics of resilience. Leaders' traits significantly affect young people's perception of their abilities to thrive. On this basis, it is imperative that leaders invest in cultivating and strengthening traits linked with leadership effectiveness. Overall, the results of this study underscore the vital role of various traits in the leadership process.

In addition, the findings of this study underscore the importance of EA as it relates to positive youth development. Oberele et al. (2019) stated, "extracurricular activities have the potential to promote positive youth development by providing young people with opportunities to pursue their interests, acquire skills, receive adult mentoring, and build new friendships" (p. 2263). The findings of this study illustrate that during engagement in EA, students perceived themselves to be more resilient when they observed a high frequency of their leaders' traits. Essentially, EA functioned as an important platform on which students could obtain meaningful experiences. Student experience in EA resulted in a higher perception of their ability to thrive. Resilience, or an ability to thrive, is an important attribute for young people as it has been found to positively influence self-esteem and mental well-being (Oshio et al., 2002). Furthermore, research suggests that student engagement in EA is related to improvement in school attendance and performance (Vandell et al., 2015). Similarly, Lang (2021) reiterated that EA appears to have important developmental and academic benefits. These benefits can be especially relevant for youth who may be socioeconomically disadvantaged.

In reference to the profile of EA engagement in the current sample, it is plausible to conclude that EA is an important aspect of young people's lives. Of the sampled population, the majority of students reported participation in EA. For instance, of the four schools under investigation, only one school (School 3) had a higher percentage of students reporting non-participation in EA. Even then, the percentage gap between students who reported non-participation in School 3 (56.52%) was not excessively large compared to students in the same school who reported participation in EA (43.48%). These and other findings imply that EA is important and has significant implications for Grenadian youth. Despite the unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 impact, Lang (2021) argued that while it may be a challenge to continue EA programs, EA should not be left behind. Im et al. (2016) suggested that viewing EA participation as an educational asset and not a nonessential option can curtail limiting factors such as program/activity cost, eligibility requirements, and competitive inclusion criteria that may be associated/linked with participating in EA.

One of the interesting points of the data in this study is the observation that most students were 14-year-old male students. This observation is noteworthy as it provides confirmation that young boys in Grenada are actively engaging in activities that support their positive development. Douglas (2019) noted that in Grenada, teenage violence is trending at a higher rate than before and that most of these events occur within schools. Teenage violence is a serious problem that can perhaps be attenuated by an influx of opportunities for youth to engage in activities that enhance their self-image and competency. Therefore, the results of this study can be used as supporting evidence to explore engagement in extracurricular activities as a meaningful tool to curtail the tendency of young people's involvement in deviant and unconventional behaviors.

Another key point of interest is that most students reported that they live within a single-parent household headed by a mother or female guardian. Douglas (2019) averred that “about forty-five percent of all Grenadian households are female-headed” (p.46). Women in Grenada as heads of household are disproportionately burdened with low-paying jobs and child-caring responsibilities (OECD, 2019), and hence it is plausible to argue that they may be unable to provide for their children adequately. Hence, the relevant discoveries of the current dataset are important for educational and community leaders’ consideration for establishing supportive partnerships between families for the benefits of youth.

### **Unexpected Findings**

There were four significant unexpected findings that emerged in the current study. First, the researcher did not expect the high participation of male students in the overall study. Of the 150 students who participated in this study, 84 or 56% of them were male. In addition, it was surprising to discover that of the 100 students who reported engagement in extracurricular activities, 50 or 50% of them were male. This observation is important for policymakers' consideration of gender-sensitive programming and growth opportunities. In addition, this observation may also signal the importance of focusing on deliberate hiring practices and school cultures that allow male teachers to thrive. Moreover, this observation also motions the need to have male teachers and male community leaders overseeing and or supporting youth development initiatives. Thus, the current dataset ignites a call to action for policymakers and educational administrators to devise plans to support youth, especially male youth, so that they can remain in school. Policy implementation and special initiatives are especially important considering the data presented in the earlier chapters of social problems and delinquencies in Grenada with a large volume of male perpetrators.

The sample of Grenadian youth who participated in the study was representative of the general makeup of the Grenadian school-aged youth population. UNICEF (2021) reported that in 2018, secondary school enrollment rate was higher for boys (93%) than girls (83%). This difference is evident in the high percentage of male student participation in the current study. Secondly, OECD (2019) established that Grenada is reported to have the highest percentage of female-headed households in the Eastern Caribbean, a significant number of whom are susceptible to poverty. In addition, results revealed that Grenadian children and adolescents account for the highest poverty rate in Grenada (Douglas, 2019). Moreover, UNICEF (2021) established that adolescents ages 10-19 living in female-headed households were more likely to live in poverty (54%) than adolescents living in male-headed households (44%) in Grenada. This information draws attention to the discoveries in the current study that of 150 students who participated in the study, 60 or 40% of them reported living within a single-parent household headed by a mother.

A second unexpected finding is that more than half (64 %) of students in the current study reported high observation of their leaders displaying the five major leadership traits. This discovery is especially important because it demonstrates the incredible impact of Grenadian leaders within schools and communities. Despite challenges such as limited resources, working with a high percentage of academically disadvantaged students and their socioeconomically disadvantaged families, school and community youth program leaders are empowering the young people of Grenada. Additionally, 31% of students reported medium observation of leadership traits, and only 5% reported low observation of leadership traits. Considering the shortage in resources and other unique challenges confronted by youth leaders in Grenada, it would not have been a surprise if more students reported low observation of leadership traits. I expected that

perhaps burnout would adversely affect the youth leaders from functioning as instrumental guides in the lives of young people in Grenada. Yet, the results from this study imply that school and community leaders in Grenada are fiercely engaging young people in crucial developmental experiences. This is commendable and I must say that I am proud.

Another unexpected finding was the observed patterns of engagement in extracurricular activities between 2018 and 2021 among the four secondary schools under investigation. Based on the current data, one of the four schools saw a major increase in extracurricular engagement from 2018 to 2021. It was fascinating to see that engagement in extracurricular activities for this particular school, School 4, increased during the period under investigation, the highest engagement occurring within the last six months. However, School 1 and School 3 experienced a significant reduction in engagement in extracurricular activities between the periods 2018 and 2021. Additionally, based on the current data, School 2 experienced a decrease until a few months (less than 6 months) prior to data collection. Overall, the four schools experienced low student engagement in extracurricular activities from 2018 to 2021. However, there was an increase in participation towards the end of 2021. These discoveries suggest the possible impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students' ability to participate in extracurricular activities at school and within their respective communities. In addition, such discoveries may also indicate an emergence of new programs or new interest in extracurricular activities programming.

Similar to the patterns of engagement in extracurricular activities, it was also surprising to discover that most (55%) of the students in the current study reported high engagement in extracurricular activities. In addition, 34% reported medium engagement, and 11% reported low engagement in extracurricular activities. I expected more students to report low engagement in

extracurricular activities considering school closures and the economic downturn brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fourth, an unexpected finding was the overall resilience of Grenadian youth. Most (53%) of the students scored high on the SRS, which measures their overall resilience. In addition, 43% of students scored average resilience, and only 4% scored low overall resilience. This finding was unprecedented considering the challenges these youth are often confronted with on the island. This discovery is a bold reminder that young people in Grenada are resilient and fierce and will thrive. With such impressive discovery, I enlist the entire Grenadian community not to lose hope in our Grenadian youth. As a Grenadian, I urge all of my fellow Grenadians to join together and do all we can to stand for positive development. The young people of Grenada are absolutely outstanding and depend on us to keep paving a pathway for them as they forge through the inevitable challenges that are part of their lives.

Finally, although I was not expecting to find such a small number of students reporting low overall resilience, I think this discovery calls our attention to how easy it may be for a fraction of students to become left behind. Since so many students reported high and average resilience, it can be easy for stakeholders such as school administrators, community leaders, and policymakers to think that young people in Grenada are all resilient. However, we should be deliberate in our efforts to include each and every student. We can begin by allowing the data to guide us as we keep our guard up and continue to do our best to support all the young people of Grenada. After all, not most, but all of the young people are invaluable and has so much to offer.

### **Implications**

Based on the findings derived from the current dataset, there are four notable implications that involves the participation and support of students, families, policy makers, community

members, youth program leaders and education administrators. These implications are mentorship programs, annual collaborative summits, leadership training programs and a research-based strategic development plan.

### **Mentorship Programs Within Schools and Communities**

One implication that emerged from this study is the need to design mentorship programs for Caribbean youth. There are various types of mentorship programs but the particular type of program that the researcher endorses is a group mentorship program devised with three core objectives. First, the program should mainly focus on fostering resilience in young people. Resilience can be cultivated through activities that require problem-solving skills, teamwork, and individual talents such as attention to detail or analytic aptitude. Within the mentorship program and upon completing tasks or milestones, students should be recognized for their efforts. The leaders of these programs should make it a priority to privately and publicly acknowledge youth for their accomplishments. Acknowledging youth can curtail the nuances of low self-image, a dilemma young people from socioeconomically disadvantaged communities often encounter.

Second, the program should emphasize gender-affirming differences. Essentially, the mentorship programs should not merely include traditionally stereotypical female programming; instead, activities, displaying arts, symbols, etc., should be sensitive, respectful, and desirable for both male and female youth. Cultivating a welcoming environment that promotes inclusion and belonging for all students, including male students, is particularly important because in the current study, of the 50 students who reported non-participation, 34 or 68% of them were males. Gender-inclusive programming are vital for the current schools under investigation because they are mixed-gender secondary schools with a high percentage of male students. As evidenced by the data gathered in this study, a large proportion of male students were barred from participating

in extracurricular activities. Hence, it is imperative to address the needs and interests of male students attending secondary schools in Grenada.

Third, and perhaps, most important, the program should be designed from a co-active-coaching framework. The co-active coaching model is a "way of effectively empowering people to find their own answers, encouraging and supporting them on the path as they continue to make important life-giving and life-changing choices" (Kimsey-House et al., 2018, p. xvi). This model assumes that every situation has possibilities and that individuals in the relationship have the power of choice. The researcher believes that a mentorship program which design allows for autonomy and support is critical for the positive development of youth. The co-active coaching model consists of five contexts: listening, intuition, curiosity, forward the action, deepen the learning, and self-management. In this model, the central focus is on the client or coachee (in this case, youth), perceived as an individual who is naturally creative, resourceful, and whole (Kimsey-House et al., 2018). Fundamental to the co-active coaching model is the recognition of the coachee's capabilities. In fact, coachees are viewed as "capable of finding answers, capable of choosing, capable of taking action, capable of recovering when things don't go as planned, and especially capable of learning" (Kimsey-House et al., 2018, p. 3). With this framework, a mentorship program can propel the positive development of Grenadian school-aged youth.

As mentors, the leaders of the mentorship programs should rely on the five contexts of co-active coaching to empower young people in Grenada. Listening is the first and foundational context of the co-active coaching model. It is a tool that cultivates safety, security, and an environment of being known and understood. Although listening is an innate talent that some people are more adept with, it can be developed with training (Kimsey-House et al., 2018).

Listening to young people can prove to be a valuable means of understanding the needs and interests of the youth enrolled in the program.

Secondly, leaders can rely on the skill of intuition. Intuition is one way of knowing; it is the opposite of the observable conventional way of knowing. Simply put, intuition pertains to one's ability to "listen deeply and deftly" (Kimsey-House et al., 2018, p. 50). The context of intuition is critical in the co-active coaching model because it often propels action and deepens learning. Spending time with youth, attentively listening to them can help leaders to become more perceptive of young people's developmental strengths and opportunities for growth.

The context of curiosity pertains to an inquiry or asking questions, leading to deeper understanding and even access to more possibilities. As the program leaders practice curiosity, they in turn will enhance the youth's ability find solutions to challenges (Kimsey-House et al., 2018). From my perspective, I think integrating the context of curiosity will give young people autonomy in the mentoring relationship. Autonomy will fuel resilience, giving the youth the confidence in themselves and overall competence in the face of adversity.

Furthermore, incorporating the self-management context of the coactive coaching model into mentorship programs will guide mentors to ask for the youth's permission. Asking permission can yield many beneficial outcomes. For example, according to Kimsey-House et al. (2018), "clients are honored when you ask permission; their boundaries are respected" (p. 104). As leaders ask the youth for their permission, young people may begin to feel more like equal partners. Employing elements of the coactive coaching model in the mentorship programs will allow young people to become active contributors of their own success.

Lastly, the forward and deepen context is relevant because it enables young people to collaboratively find solutions with the guidance or leadership of their mentors. A unique element

of the co-active coaching model is a deliberate shift from rank or content to human connection (Kimsey-House et al., 2018). In a nutshell, a mentorship program that incorporates this model can be transformative and sustainable. Thus, the co-active coaching model is excellent for the personal growth and programmatic success for youth. I firmly believe that implementing mentorship programs using the foundations of a co-active coaching model will enable young people to feel empowered as they co-create and achieve a number of goals with their mentors.

### **Collaboration: AI Collaborative summit**

Based on the current data, there were several barriers hindering young people in Grenada from engaging in extracurricular activities. Of particular interest is the indication that a large group of students (34%) reported disinterest in the current programming. And, considering that 64% of all the students who reported non-engagement specified that they would participate in EA if the barriers were removed, it would be ideal and beneficial to find ways to mitigate and perhaps eliminate the barriers affecting the young people's participation in EA. Thus, stakeholders should come together to specifically devise a solution designed to address the obstacles hindering youth engagement in extracurricular activities. One approach to address this problem is coming together to conduct an annual stakeholder meeting or summit. This event could be developed from the foundations of an appreciative inquiry framework. Appreciative Inquiry, or the act of taking a deliberate and positive approach to difficult conversations, is a widely used approach to support program development and overall organization success (Block, 2011). And as previously mentioned, the stakeholders for all youth programming in Grenada should include students, families, community leaders, school administrators, policymakers, and other members, including educational veterans and consultants who can collaborate to formulate plans and programming goals that are reflective of the needs and interests of students. Leveraging

the insights, talents, and perspectives of the relevant stakeholders would also increase buy-in and amplify the efforts of policymakers as they sponsor and support programming for Caribbean youth.

### **Leadership Training and Support Programs**

Another implication of this study is aligned with the observation that most (64%) students reported high observation of leadership traits. In essence, the data suggests that both school and community leaders are doing an outstanding job supporting the youth of Grenada. For this to continue, it is important to implement leadership programs that focus on training and supporting these leaders. The design of these leadership programs can be three-fold. One element of the leadership program can focus on the trait theory of leadership. Within these programs, the focus would be to strengthen the desired leadership traits. To assess the prevalence or lack thereof of these traits, leaders can take assessments that would give them an overview of leadership aptitudes and areas for growth.

Secondly, new leadership programming can employ adaptive leadership training as an adaptive leadership framework would position leaders to strategically support students post the covid-19 pandemic. According to Northouse (2019), adaptive leadership is defined as a practice that involves mobilizing people to design responses to tough challenges and thrive. Adaptive leadership is follower-centered (Northouse, 2019). Thus, programming sustained by adaptive leadership practices is an excellent approach to mobilizing stakeholders as we venture to do the hard and vital work of structural changes within schools and communities to remain relevant in the post-pandemic era. I believe that an adaptive approach to leadership development is impactful as adaptive leaders view leadership as an activity, and thus the role of leadership becomes available to everyone (Heifetz et al., 2009). Also, Obokensky (2010) claimed that

complex adaptive leadership leans strongly towards people focus where the goal of the leader is to develop people and "leave them in a better position, either from motivation, capability or just human emotion point of view" (p. 160).

Moreover, Khan (2017) reiterated that adaptive leadership is an effective tool in helping institutions plan properly for change as adaptive leaders are better equipped with knowing the problems, defining them, and identifying the best solutions. The unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will require unprecedented responses. Adaptive leadership provides training for leaders to take a balcony view of the challenges at hand, collaborate with others, and take deliberate action to shift priorities, beliefs, and habits, all of which may be necessary to survive in the post-pandemic era. Utilizing adaptive leadership theory's theoretical and practical underpinnings can enable leaders to apply innovative solutions that can effectuate long-term sustainability instead of short-term fixes.

Last but not least, these programs can focus on cultivating and supporting leaders through the integration of transformational leadership practices. Transformational leaders focus on inspiring and motivating the people around them. I believe it is of utmost important for youth leaders to continue to motivate and inspire the youth of Grenada. Transformational leaders are characterized as influential, considerate, stimulating, and inspirational individuals who inspire followers to achieve and engage in self-development while simultaneously igniting group and overall organizational development (Pieterse-Landman, 2012). Thus, with a leadership program that integrates features of transformational leadership practices, it is expected that the extracurricular activities leaders will be able to create more impact. The transformational leadership theory is widely studied and integrated within organizations. Transformational leadership is especially useful for navigating change and disruption, such as the Covid-19

pandemic. For example, Alqatawenh (2018) found that the four dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and empowerment, were positively correlated to change management. There are different transformational leadership models, but one particular model that I think would be useful is Kouzes and Posner's Model of Transformational Leadership. This model assumes five major leadership behaviors: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart (Pieterse-Landman, 2012). The commonality across the different transformational leadership models is the core goal of enabling or empowering followers (i.e., organizational members or stakeholders) to become the best version of themselves. Transformational leadership enables leaders to function as change agents, equipping them to support their followers to achieve desirable goals (Islam et al., 2021). This leadership style is suitable for the proposed program because it enhances the bond between leaders and those they serve (Burns, 1978). Furthermore, the researcher strongly encourages transformational leadership as studies have shown it enhances trust (Islam et al., 2021). Trust is pivotal for the success of programs and overall change management. Thus, a leadership training and development program fueled by transformational leadership practices can benefit Caribbean leaders as they make a positive impact within schools and the community.

### **Research and Strategic development**

The final implication is concerned with addressing the need for research and strategic development. I strongly recommend a leadership expert like myself to spearhead this effort to ascertain efficient strides and effective outcomes. Having carefully examined the needs of Grenadian youth, I am confident I can make a unique and valuable contribution to the positive development of Grenadian youth in two ways: as a newly trained researcher with a contextual

background, and as an empathetic mentor and life coach to Grenadian youth, especially those from under-resourced backgrounds.

### ***Researcher***

Although my contributions as a scholar are in their infancy, I have a deep commitment to academic excellence. My research goals are to blend theory and application to support individuals living on society's margins. This dissertation research, for example, is an unprecedented study of Caribbean youth who live in under-resourced communities. My research subjects attend four of Grenada's most socioeconomically and academically disadvantaged secondary schools. As a Grenadian, I built trust and thus obtained permission to collect data among a crucial, difficult-to-access population: Caribbean youth and their families. The findings offer substantive implications for policy, practice, and theory. I am energized by the possibility of collaborating with policymakers, among other stakeholders in Grenada. The transferrable skills I obtained within the classroom and the research field has positioned me to succeed in areas of strategic planning, change management, leading teams, and organizational effectiveness.

Furthermore, I am a committed champion of student success. My experience teaching youth, undergraduate and post-graduate students from private Christian universities enables me to employ classroom management techniques and innovative teaching practices to support a variety of learning styles. One classroom innovation that I have designed and implemented is the inclusion of case studies inspired by real-world situations. These case studies are investigated collaboratively within small and large group settings. I encourage students to share their input and constructively critique differing perspectives and approaches. This particular classroom innovation has elevated students' ability to meet and exceed course outcomes. I believe that I can

use my teaching and classroom management skills to support students, families and educational administrators of Grenada.

### ***Mentor***

I was born into a multi-generational cycle of poverty, which denied me a carefree childhood and undermined my educational opportunities. When I was nine years old, my birth mother died. I didn't learn to read until age 12. Despite this slow start, my work ethic, resilience, and determination helped me complete secondary school with honors. I was academically qualified to accept a full private-family sponsorship to attend Brigham Young University-Hawaii, which opened the door to enriching post-graduate opportunities. I have made it my responsibility to support peers and colleagues throughout my academic journey actively. For example, in 2009, I was hired as the first New Learning Committee Mentor to support first year college students coming from over 70 countries. Moreover, in January 2020, I collaborated with a colleague to become the co-founder of a mentorship group named Dissertation Warriors. The Dissertation Warriors (DWs) is a doctoral peer mentorship group that provides NU CFLS doctoral students with community and resources to navigate the rigor of the doctoral program. Within both roles as a peer mentor, I have seen tremendous success of participants, including course completion, and perhaps most importantly, the building of trusted relationships that extends well beyond the classroom.

My life experiences have given me an unshakeable determination to help others avoid or work past the obstacles I've overcome. I've devoted my educational pursuits and my life's work to becoming a transformative servant leader. As a scholar-practitioner, I serve as a confidante and mentor, promoting academic success and professional development to young people in need. I see each person's divine potential and do everything I can to help them achieve it. For example,

I have supported a relatively new non-profit organization in various roles, expanding its influence to empower some of Utah's most vulnerable populations. In addition, I foster solid ethical foundations for youth and women to first, recognize their self-worth, then cultivate their leadership and drive change within local and international communities.

A strategic development plan can be useful in sustainably assisting the youth of Grenada. I envision collaborating with a number of Grenadian nationals, both at home or abroad to design a plan to support our youth. This plan will include actionable items to guide families, school administrators, and community members as they strive to empower Grenadian youth. In addition, the plan will include detailed information related to making it feasible for youth to access the knowledge, experiences, and other resources they will need to succeed. I am confident that I am an excellent candidate to bring this initiative to fruition because of my leadership training, research capabilities, and mentoring abilities. Based on my professional and personal successes, I know I can support the Grenadian community and its resilient student population. I have a proven ability to build trusting relationships quickly. My willingness to learn from others will enable me to work collaboratively with principals, teachers, and the Grenadian community at large. My mission is to use the position earned through my life experiences to motivate and inspire youth, especially those from under-resourced and multicultural backgrounds.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Exploring student resilience and the influence of leadership traits on understudied populations such as the Grenadian school-aged youth population is important. And as such, there are several recommendations for future research. First, a replication of the current study using a larger sample size is highly recommended. Only 100 students from four secondary schools were included in the predictive statistical analyses in this study. The sample size should account for a

higher number of students in future studies. In addition, this sample should be inclusive of students from more than four of the secondary schools in Grenada. Such research design elements will enhance methodological rigor allowing for a more robust and sound investigation of Grenadian youth's positive development.

Another recommendation is to conduct a cross-comparative analysis between rural and urban students in Grenada. As previously specified, Grenadian youth who reside in the rural areas of Grenada experience poverty at a higher rate than youth who live within the urban vicinity of the island (Douglas, 2019). Investigating these groups separately and collectively can provide an in-depth examination of socioeconomic and geographical challenges to engaging in extracurricular activities. This cross-comparative analysis can also include data from the leaders of extracurricular activities to consider factors influencing the acquisition and portrayal of their leadership traits.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, future studies can address the missing qualitative aspect of this study. While quantitative studies focus on testing objective theories (i.e., exploring the relationship among variables), qualitative research emphasizes the individual meaning and sheds light on the significance of reporting the complexity of a situation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The results reveal that several areas require a qualitative or inductive inquiry, considering the summary and analysis of the current dataset. For instance, results presented in the 'Reasons for Non-Participation' table (Table 3) in Chapter 4 indicate that there are unknown (other) barriers preventing young people in Grenada from participating in extracurricular activities. A qualitative research approach is necessary to address this ambiguity. Within this design, including parents and leaders of extracurricular activities as participants to triangulate findings can strengthen the trustworthiness of the results (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Similarly, Oberle et al. (2019) recommended that future studies exploring the associated benefits of students' participation in extracurricular activities should include information about (a) the length of time students participated in extracurricular activities, (b) how often and how regularly students participated in extracurricular activities, (c) why students participated, (d) the locations of extracurricular activities that students participated in, and (e) the socioeconomic backgrounds of the students' families which is especially significant for understanding non-participation. Employing an inductive research design will elicit rich contextual information allowing for the emergence of themes and an understanding of participants' lived experiences.

In sum, future studies involving the resilience framework and the trait theory of leadership can have significant implications for research and practice in the fields of leadership, education, and positive youth development.

### **Conclusions of the Study**

This quantitative correlational study investigated the effect that levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership traits may play in explaining the core characteristics of the personal resilience of Grenadian youth. Grenadian school-aged youth were identified from four of the twenty-one secondary schools on the island, enrolled in the third year of compulsory secondary education, and aged 13 to 16. This study investigated how youth resilience was conditioned based on their level of engagement in extracurricular activities and observed leadership characteristics during the first three years of secondary school, using survey data and predictive analytic methods.

Overall, the results of this study strongly support the foundational theories of this study. As discussed in previous chapters, this study was founded on the premise that resilience is a personality trait heavily influenced by protective factors such as supportive role models, peers,

school, and community. In addition, this study also premised that the visibility of leadership traits is strongly associated with leadership effectiveness. The findings of this study indicate that leaders of EA activities who demonstrate leadership traits have a major influence on students who are participating in EA activities.

Representativeness is a practical significance attained by the current study. Babbie (2021) contends that all variations of the population do not need to be reflected in the sample because representativeness is about the characteristics of the sample that are critical to the substantive interest of the study. Based on the sample students' age, at least fifty percent of secondary school-aged youth are on track to complete their secondary education by age sixteen, the standard age for secondary school completion in Grenada (Douglas, 2019). However, based on grade retention, a number of students as indicated by the 16% of 16-year-old students are on track to complete their secondary school education at around 18 years of age. Such trajectory is not unusual for students attending any one of the four secondary schools sampled in the current study.

Additionally, the aggregated gender data of the current sample is consistent with the overall enrollment of Grenadian youth at the secondary school level. The Statistician at the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs, and Information report the latest available data for the 2020/2021 school year for secondary school students in Grenada is 4260 females and 4287 males (G. George, personal communication, March 15, 2022). Evidently, in Grenada, there is a higher male student enrollment at the secondary education level, which explains the higher rate of male compared to female respondents in the current study. In addition, the largest group of students, that is 40% of the 150 participants, reported that they live within a single-parent household headed by a mother or female guardian. This observation is

supported by the UNICEF (2021) report, which declared that most children live within a female-headed household on the island. In hindsight, based on the demographic analysis presented in chapter four, the youth in the study were representative of the youth population in Grenada.

This study is unique in its analysis of data collected on the trait theory of leadership and student resilience separately. No evidence in the current literature indicates that the trait theory of leadership has been examined within a public-school setting. Similarly, the theoretical resilience framework has not been surveyed within the context of Grenadian youth enrolled in public secondary schools.

The results of the study demonstrated strong practical significance. Despite a limited body of literature, there is reasonably strong evidence for the contributory factors of the trait theory of leadership on positive youth development. This study found a significant linkage between leadership traits observability and overall student resilience.

In addition, the findings from the current study informed research and practice in three different ways:

First, shedding light on the benefits young people can anticipate from participating in extracurricular activities. Although student engagement had a non-statistically significant effect at the 0.05 confidence level on their overall resilience, results indicate an effect between students who had higher engagement from those who reported low engagement in extracurricular activities.

Second, highlighting the significance of understanding varying ecological mechanisms (e.g., peer support, community support) of extracurricular activities and how they contribute to positive youth development. Using the Student Resilience Survey, which measures resilience

from an ecologic perspective, highlighted the importance of family, school, and community engagement in students' perception of their abilities.

Finally, providing direction for educational and community leaders in support of understanding who they are and how their traits may influence those they lead. The findings of this study demonstrated that in relation to their overall resilience, youth level of engagement in EA was not as weighted as the frequency in which the students observed their leaders' traits. Essentially, the data support the importance of youth having a relationship with a significant leader. The findings also support a call to action for the availability, access, implementation, and development of extracurricular activities during secondary school years.

Currently, the youth in Grenada rely heavily on their community and school leaders. While commenting on the well-being of young people in Grenada, UNICEF (2021) noted:

Experiences at school have far-reaching effects on their development and well-being, encompassing physical and mental health, safety, civic engagement, and social development. Education in various forms is a vital prerequisite for combating poverty, empowering young people, protecting them from hazardous and exploitive practices, promoting human rights and democracy, and protecting the environment. (p. 3)

In essence, it is imperative that young people have access to different forms of education. Ample opportunities to engage in extracurricular activities can function as significant contributors to young's people's ability to resist and bounce back from negative experiences. The statistically non-significant effect and the statistically significant effect of level of engagement in extracurricular activities and leadership traits observation, respectfully, on the resilience of Grenadian youth should not be ignored. Instead, these observed effects should inform future research, increase leadership traits assessment, and other leadership training to support program

development and implementation. This study underscores the protective functions of extracurricular activities. In addition, the current study supports the influential roles of leaders' traits in the leadership process and the value of leaders who spearhead initiatives that bring into line positive youth development. Overall, study conclusions support the significance of particular leadership traits impacting student resilience and the integration of extracurricular activities within schools and communities.

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**Appendix A: Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic Questionnaire**

**GRENADIAN YOUTH AND RESILIENCE**  
 Grenadian Youth and Resilience Demographic Questionnaire  
 Northwest University Center for Leadership Studies  
 Salisha Allard-Blaisdell

1. What is your gender?
  - ☐ Male
  - ☐ Female
  - ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

2. How old are you?
  - ☐ 13
  - ☐ 14
  - ☐ 15
  - ☐ 16

Note: If you are between the ages of 13 and 16 years, then you qualify for this study. If you are younger than 13 or older than 16, please exit the survey at this time.

3. Which of the secondary schools do you attend? \*
4. How would you describe your family unit?
  - ☐ Single parent household headed by mother
  - ☐ Single parent household headed by father
  - ☐ Traditional (mother and father) nuclear family or two-parent household
  - ☐ Extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncle)
  - ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. Which statement is most true for you and your family unit?
  - ☐ We always have enough food and money to meet our daily needs
  - ☐ We sometimes have enough food and money to meet our daily needs
  - ☐ We rarely ever have food and money to meet our daily needs
  - ☐ We do not have enough food and money to meet our daily needs
  - ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the total number of members (including yourself) in your family unit?
  - ☐ 2
  - ☐ 3
  - ☐ 4
  - ☐ More than 5

\*Names of the four schools were redacted for privacy purposes.

## **Appendix B: Student Resilience Survey**

## Student Resilience Survey

Please read every statement carefully and circle the answer that fits you best.

At home, there is an adult who... never always

... is interested in my school work	1	2	3	4	5
... believes that I will be a success	1	2	3	4	5
... wants me to do my best	1	2	3	4	5
... listens to me when I have something to say	1	2	3	4	5

At school, there is an adult who... never always

... really cares about me	1	2	3	4	5
... tells me when I do a good job	1	2	3	4	5
... listens to me when I have something to say	1	2	3	4	5
... believes that I will be a success	1	2	3	4	5

Away from school, there is an adult who... never always

... really cares about me	1	2	3	4	5
... tells me when I do a good job	1	2	3	4	5
... believes that I will be a success	1	2	3	4	5
... I trust	1	2	3	4	5

Away from school... never always

... I am a member of a club, sports team, church group, or other group	1	2	3	4	5
... I take lessons in music, art, sports, or have a hobby	1	2	3	4	5

Are there students at your school who would...	never				always
... choose you on their team at school	1	2	3	4	5
... explain the rules of a game if you didn't understand them	1	2	3	4	5
... invite you to their home	1	2	3	4	5
... share things with you	1	2	3	4	5
... help you if you hurt yourself	1	2	3	4	5
... miss you if you weren't at school	1	2	3	4	5
... make you feel better if something is bothering you	1	2	3	4	5
... pick you for a partner	1	2	3	4	5
... help you if other students are being mean to you	1	2	3	4	5
... tell you you're their friend	1	2	3	4	5
... ask you to join in when you are all alone	1	2	3	4	5
... tell you secrets	1	2	3	4	5

Please read every statement carefully and click on the answer that fits you best.

	never				always
I do things at home that make a difference (i.e. make things better)	1	2	3	4	5
I help my family make decisions	1	2	3	4	5
At school, I decide things like class activities or rules	1	2	3	4	5
I do things at school that make a difference (i.e. make things better)	1	2	3	4	5
I can work out my problems	1	2	3	4	5
I can do most things if I try	1	2	3	4	5
There are many things that I do well	1	2	3	4	5
I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt	1	2	3	4	5
I try to understand what other people feel	1	2	3	4	5
When I need help, I find someone to talk to	1	2	3	4	5
I know where to go for help when I have a problem	1	2	3	4	5
I try to work out problems by talking about them	1	2	3	4	5
I have goals and plans for the future	1	2	3	4	5
I think I will be successful when I grow up	1	2	3	4	5

**Save form**

**Attach to email**

**Appendix C: Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Trait Questionnaire**

**GRENADIAN YOUTH AND RESILIENCE**  
 Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Trait Questionnaire  
 Northwest University Center for Leadership Studies  
 Salisha Allard-Blaisdell

**Section 1: Participation in Extracurricular Activities**

2. Within the past three years (2018-2021), have you been a member of any extracurricular activities (clubs/programs) at school or the community?
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No

If **YES**, continue to the next question; if you responded **NO**, then skip to Section **III**.

3. Within the past three years (2018-2021) – Select one:
- ☐ I participated in school-based extracurricular activities only
  - ☐ I participated in community-based extracurricular activities only
  - ☐ I participated in school-based and community-based extracurricular activities
4. At some point within the past three years (2018-2021); I was a member of (Select ALL that applies):
- ☐ 4-H
  - ☐ Pan
  - ☐ Music Club
  - ☐ Cadet
  - ☐ Drama Club/Theatre
  - ☐ Other
5. Overall, how long have you been a member? \* If you are a member of several clubs, select the one you prefer the most:
- ☐ Under six months
  - ☐ Roughly six months
  - ☐ About one year
  - ☐ About two years
  - ☐ About three years
6. On average, how many hours per week do you spend participating in club activities?
- ☐ 1-2
  - ☐ 3-5
  - ☐ 6-10
  - ☐ More than 10 hours

The next two questions ask you to rate your levels of interest and engagement in club activities.

7. How would you rate your levels of engagement in your club activities?
- ☐ Very disengaged
  - ☐ Disengaged

- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Engaged
  
- ☐ Very Engaged
  
- 8. How would you rate your interest level in your club activities?
  - ☐ Very Poor
  - ☐ Poor
  - ☐ Average
  - ☐ Good
  - ☐ Excellent

### **Participation in Extracurricular Activities**

In this section, you will be asked to describe your observation of your activity/club leaders. Carefully read the questions and select the options that best apply.

Response code: 1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes; 4=Frequently; 5=Always

**Intelligence** is one's intellectual ability. Intelligence is identified as a trait (characteristic) that significantly contributes to a leader's achievement of complex problem-solving skills and social judgment skills.

9. From my observation, my group leader\_\_\_\_\_exhibit **Intelligence**.

1. Never      2. Rarely      3. Sometimes      4. Frequently      5. Always

**Self-Confidence** is the ability to be certain about one's abilities and skills. It includes a sense of self-esteem, self-assurance, and self-belief that one can make a difference.

10. From my observation, my group leader\_\_\_\_\_exhibit **Self-Confidence**.

1. Never      2. Rarely      3. Sometimes      4. Frequently      5. Always

**Determination** is the desire to get the job done and includes characteristics such as initiative, persistence, dominance, and drive.

11. From my observation, my group leader\_\_\_\_\_exhibit **Determination**.

1. Never      2. Rarely      3. Sometimes      4. Frequently      5. Always

**Integrity** is the quality of honesty and trustworthiness. Leaders with integrity inspire confidence in others because they can be trusted to do what they say they are going to do. They are loyal, dependable, and not deceptive.

12. From my observation, my group leader \_\_\_\_\_ exhibit **Integrity.**

1. Never      2. Rarely      3. Sometimes      4. Frequently      5. Always

**Sociability** is a leader's tendency to seek out a pleasant social relationship. Leaders who show sociability are friendly, outgoing, courteous, tactful, and diplomatic. They are sensitive to others' needs and show concern for their well-being.

13. From my observation, my group leader \_\_\_\_\_ exhibit **Sociability.**

1. Never      2. Rarely      3. Sometimes      4. Frequently      5. Always

### **Section 3: Non-Participation in Extracurricular Activities**

You have indicated that you have not participated in any forms of Extracurricular activities in the last three years (2018-2021).

14. What influenced your enrollment? **Select all** that applies:

- ☐ No money (for transportation, uniform, equipment, etc.)
- ☐ No support or encouragement from trusted mentor/guardian
- ☐ Not interested in the activities of the club
- ☐ No friends/peers in the clubs
- ☐ Do not know the club leader (s)
- ☐ Other barriers

15. If there were no barriers, would you have joined at least one of the clubs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## **Appendix D: Additional Analysis of Dataset**

**Q01. Are there significant differences in the mean resilience scores?**

If EA effects resilience we would expect participant resilience scores to be higher than non-participant scores.

Q01a. Is there a significant difference between the mean resilience scores for students who report participation in EA and the resilience scores for students reporting no EA participation?

Yes,  $t(148) = 3.10, p < .01, d = 0.54, 90\% \text{ CI } [0.25, 0.83]$  the mean resilience score for students participating in EA,  $M = 145$  (26), was significantly higher than for students not participating in EA,  $M = 130$  (31). Mean comparison t-test.

If EA effects resilience, we expect resilience scores for students with minimal EA participation to be similar to those of non-participating students.

Q01b. Is there a significant difference between the mean resilience scores for non-participating students and participating students reporting less than 6 months participation in EA?

Yes,  $t(77) = 2.49, p < .05, d = 0.58, 90\% \text{ CI } [0.19, 0.97]$  the mean resilience score for participating students reporting less than 6 months participation in EA,  $M = 147$  (27), is significantly higher the mean score for non-participants,  $M = 130$  (31). Mean comparison t-test

If EA effects resilience, we expect resilience scores for students involved in EA for a longer period of time to be higher than students just beginning to participate in EA.

Q01c. Is there a significant difference between the mean resilience scores for students reporting less than 6 months participation in EA and the scores for students reporting more than 2 years experience in EA?

No,  $t(54) = -0.73, p = .469, d = -0.19, 90\% \text{ CI } [-0.63, 0.25]$  the mean resilience score for students with less time participating in EA,  $M = 147$  (27), was not significantly different than for students with more time participating,  $M = 142$  (24). Mean comparison t-test

Up to this point we have assumed that the mean resilience score for EA participating students was not significantly different between the four schools.

Q01d. Is there a significant difference between the mean resilience scores reported by EA participating students across the four schools?

Yes,  $F(3, 96) = 2.45, p < .100, \eta^2 = .07, 90\% \text{ CI } [0.00, 0.14]$  EA participating students from schools 1,  $M = 151$  (24), and 2,  $M = 150$  (21), had significantly higher resilience scores than participating students from schools 3,  $M = 137$  (34), and 4,  $M = 136$  (26). One-way ANOVA

**Q02. Is there a significant relationship between student resilience scores and observed leadership traits and level of EA engagement for students participating in EA?**

If EA participation effects resilience, we expect students who report higher instances of observed leadership traits and higher levels of EA engagement to have higher resilience scores.

Q02a. Is there a significant relationship between resilience scores and higher instances of observed leadership traits and higher levels of EA engagement?

Yes, significant relationships were indicated between high levels of observed leadership traits,  $\beta = 36.2$ ,  $t(95) = 3.39$ ,  $p < .001$ , and high levels of EA engagement,  $\beta = 15.8$ ,  $t(95) = 2.03$ ,  $p < .05$ . These factors explained a significant proportion of variance in resilience scores,  $R^2 = .27$ ,  $F(4, 95) = 10.35$ ,  $p < .0005$ . Multiple linear regression using binary variables for categorical data.

**Q03 Given the high resilience scores by students reporting recent EA engagement, we expect other external factors to influence student resilience scores. All multiple linear regression using binary variables.**

Q03a Is there a significant relationship between reported student socioeconomic status and resilience scores among EA participating students?  
No.

Q03b Is there a significant relationship between reported student family structure and resilience scores among EA participating students?  
No.

Q03c Is there a significant relationship between reported student family (household) size and resilience scores among EA participating students?  
No.

Q03d Is there a significant relationship between reported student years of engagement in EA and resilience scores among EA participating students?  
No.

Q03e Is there a significant relationship between reported student average hours per week of EA engagement and resilience scores among EA participating students?  
No.

Independent Variable	$\beta$	$t$	$df$	$p$
Socioeconomic status				
Constant (Never enough food or money)	120.00			
Rarely enough food or money	20.00	0.87	92	0.384
Sometimes enough food or money	26.76	1.40	92	0.165
Always enough food or money	25.47	1.34	92	0.185
Family structure				
Constant (External head of household)	143.69			
Two-parent household	3.89	0.47	81	0.638
Single parent - mother	-5.91	-0.72	81	0.476
Single parent - father	-4.83	-0.40	81	0.692
Family (household) size				
Constant (2 people in household)	147.00			
3 people in household	-12.63	-0.94	96	0.350
4 people in household	-10.07	-0.92	96	0.361
5 or more people in household	3.49	0.34	96	0.738
Years of engagement in EA				
Constant (6 months or less)	145.05			
6 months to 1 year	5.81	0.73	97	0.464
More than 1 year	-2.61	-0.42	97	0.674
Hours per week engaged in EA				
Constant (1 to 2 hours)	145.73			
3 to 5 hours	4.56	0.82	93	0.414
More than 5 hours	-10.43	-1.20	93	0.234

## **Appendix E: Biography**



### **Dr. Salisha Allard-Blaisdell, Ph.D., MPA, MA, BA**

Salisha is a native of the Eastern Caribbean Island of Grenada. In 2012, she obtained a Bachelor degree in English from Brigham Young University-Hawaii. During her academic endeavors there, Salisha served as a crucial team leader of the Student Government Association. Her years as the Executive Director, then later as the Vice President of the Service Department, sparked her interest in administrative leadership and organizational development. Consequently, Salisha obtained a Master of Public Administration from the #1 internationally accredited MPA Program offered by Rutgers University in 2016. After half a decade in the non-profit and public sector, Salisha launched into leadership effectiveness and earned a Master of Applied Leadership Theory in 2021 and a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership in 2022, both from Northwest University.

Salisha was born into a multi-generational cycle of poverty and did not learn to read until age 12. Thus, she prides on becoming the first Black woman to defend a Ph.D. at Northwest University. She is proud to complete her doctoral studies in three years and become Dr. Salisha Allard-Blaisdell at age 32. Personally, and professionally, Salisha is best known for her selflessness towards enabling others to thrive, strong work ethic in accomplishing her goals, and sheer sense of responsibility that allows her to navigate obstacles.

Salisha has vast experience working with diverse communities, various service agencies, higher education institutions, and non-profits to plan service days, significant events, and cultural awareness and DEI activities. As a scholar-practitioner, her research and practice focus on empowering youth, women, and families living within under-resourced communities. She is also a global thought leader advocating for women's advancement in leadership roles.

Salisha currently serves as the Development Director for GK Folks Foundation. GK Folks Foundation is a Utah-based nonprofit organization committed to supporting the Black community with educational, entrepreneurial and mental health-health resources. In addition, she is working with her father, Ken Blaisdell to register her non-profit organization that specializes youth development and international charitable donations. This is an important step in supporting Salisha's goals of assisting current orphanages in Grenada and establishing her own orphanage on the island in near future.

On a personal note, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, long-boarding, bike riding, and everything tropical. Salisha especially loves keeping up with her precious nine-year-old daughter, Kaelyn.

LinkedIn Profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/salisha-allard-blaisdell-phd-mpa-a194b87a/>

GK Folks Foundation: <https://www.gkfolksfoundation.org/meet-the-team.html>

## **Appendix F: Curriculum Vitae**

# SALISHA T. S. ALLARD-BLAISDELL

Kirkland, WA 98033  
 (951) 317-5195  
[salishaablaisdell@gmail.com](mailto:salishaablaisdell@gmail.com)

## EDUCATION

- 2022            **Ph.D. (Organizational Leadership)**, Northwest University
- Dissertation: Caribbean youth and resilience: Exploring levels of engagement in extracurricular activities, leadership traits and their effects on the resilience of Grenadian youth.
- 2021            **Master of Arts in Applied Leadership Theory (MAALT)**, Northwest University, Center for Leadership Studies
- 2016            **Master of Public Administration (MPA)**, Rutgers University-Newark, School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA)
- 2012            **Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) English**, Brigham Young University- Hawaii

## CURRENT RESEARCH

Dissertation: Caribbean youth and resilience: Exploring levels of engagement in extracurricular activities, leadership traits and their effects on the resilience of Grenadian youth.

This study analyzes the influence leaders of extracurricular activities have on the resilience of secondary grade students. Research has documented the compensatory and protective functions of extracurricular activities. Taken as a whole, these studies suggest that youth living within socioeconomically disadvantaged communities benefit from participating in extracurricular activities. This study contributes to the literature by exploring levels of engagement in extracurricular activities and leadership traits' interactions to explain students' resilience. The sample of this quantitative correlational study is unique: 150 Grenadian youth, ages 13 to 16 who completed the Grenadian Youth Engagement and Leadership Trait questionnaire, Student Resilience Survey, and the Grenadian Youth and Resilience Study Demographic questionnaire collecting sociodemographic data. Employing a cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression with proportional odds, I find a statistically non-significant effect of levels of engagement on students' resilience. However, I also find a statistically significant effect of leadership traits observation on the overall resilience of school-aged youth. These results support the hypothesis that an influential leader in extracurricular activities functions as a protective mechanism for positive youth development. This study makes two novel contributions: first it correlates separately collected data on the trait theory of leadership and student resilience. Second, it provides invaluable information about an understudied population

that is difficult to access: school-aged Grenadian youth. Study conclusions support the significance of particular leadership traits impacting student resilience and the integration of extracurricular activities within schools and communities.

## **EDUCUCATIONAL/TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

- 2022            **Doctoral Research Teaching Assistant**, Center for Leadership Studies  
Northwest University. Research Teaching Assistant to Donald Conant, Ph.D.
- 2021            **Doctoral Teaching Assistant**, Center for Leadership Studies,  
Northwest University. Teaching Assistant to Donald Conant, Ph.D.
- 2020-Present **Dissertation Warriors Peer Mentoring Group Co-Founder**, Center for  
Leadership Studies Northwest University
- 2008-2011    **New Student Learning Committee Mentor and Teaching Assistant**, English  
Department, Brigham Young University-Hawaii

## **RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE**

- 2018-2019    **Coordinator and Assistant to the Chief Diversity Officer**, President's Office  
Salt Lake Community College
- 2017-2018    **Multicultural Programming and Special Projects Coordinator**, Office for  
Diversity and Multicultural Affairs; Salt Lake Community College
- 2015-2016    **Graduate Assistant Coordinator of Special Events and Programs**,  
Chancellor's Office, Rutgers University-Newark
- 2009-2011    **Coordinator; Vice President of Service**, Student Association  
Brigham Young University-Hawaii (Coordinator 2009; Service VP 2010-2011)

## **ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL AND SERVICE EXPERIENCE**

- 2020-2022    **Center for Leadership Studies (CFLS) Ambassador**, Center for Leadership  
Studies Northwest University
- 2022            **Volunteer Research Assistant, University of the West Indies**  
Assistant to Dr. Cheryl Barnabe-Bishop
- 2021            **Foodbank Assistant**, Food Services  
Hopelink
- 2016- Present **Development Director**, Leadership Committee  
GK Folks Foundation

## ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AND PRESENTATIONS

Allard-Blaisdell, S. T. S. (2022, April). Leadership for Change Guest Lecturer. Utah Valley University, Higher Education Leadership (Education Graduate Program). Orem, UT

Allard-Blaisdell, S. T. S. (2022, June). Leadership Across Cultures and Context - The Social Construction of Leadership and Black Women: Navigating Minoritized Challenges. Paper to be presented at the International Leadership Association 6th Annual Women and Leadership Conference, Portsmouth, United Kingdom

Abanwka, G.; Allard-Blaisdell, S. T. S., Byng, D. D., Mensah, G., Vloe, P. (2022, June). Mentorship Models for Girls and Young Women - Black Women Empowering Black Girls: Cultured Insights from 21st Century Trailblazers. Presentation at the International Leadership Association 6th Annual Women and Leadership Conference, Portsmouth, United Kingdom (invited)

Burges, G., Allard-Blaisdell, S. T. S., et al. (2022, June). Standing on the Shoulders of Giants. Stories of Wise Women in Leadership. Presentation at the inaugural Center for Leadership Studies Inspire Leadership Series, Northwest University, Kirkland, WA (invited)

Elwin, P. B., Lynn, D. A., Allard-Blaisdell, S.T.S., (2021, October). Compassionate and Transformational Warriors: Traits of Successful Women Leaders Mitigating Global Crisis. Presentation at the International Leadership Association Global Conference, Geneva, Switzerland (invited)

Elwin, P. B., Allard-Blaisdell, S.T.S., Lynn, D. A., (2021, May). An Intersection of Transformational Leadership and Discursive Leadership with Mindfulness Practice. Presentation at the International Leadership Association Inaugural Healthcare and Leadership Conference, online (invited)

Allard-Blaisdell, S. T. S., Lynn D. A. (2020, November). Dynamics of Mindful and Flawless Women Leadership in Social Change. Presentation at the International leadership Association Global Conference, San Francisco, CA (invited)

Allard-Blaisdell, S. T. S., et al. (November, 2015). NASPAA Student Simulation Competition, Reforming the U. S. Health Care System Within a Simulated Environment, Albany, NY

Allard-Blaisdell, S. T. S. (2011, April). A Survival Story: A Peak into My Childhood. Paper presented at the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual National Undergraduate Literature Conference, Weber State University, Utah, 2011

Allard-Blaisdell S. T. S. (2019, February). You Can Succeed. Guest Speaker at Salt Lake Community College Annual African/African American High School Day Conference, Salt Lake City, UT

## NON-ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

2019	SLCC Literature Journal – Folio, Salt Lake City, Utah
2018	SLCC Literature Journal – Folio, Salt Lake City, Utah
2010	BYUH-Literature Journal – Kula Manu Laie, Hawaii
2009	BYUH-Literature Journal – Kula Manu Laie, Hawaii

## SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS AT-A-GLANCE

**Peer Mentor** with 2+ years of experience teaching, coaching, and supporting doctoral students with organizational leadership courses and dissertation writing at Northwest University.

**Branding and Development Consultant** responsible for content writing, grant writing, program development, and teaching organizational leadership best practices in Utah and Washington.

**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Change Agent** with 6+ years of experience serving as an ally for historically underrepresented groups by developing programs, coordinating events and activities, promoting awareness and cultivating affirming spaces.

**Conflict Management Co-Active Coach** with strategic leadership experience working for a Washington-based public school district developing crucial conversation plans, conflict resolutions and restorative initiatives to address 10-year-old conflict.

**Mentor and Coach** with 8+ years supporting undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students pursuing academic degrees and career goals.

**Transformative Servant Leader** committed to serve and lead authentically with compassion, collaboration and integrity.

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

International Leadership Association, since 2020  
Pacific Northwest Organization Development Network, since 2021

## AWARDED INTERESTS

President's Leadership Institute, Salt Lake Community College, 2019  
Navigators (Leadership) Academy, Salt Lake City, 2019  
GK Foundation 8-year Volunteer Award, 2020  
Volunteer Recognition Certificate, State of Utah Office of the Lieutenant Governor, 2020  
#1 Blood Bank Coordinator, Blood Bank of Hawaii, 2010

## REFERENCES

Provided upon request.

## **Appendix G: Personal Reflections**

As a researcher, I recognize that I bring personal assumptions and biases to the research process. However, one of the strengths of quantitative studies is that it reduces the researcher's influence over the data collection and analysis. Quantitative studies typically rely on closed-ended and validated survey instruments for data collection, leaving less room for misinterpretation of the data.

As I reflect on the research process, particularly the data collection phase, I realize that our assumptions and biases can cloud our understanding to the extent that we can fail to prepare for certain inherent obstacles. For example, I was born and raised in Grenada, the population from which I drew the sample for the current study. Although I grew up within a highly under-resourced community, I have had the opportunity to relocate to the United States to pursue my tertiary education. To date, I have spent half my age living in the United States, learning the culture while still holding on to the fundamental values of my Grenadian pride and traditions.

My research in Grenada was of utmost importance to me. It was a dream come through. However, despite my initial goal to conduct my study in person, that decision quickly changed when Grenada experienced a major COVID-19 outbreak in August 2021, shutting down the country, delaying school reopening, and shifting schools to remote learning from November 2021 until Spring 2022. During the period of writing and defending my research proposal, I had to decide how the data would be collected, and since schools were still entirely remote, I thought it was safest to switch to a fully online study. I had considered the option of a hybrid study. Still, the uncertainty of whether the students would be physically in school or learning remotely at home solidified my decision to conduct a fully online study.

While an online study seemed more practical and feasible for collecting my data, I failed to acknowledge the breadth of challenges I would encounter regarding obtaining parental

consent. Because my sample is Grenadian youth between 13 and 16, my study required parental consent before soliciting student assent. Everything worked out well but as I bring this portion of journey to a close, I decided to write this reflection as a reminder to myself going forward. I hope to always remember to keep the characteristics and needs of the research participants at the forefront. I recognize that I have done my due diligence in writing all research materials so that it required only an elementary-age reading proficiency. Nonetheless, I felt very sad that I did not anticipate that several parents wouldn't have access to an electronic device or the internet to respond to my electronic parental consent. The truth is, I am very happy with the number of participants in my study, yet I know that I could have received possibly double the number of participants if parents had fewer barriers.

From this experience, my two key takeaways are:

1. Spend more time researching the population and their needs – while I am Grenadian and still maintain close relations to many family and friends at home, I assumed that because schools had shifted to fully online, every household had access to an electronic device and internet. This was not the case despite efforts made by government officials to support students while they participated in remote learning. Perhaps if I had engaged in more discussions, I would have learned about this electronic divide and planned for it accordingly. Although the Covid-19 pandemic made everything much more difficult, I would have felt happier knowing as opposed to assuming the characteristics of my participants' families. I kept feeling that I should have remembered. You see, when I was 15 years old, growing up in Grenada, we did not have internet, a computer or a smart phone in the house. Instead, we had a small cell phone that had many functional

restrictions. Moreover, my father who was in his seventies at the time, would have needed additional support to understand the contents of the parental consent.

2. If conducting a studying involving under-age youth, spend more time getting to know their parents – while it may be impossible to build rapport with every parent, as a researcher it was important for me to become more informed about the parents of the youth population that I sampled. Although I wrote all the research materials using an elementary comprehension level, many parents would have had difficulties understanding the materials. Some parents may have had problems seeing the words on the paper, while others may have experienced difficulties with comprehension. If I had to do my study over again, I would have made every effort to engage in dialogue with the parents, speaking their language and allowing them to ask me questions directly. Looking back, I realized that many parents may have declined for their child/children to participate in the study due to numerous barriers. For instance, although I provided contact names, phone numbers, and email addresses for myself and others, parents who did not have access to an electronic device could not send emails. In addition, making local and international calls from a cell phone is very costly, an expense many under-resourced families cannot afford. Moreover, although our native language is English, we all speak Grenadian creole daily. British English is taught at school, and comprehending formal English writing can be challenging for parents who may have received minimal formal education. As I reminisce on this life-changing journey, I can honestly say that I have learned that it is of utmost importance to meet research participants (in this case, parents and the children) on their own turfs – where they are at and not where you think they are. Knowledge is power.

3. Exercising self-compassion – the research process, from start to finish is rigorous and daunting. At times, it felt like no matter how hard I tried, my efforts were not good enough. In the doctoral journey, there are a lot of hard days and some really good days. On the hard days, it can feel almost impossible to get out of the darkness to find the light. I recall feeling extremely devastated when I realized that several parents cannot provide consent because they could not access the parental consent or that were unable to contact me and other pertinent individuals who may have been able to aid them with making an informed decision. Also, I was heartbroken when data analysis took me much longer than I anticipated. But self-compassion is what I learned was the way to go when it comes to dealing with hard days. Finding the courage to recognize and appreciate your efforts, to forgive yourself when you fall short, and to seek acceptance of the notion that tomorrow can be a better day were important reminders that kept me going. Moreover, I found a lot of comfort and support from NU's Dissertation Warriors group. Listening to their stories and experiences helped me to understand that I was not the only one struggling. Throughout my journey, the Dissertation Warriors taught me different approaches to navigate my challenges. They kept me accountable, cheered me on, and offered their shoulders for me to cry on. But most importantly, these dynamic women taught me the power of a peer support system.

I am very thankful to the government officials, principals, teachers, parents, and students who served me throughout my field research. Thank you all so very much, and know that I will forever be grateful for your assistance. Overall, I am thankful for the lessons I have learned, my incredible support system, and the progress I have made towards achieving my life's mission.