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EVALUATING A FRAMEWORK FOR STARTING A K-12 PRIVATE SCHOOL:  
VARYING MODALITIES OF APPLYING THE FRAMEWORK

A Scholarly Research Project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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## ABSTRACT

The topic I choose for my dissertation is, Examining a Framework for Starting a K-12 Private School; Varying Modalities of Applying the Framework. Starting a private school requires a great deal of critical-thinking, knowledge-seeking, and decision making. There are numerous factors to consider before starting a private school, which I have organized into sections within a framework that I have previously created based on my experience in the industry. The sections, or phases as I refer to them in the framework (also referred to as a blueprint), are listed as, 1) Pre-planning, 2) Conception, 3) Development, 4) Implementation, 5) Establishment, 6) Launch. Within these six phases are additional sections, which include a timeline for the K-12 private school project.

All of these sections must be taken earnestly because they represent the overall policies, culture and expectations as a collaboration of the school, students, parents, and society. This paper intends to explore sources that give insight on how to start a K-12 private school and what components are necessary to successfully launch a school. Sources for this topic were challenging to locate as there is scarce literature on the topic. Therefore, I broadened my research to include individual research topics for specific sections of my framework. By expanding the scope, I was able to find additional sources to help support my research.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family and many friends who continuously encouraged me to keep going. A special gratitude to my two children, Ashton and Kyle Blatz, whose constant support and words of encouragement kept me on the path. To our sweet dog Maverick, who left us at the completion of this dissertation.

I dedicate this work and give special applaud to all the school founders who labor tirelessly to create schools that support the children of our future.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

In the United States, there is a lack of current resources available to founders who wish to create K-12 (kindergarten through high school) private schools. The private school industry is a vital component of the education system with over five million students attending private schools each year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017), yet there is limited information available to assist with the process of founding a K-12 private school. Starting a new school involves challenges such as managing a budget, facilities acquisition, instructional design, and the hiring of staff (Cannata et al., 2014). The amount of effort required to construct a K-12 private school is immense, and the inability to locate effective assistance or materials of any kind creates a process that offers an added challenge.

Selected materials exist for schools in the public sector, as well as for nonprofit organizations, which can be adaptable to the private school industry. However, there are no studies or published materials available to strategically and specifically support the process of starting a K-12 private school. This chapter introduces the study's research problem, purpose, and questions before briefly reviewing relevant studies and theoretical underpinnings related to the study's purpose. The chapter goes on to describe the significance of the study and outline the assumptions, limitations and delimitations, and definitions used to guide the study. The chapter closes with a description of the structure of this research report.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Even with the increase in the number of students that attend private schools (NCES, 2017), there are currently limited relevant resources obtainable for starting K-12 private schools. According to the NCES, approximately 5.7 million students were enrolled in private elementary and secondary schools in 2017. Furthermore, as stated by the Council for American Private

Education (CAPE), private schools accounted for 25% of the nation's schools during the 2015-2016 school year and enrolled 10% of all PK-12 (prekindergarten through high school) students during the 2013-2014 school year. The latest data collected by Educationdata.org demonstrated that approximately 5.8 million students were enrolled in private schools in 2019. Furthermore, according to data collected from the United States Census Bureau, enrollment in K-12 private schools was at 4.4 million in 2018 and is expected to rise over the next ten years. Likewise, according to *IBISWorld* (June 2020), a company that provides trusted industry research on thousands of industries worldwide, revenue in the private school industry is estimated to increase at an annualized rate of 2.1% to approximately \$87.7 billion into 2020, with an anticipated growth of 1.2% in 2020 alone. The private school industry is stable and continues to grow, yet the information available to build or improve upon a private school business is negligible.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the perceived usefulness of a framework for starting a K-12 private school in terms of perceived effectiveness and modalities used. The study was guided by four research questions:

**RQ1:** What are user perceptions of the framework of starting a K-12 private school?

**RQ2:** Which modality is best for applying the framework of starting a K-12 private school, based on the perceptions of users of each modality?

**RQ3:** Of the two modalities, what motivates a subject to choose one over another?

**RQ4:** How do the two modalities differ? How are they similar?

### **Relevant Studies and Theoretical Underpinnings**

Starting public schools and nonprofit organizations has been studied for decades. However, there is little research on the startup of charter schools as public schools started in the

private sector. There are numerous published studies on how to start a public charter school and how to start a nonprofit organization (i.e., Cannata et al., 2014; Grobman, 2002; Hummel, 1996). Additionally, there are many studies that relate to school management (i.e., Rowe et al., 2012; Squire et al., 2015). However, there are few relevant and current studies that exclusively address the issue of starting a K-12 private school.

Despite the lack of materials specific to starting K-12 private schools, a few theories are mentioned with regards to starting charter schools and nonprofit organizations. According to Cannata et al. (2014), starting a new school encompasses various challenges, including budget management, acquiring suitable facilities, hiring teachers, and designing an instructional program. These concepts of budget management, hiring teachers, and designing instructional programs can be relatable and applicable to private schools.

### **Framework**

The theoretical framework used in this study is based on the work of Hummel (1996) and Grobman (2002). Grobman (2002) presented theories concerning current laws, regulations, and court decisions, which apply to nonprofit organizations, including knowledge on how to write useful grant applications and human resources information for nonprofits. These concepts may or may not be adaptable to private schools as their usefulness depends on whether the school incorporates as a for profit or nonprofit school. In an earlier text, Hummel (1996) described theories for developing nonprofit organizations step by step, which include typical evaluations for creating or operating new nonprofits encompassing incorporation, the establishment of a board of directors, obtaining exempt status, creating a tactical plan, and grant seeking. By understanding what the essential steps are required to start a school, such as practical advice on running a school, grant-writing, communications, fundraising, quality management, insurance,

marketing, personnel, fiscal management, and more, stakeholders can effectively use this information to accurately start a school (Grobman, 2002).

### **Significance of the Study**

The results of the study enhanced the knowledge on constructing a K-12 private school, and the most advantageous delivery method of such information. The expectation is that this study enabled private school founders to create a K-12 private school using a framework that is perceived to be beneficial and valuable in starting a K-12 private school.

Several stakeholder groups may benefit from this study, which enabled them to move forward with either starting a private school or improving upon a current one. Using this study's results, private school founders may leverage the findings to institute a private school program by utilizing the framework provided. This study may also benefit current private schools that are looking to improve on their newly created schools by adding the knowledge from the framework to find gaps within their own school.

### **Assumptions, Delimitations and Limitations, and Definitions**

#### ***Assumptions***

The assumptions of a study are the factors that are assumed to be true by the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). An assumption in this proposed study is that participants will provide honest responses reflective of their views regarding their experiences in the use of the framework. An additional assumption in this research is that participants utilized the framework, either the workbook or consulting services, to start a K-12 private school.

#### ***Delimitations and Limitations***

The delimitations of a study refer to the scope of the study (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study is delimited to four cases of users of the framework for

starting a K-12 private school – two cases with the use of a workbook and two cases with the use of consulting services. The limitations of this study are consistent with those found in qualitative research. The limitations include the use of a small sample size and the fact that the findings of this study are limited to the subjective perspectives and experiences of participants as users of the framework. The transferability of the findings of this study is limited.

### ***Definitions***

Private schools, also known as independent schools, is independent in terms of financing and governance (Cannata et al., 2014). Private schools are privately owned. Public schools, in contrast to private schools, receive public or government funding for operation (Cannata et al., 2014). Public schools are subject to government regulations and standards and must follow guidelines to maintain operation (Cannata et al., 2014). Charter schools within this definition are also public. Over 5 million students attend private schools in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017).

### **Structure of the Report**

This chapter introduced the study's research problem, purpose, and questions before briefly reviewing relevant studies and theoretical underpinnings related to the study's purpose. The chapter described the significance of the study and outlined the assumptions, limitations and delimitations, and definitions used to guide the study, closing with a description of the structure of this research report. Chapter 2 will discuss previous research studies related to starting a K-12 school and discuss the importance of developing a framework dedicated solely to the private school industry. Chapter 3 will be an elaboration of the research design and specific details of how the study was conducted. Chapter 4 will report the study's findings, and chapter 5 will draw conclusions and make recommendations for practice and future research.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Even with the increase in the number of students that attend private schools (NCES, 2017), there are currently limited relevant resources obtainable for starting K-12 private schools. The private school industry is stable and continues to grow, yet a gap exists in the existing literature concerning the resources available at present to founders who wish to create K-12 private schools.

The effort required to construct a K-12 private school is significant. Starting a new school involves challenges such as managing a budget, facilities acquisition, instructional design, and the hiring of staff (Cannata et al., 2014). The inability to locate effective assistance or resources of any kind creates an added challenge.

In the present chapter, a review of existing literature is presented, organized by themes found relevant to the current body of literature concerning the development of new schools. The goal of this review was to discover and compare the information available for starting a school. The review of literature confirms the types of information available when starting a K-12 private school. After an introduction in which the search strategy used for conducting the review is described, the review discusses key themes identified in the literature, separated into sections. The sections cover the theoretical framework of the study, non-profit organizations, charter schools, school infrastructure and management, curriculum development, and technology and innovation in school programs. The review ends with an identification of the research gap and a summary of the chapter.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

In this literature review, studies are included that are relevant to the development of new schools both in public and private sectors. To identify relevant research, I used multiple research

databases, including Taylor and Francis, Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC), JSTOR, PubMed, and Science Direct. Additionally, when relevant studies were discovered concerning the research phenomenon, their reference lists were searched for possible citations that could be of relevance for the present literature review. To conduct searches across the databases, the following key search terms were used, either alone or in combination: *private schools*, *charter schools*, and *school construction*.

## **Theoretical Underpinnings**

### **Ecological and Institutional Theories**

The theoretical underpinnings of this study incorporate trends in the literature on a school or non-profit organization's initial development phase. One theoretical underpinning involves ecological and institutional theories, showing that a new organization arises out of a response to an environment's needs and is developed in accordance with institutional expectations and norms (Aksom et al., 2020; Lander & Heugens, 2017). The elements out of which a new organization is developed can be found in its environment, and starting a new organization involves assembling a structure to address those elements (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018). For example, a new K-12 private school may be created in order to accommodate the requirements arising from change in the demographic characteristics of a neighborhood. As part of this developmental process, new organizations must adhere to institutional regulations and follow the examples of established organizations in order to obtain legitimacy, resources, and solvency (Gupta et al., 2020). Thus, a new K-12 private school, although developed to accommodate the requirements arising from change in the demographic characteristics of a neighborhood, would nevertheless have to adhere to the same regulations for private schools as others.

## **Life Cycle Approach**

Another trend in the theoretical literature on starting new organizations follows a life cycle approach, in which the focus is on the process through which organizations emerge (Aksom & Tymchenko, 2020). By focusing on the early stages, the form of later development of an organization is understood (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018). Research in which this framework is considered highlights the connection between implementation of a new school or organization and the planning methods that are utilized in the early stage of starting an organization, the significance of developing identity and discovering an appropriate niche, and the challenges that need to be overcome in altering an energetic early phase into stable institutionalization (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018; Bogaert et al., 2014; Lander & Heugens, 2017). For example, with respect to the development of a new K-12 private school, the focus in a life cycle approach would be to understand the development of the school, such as the demographic characteristics of its students and teachers, in connection with its early planning methods, such as its having developed to fulfill a niche created by the changing demographic characteristics of a neighborhood.

The framework developed consists of 6 phases with 6 lessons in each phase: (1) Pre-planning Phase, (2) Conception Phase, (3) Development Phase, (4) Implementation, (5) Establishment, (6) Launch. Table 4.2 details the specific elements of each lesson of each phase. These phases and lessons guide the stakeholder through the process of developing a K-12 private school in any state in the US.

## **Stage Models**

In the life cycle approach focused on organizational development, stage models have also been discussed in the literature. In this regard, Mulford (2004) noted a four-stage model for

starting a new organization, consisting of structural elaboration stage, formalization stage, collectivity stage, and entrepreneurial stage. For example, in the development of a new K-12 private school, the entrepreneurial stage would involve creativity and early innovation for establishing the school, the collectivity stage would involve commitment and cohesion among all the employees at the school, the formalization stage may involve establishing institutions, and the structural elaboration stage may involve decentralization and expansion. Mulford (2004) conducted a study in the context of a new college and found support for the model. It can be noted that researchers such as Mulford (2004) do not distinguish between new organizations that are ordinary and those that are experimental, which some researchers may view as different types.

### **Ordinary Versus Experimental Organizations**

In organizational development models where there is a distinction between ordinary and experimental organizations, an ordinary organization is seen as reproducing established models, while experimental organizations are seen as a new kind of organization (Aksom et al., 2020). The ordinary organizations are described as those that are founded in a population that has an established status and in which there is minimal variation in competences and routines (Lander & Heugens, 2017). An example of an ordinary organization would be a typical private K-12 school. Ordinary organizations do not bring significant incremental knowledge to the space they chart, instead organizing their actions around those practices followed by previous organizations (Aksom & Tymchenko, 2020). On the contrary, experimental organizations are those that are started by individuals with greater variation in their competencies and routines compared to existing organizations (Gupta et al., 2020). An example of an experimental organization would be an innovative school. New organizations that are experimental can be thought of as those

which have developed as mutations of ordinary organizations by identifying and exploiting a particular niche (Bogaert et al., 2014).

### **Functional Theory**

Another theoretical approach towards new organizations comes from functional theory, in which it is argued that all social phenomena have a social function. In this approach, the two types of organizations - ordinary and experimental - are distinguished based on the social function they serve (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018; Aksom et al., 2020). In this paradigm, an ordinary organization satisfies the adaptation needs of a system for attaining resources, while an experimental organization applies latent needs by challenging the values of a system (Gupta et al., 2020). For example, an organization developed with a more formal structure is guided by certain rules and procedures that would lend itself to be a more ordinary organization, while one that arises out of social nature and experimental changes would lean towards an experimental organizational structure.

### **Summary of Theoretical Underpinnings**

In the literature on the development of schools, a number of theoretical approaches are found. These include ecological and institutional theories, which show a organization as a response to an environment's needs (Aksom et al., 2020; Lander & Heugens, 2017), life cycle approach, where the attention is directed towards the process through which organizations emerge (Aksom & Tymchenko, 2020), stage models, which focus on the four stage of new organization's formation: entrepreneurial stage, collectivity stage, formalization stage, and structural elaboration stage (Mulford, 2004), ordinary versus experimental organizations, in which a distinction is made between ordinary and experimental organizations, (Aksom et al.,

2020), and functional theory, where the focus is on the social function of creation of a new organization (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018; Aksom et al., 2020).

### **Practical Considerations**

In the existing literature, there is a general lack of information specific to the establishment of new K-12 private schools; however, some researchers have reported practical considerations concerning the process of developing new schools. For instance, Cannata et al. (2014) noted that establishing a new school involves multidimensional challenges, including budget management, acquiring suitable facilities, hiring teachers, and designing an instructional program. Thus, the practical challenges cover various fields, such as budget management, hiring teachers, and designing instructional programs. The founding of a new school also involves practical issues related to laws, regulations, and court decisions (Grobman, 2002). Grobman further noted the need to understand how to write useful grant applications and human resources information for nonprofits. These considerations may or may not be adaptable to the creation of new K-12 private schools as it depends on if the school incorporates as a for profit or nonprofit school.

Broadly, researchers have discussed the practical process of developing non-profit organizations, which may be applicable to the development non-profit schools. For instance, Hummel (1996) provided instruction for developing nonprofit organizations step by step, including pre-assessment of needs, incorporation, establishing a board of directors, obtaining exempt status, creating a tactical plan, and seeking grant funding and other financial resources.

In addition to synthesizing the theoretical developments from previous literature within the review, the researcher relied on a four-stage theoretical framework for establishing a new school developed by Tubin (2008) for forming the theoretical framework. While studying the

creation phase of two new schools, this researcher conducted interviews with important stakeholders across both schools, reviewed documents, and visited the schools. Based on the data, Tubin identified four stages in the process of establishing new schools: building construction and attaining resources, prioritization of goals, developing staff, and formulating vision. These four stages do not follow a specific sequence for each school, but instead form essential role in the establishment of new schools. Since the research conducted by Tubin was in the context of schools, this framework was found relevant for the present study.

### **A Practical Theoretical Framework**

While some of Hummel's (1996) and Tubin's (2008) steps may be applicable to the development of K-12 private schools depending on the type of school established, these works do not provide a practical theoretical framework specific to the present study's needs. Thus, I combined both theoretical underpinnings and practical considerations from the existing literature with my own knowledge and experiences from 20+ years of creating new K-12 private schools to develop a practical theoretical framework for the present study.

In the framework I developed, depicted in Figure 1, six phases are identified, namely pre-planning, conception, development, implementation, establishment, and launch. In the pre-planning phase, activities undertaken at the earliest stage are included, such as the identification of a niche for the school, discussions regarding its feasibility with local stakeholders, and development of plans regarding curriculum and construction. In the next phases, development of school begins with conception, development, and implementation, and involves regulatory work, construction-related work, and hiring of teachers and other workers. Finally, establishment and the launch of the school as an institution occurs, and includes the development of a work culture,

institutions within the school such as for teachers' development, and integration of technology and innovation in school programs.

**Table 1**

*Private School Development Template (Framework)*



The framework was created to serve as a blueprint for stakeholders to follow and utilize to develop their K-12 private school and includes specific steps on how to develop a K-12 private school.

With the study's practical theoretical framework established, the following sections review the literature related to the creation of new K-12 private schools, including non-profit organizations, charter schools, school infrastructure and management, curriculum development, and technology and innovation in school programs.

### **Non-Profit Organizations**

Most schools choose to be nonprofit organizations. As a result, the processes involved in starting a nonprofit provide an understanding concerning the processes involved in developing a

K-12 private school. In this regard, Grobman (2002) noted the need to familiarize oneself with issues facing modern nonprofit organizations in the US and what is needed to start a nonprofit. In the context of starting a private K-12 school, the challenges faced can provide guidance. In addition to providing precise information concerning the startup of a nonprofit organization and delivering information concerning current laws, regulations, and court decisions which apply to nonprofit organizations, Grobman advised that another element in starting a nonprofit school is familiarizing oneself with existing laws, regulations, and court decisions concerning the process.

### **Grant Applications and Human Resources**

Grobman (2002) also described how to write useful grant applications and human resource information for nonprofits, which form another important element in starting a new school. Moreover, Grobman explained the process of developing of a strategic plan and a program evaluation, which are vital requirements of starting a nonprofit. Grobman's research provides an overall examination of information needed for a nonprofit startup, some of which may be transferred to the creation of K-12 private schools.

### **Financials**

Other insights from the nonprofit context that may be applicable to the creation of K-12 private schools include the need to recognize the importance of earned income. Traditionally, the nonprofit sector has been dependent on voluntarism, philanthropy, and government subsidies (DeVaro et al., 2017; Shi et al., 2020). However, to remain sustainable, it is important that new nonprofit organizations earn income without relying on subsidy and philanthropy only, especially given the unpredictability associated with the latter (Park et al., 2018; Suykens et al., 2018). In addition to sustainability, nonprofits that generate revenue are able to develop self-determination, which is important for the success of a new organization (Thomas & Van Slyke,

2019). New progressive schools are utilizing self-determination by building self-awareness, assertiveness, creativity, and pride, and problem solving and self-advocacy into the school environment. Progressive schools are trending as they are schools with an emphasis on skills like critical thinking and creativity verses their traditional counterparts that value memorization of facts and following of a core curriculum.

### **Sustainability**

Another important element of nonprofit organizations that could be relevant for K-12 private schools is the need to provide services of the highest quality by focusing on fewer initiatives and doing each one well (Pakroo, 2017). Nonprofits that focus on multiple areas may lose focus and fail to provide their clients with the attention they require (Kuan, 2018). In the context of K-12 private schools, new nonprofit schools can succeed by focusing on providing students with an academic environment that fosters learning and reducing initiatives. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, the movement towards a more progressive whole child approach is more in line with a school that provides both academic support and learning while fostering a whole child approach, thus limiting initiatives that do not serve the student population. Likewise, it is important for those who start a new school to develop a realistic attitude. Successful nonprofits recognize the difficulty involved in starting a new venture and the money as well as time it will take to attain their goals (Hopkins, 2017). Many nonprofit organizations do not generate revenues to sustain themselves in the initial years, and under-capitalization becomes a challenge (Freund, 2017).

Recruiting and managing human resources is another important element that is of importance when starting a nonprofit (Cabral et al., 2019). New nonprofit organizations fail when they are not run by individuals who have the skills required to attain the organizational

goals (Buonomo et al., 2020). For a new nonprofit to succeed, it requires competent leadership, which should involve professional managers, entrepreneurs, and innovators (Bharath & Carter Kahl, 2021). While innovators develop new ideas and vision, entrepreneurs are interested in building and turning ideas into reality (Bharath & Carter Kahl, 2021). The role of a professional manager is to provide security for the long-term sustainability of the organization, developing and maintaining the infrastructure required to keep a nonprofit functioning (Bharath & Carter Kahl, 2021). Limited resources in the nonprofit sector may lead many new organizations, such as K-12 private schools, to place individuals into roles that are not suitable to them or to place individuals into multiple roles, which often results in not being able to contribute to the best of their abilities (DeVaro et al., 2017; Thomas & Van Slyke, 2019).

## **Culture**

Another important factor in starting a new nonprofit is the development of a culture that is conducive to the organization's mission (Pakroo, 2017; Park et al., 2018). In the context of K-12 private schools, it is the school's culture within which the students and staff operate. An organizational culture consists of compacts that are implicit, demonstrating the identity of an organization (Jaskyte et al., 2018). While existing staff may not be aware of it, new employees may notice the culture more easily (Kuan, 2018). For example, a school's organizational culture may show an environment with high expectations from students and teachers, a collective sense of responsibility, and lifelong learning commitment among faculty. While existing staff may not be aware of it, new employees may notice the organizational culture more easily (Kuan, 2018). Thus, an organization's culture may determine what kinds of employees it attracts. An organizational culture also involves practices related to management (DeVaro et al., 2017). New nonprofit organizations where risks are taken and difficult choices are made regarding the staff

members have a better chance of succeeding (Cabral et al., 2019). Further, decentralization of control is an important element that encourages faster decision-making across the different levels of an organization (Bharath & Carter Kahl, 2021).

As an example, these cultural elements were examined by Hummel (1996) in a study exploring the opening and running of a charitable organization. Hummel reviewed the processes of establishing new and small nonprofits, discerning about the conversion of an ordinary informal group to exempt status, reorganization of a prevailing agency, or new management of profit. Hummel described step by step the typical evaluations for creating or operating new nonprofits encompassing incorporation, the establishment of a board of directors, obtaining exempt status, creating a tactical plan, and grant seeking.

### **Summary**

While the existing literature regarding nonprofit organizations is effective and valuable to informing the process of developing a K-12 private school, additional research more specific to schools is necessary. For that, the research on the process of starting charter schools can be of value, as they have more similarities to traditional private schools. This is discussed in the next section. This is discussed in the next section.

### **Charter Schools**

Charter schools are usually conceptualized by researchers as public schools that are managed independently through an authorizing agent, which could be a school district or a university (Ahn & McEachin, 2017). The administration of charter schools occurs within a contract or a charter (Bingham, 2017). While charter schools can be described as independent in relation to the boundaries and obligations of the district and state laws in which traditional public schools' function, such as decisions related to hiring and curriculum, this does not prevent

charter schools from obtaining public funding (Kane & Lauricella, 2018). For example, charter schools have permission to enroll students who may be outside their immediate region's school district (Glazer et al., 2018). However, they do not have permission to implement requirements for admission that may be too strict. Further, charter schools have accountability towards state as well as local-level standards concerning the starting and maintaining of charter schools (Gawlik, 2017). For example, charter schools are held to the same measures related to outcome as other public schools regarding the state-level testing requirements.

While the model upon which traditional schools are founded lacks independence with respect to administration, administrative independence is precisely how charter schools are defined (Walters, 2018). In traditional public schools, decisions concerning the allocation of funds and curriculum in the establishment and functioning of a new school are made by the school's administrators within a system of authority and based on an explicit hierarchy, lacking greater community participation (Roch & Sai, 2018). Although multiple advantages characterize such hierarchical systems, including goal setting with respect to outcomes and procedures, certain disadvantages have been identified, including delay and rigidity when making decisions (Buerger & Bifulco, 2019). Such disadvantages are seen as making traditional school systems outdated significantly less innovative in relation to transforming the educational environment (Bingham, 2017).

On the contrary, charter schools do not have rigidity because they enable faster decision-making concerning such elements as allocation of funds and curriculum (Ballou et al., 2017). This enables charter schools to employ administrative procedures that are more in alignment with the dynamic nature of the education sector (Ladd, 2019). Some researchers have noted that flexible administrative decision-making ultimately results in positive outcomes for students

(Ladd, 2019). For the proponents of charter schools, charter schools allow a better option compared to traditional models by promoting better performance among schools and students (Cohodes, 2018).

Cannata et al. (2014), who examined best practices when starting a charter school, summarized findings in three states through interviews with the administration. The researchers also used documents supporting new charter schools with technical training, backing, and resources throughout eleven states. According to Cannata et al., starting a new school encompasses various challenges, including budget management, acquiring suitable facilities, hiring teachers, and designing an instructional program.

In the wider literature on starting charter schools, multiple themes can be identified, including leadership, curriculum, school vision, culture, and infrastructure (Cohodes et al., 2021; Jerome, 2019). With respect to leadership, case studies on the establishment of charter school suggest that for new teachers, instructional leadership determines their behavior, opening space for honest and open communication between leaders and teachers (Cohodes et al., 2021; Jerome, 2019). However, when beginning a new charter school, disagreement regarding budget may strain the relationship between teachers and administrators (Levin, 2012). For instance, when beginning a new charter school, administrators may decide that using funds for certain programs is not prudent (Leonard, 2002). Lack of communication or consensus may prevent teachers from providing their opinions on various programs, which may prevent an understanding of the needs of the teachers regarding the programs that are to be funded (Jerome, 2019).

In reports on the establishment of new charter schools, collegial relationships between leaders and teachers are one of the challenges. When a negative relationship is formed, teachers may choose to resign (Cohodes et al., 2021). This is often the case when teachers' work

requirements are not met; for instance, when teachers do not have sufficient or appropriate learning materials for students (Leonard, 2002). Further, while administrators in charter schools may show concern regarding instructional leadership, they may not follow it up with action (Levin, 2012). For example, administrators more concerned with a new charter school's image may fail to consider more substantial issues related to curriculum and instruction. Additionally, lack of consultation with teachers may increase friction with staff (Cohodes et al., 2021). For instance, when decisions regarding the class size are made by an administrator without consulting teachers, it may result in a lack of enthusiasm among teachers (Leonard, 2002). However, a favorable element for charter schools compared to traditional schools is that new teachers may be motivated by the independence and mission of charter schools, which may make them overlook other issues to some extent (Jerome, 2019).

In the establishment of new charter schools, another important element is the role of teachers (Jerome, 2019). As previously noted, the mission of charter schools may motivate teachers in new schools and help overlook some issues, with the hope that such issues would be resolved over time. At new schools, teachers may help recruit and screen new teachers (Levin, 2012). Likewise, teachers at charter schools also take part in the process of selecting students, asking questions to parents regarding the students' requirements (Levin, 2012). In new charter schools, there is a lack of record which may prevent the identification of students with disabilities early on, requiring teachers to collaborate with parents to understand the children's needs (Leonard, 2002). Further, teachers at new charter schools can share ideas regarding how instruction can be improved (Levin, 2012). Teachers in all schools typically have high commitment towards their students and work hard to alter instructions in order to meet the academic and emotional needs of their student (Cohodes et al., 2021). This may be especially

true in charter schools due to their innovative mission. Despite challenges, teachers at charter schools consider charter schools better for students than traditional schools (Jerome, 2019).

For new charter schools, as for new traditional schools, the development of school identity is important (Levin, 2012). Over time, new charter school staff become more cohesive, collaborating with one another in the pursuit of goals they share, namely related to high academic standards (Leonard, 2002). Traditions and events at new charter schools begin to develop and help overcome early difficulties, increasing confidence and collegiality among teachers. Beginning new traditions is often a highlight for teachers in new charter schools (Jerome, 2019).

Some of the major challenges new charter schools face arise from a lack of infrastructure and resources. For instance, a challenge that may arise for new charter schools is delay in readying the school building, which results in the school not opening on time (Cohodes et al., 2021). For some schools, limited funds may require finding temporary accommodations for students in nearby areas (Levin, 2012). Further, if the building for the new school is not ready at the time, it creates difficulties with the provision of certain services, such as lunch for students and the enthusiasm of teachers, which further enhances the difficulty of beginning a new school (Jerome, 2019).

Another challenge specific to charter schools concerns the curricula. At the beginning, new charter schools may lack specific curriculum with regards to core subjects, or the ordered curriculum materials may not arrive on time, which may require teachers to improvise (Levin, 2012). In such cases, some teachers may instead engage students through dialogue (Jerome, 2019). Other teachers may modify existing curricula available. In some new charter schools, teachers may purchase learning materials with their own money (Cohodes et al., 2021). Some

charter schools may fail to order curricula on time or may have to develop their own curricula (Leonard, 2002).

Lack of a cohesive curriculum is also a problem that teachers in new charter schools may experience. As a result of every teacher doing their own thing, teachers may have difficulty developing lesson plans that connect from grade level to grade level or from subject area to subject area (Levin, 2012). For example, new teachers may choose to make learning plans on a daily basis rather than over the course of a long-term unit of study, quarter, or semester (Jerome, 2019). Lack of cohesive curriculum planning may prevent teachers from collaborating with one another, especially collaboration between new and experienced teachers (Cohodes et al., 2021). However, when teachers obtain guidance with respect to lesson planning, have kits available for mathematics and science, and possess textbooks to structure and advance learning as the school year progresses, teacher self-efficacy increases (Jerome, 2019). Overall, the establishment of a new charter school is challenging, but the mission of charter schools may provide motivation to teachers to overlook the difficulties.

## **Summary**

With respect to the creation of charter schools, the literature provides several insights that may be relevant to the creation of K-12 private schools. For example, some of the struggles mentioned by Cannata et al. (2014) in starting a new charter school, such as budget management, acquiring suitable facilities, hiring teachers, and designing an instructional program, may be the same in the context of private K-12 schools. Further, the importance of elements such as leadership, curriculum, school vision, culture, and infrastructure mentioned in the previous literature (Cohodes et al., 2021; Jerome, 2019) may also be the same in the context of private K-12 schools.

### **School Infrastructure and Management**

One of the important processes in starting a new K-12 private school involves infrastructure development and attaining resources (Tubin, 2008). The resources necessary for starting a new school are often obtained during the process (Sun & Chiou, 2019). Resources for starting a new school include furniture, equipment, proper building, learning materials, and funding (Tal & Tubin, 2021).

Because of the exorbitant cost and the impact school infrastructure has on the day-to-day experience in the school, school development, or building, forms a different resource compared to others in the early developmental state of a school. Building serves both symbolic and functional uses (Klein & Shimoni-Hershkoviz, 2016). During the first year a new school is open, building has been found to be an important concern (Yemini, 2017). For public schools, state, local, and federal government serves the role of providing the required resources (Sun & Chiou, 2019). For instance, the municipality determines whether a new school is required, while the stakeholders and educational requirements of the state plays a role in finance, approval, architect assignment, and construction (Tubin, 2008). Once it is determined that a new school is required within a particular city the stakeholders may then work with city or state officials (Chen, 2010). After government approval is obtained, architects with experience in building schools are hired. In the building development process that follows, the role of educational staff is minimal (Wang et al., 2014).

As part of the process of developing a K-12 private school, school management must address school location and infrastructure. According to Pal (2018), infrastructure such as roads and communication systems are vital in the growth and development of a school. As a matter of

fact, in order to appropriately locate a site for the school, one must first consider the public infrastructure and development in the area. Specifically, concrete roads, piped water, electricity, transportation means, and communication networks should be established in the area before setting up a private school. Pal noted the scarcity of private schools in remote areas due to the limited vitality of infrastructures in school setups.

Prioritization of goals is another element important in the establishment of a new K-12 private school (Shaw, 2020; Tubin, 2008). In the goal prioritization process, the goals of the school are ranked. The order in which the different goals are ranked suggests the priority or mission of the new school. Such priorities may involve recognizing the needs of the students, providing for student needs, focusing the school curriculum, developing methods of teaching and materials for learning, choosing evaluation and measurement systems, and establishing the annual calendar and daily schedule for the new school (Klein & Shimoni-Hershkoviz, 2016; Tubin, 2008). By ranking the different goals in a hierarchy, the stakeholders are able to efficiently utilize its resources.

Development of a vision, another element in the establishment of a new school (Yemini, 2017), emerges from the process of goal prioritization. Vision development is a crucial stage in the development of a new K-12 school in which decisions concerning such matters the image a school, the curriculum content, teacher's roles, and arrangements of time and space are made (Chen, 2010). A new school may choose to follow an established visionary path or craft a new pedagogical vision (Tubin, 2008). For ordinary schools (defined earlier in this chapter), the vision revolves around the provision of a good overall education, effective teachers, a sense of community, and a commitment to equality and equity (Shaw, 2020). For schools that have a more experimental vision (also defined earlier in this chapter), academic consultants may be

sought for help developing an innovative vision for the school (Sun & Chiou, 2019). Generally, an ordinary new school's vision reflects the common derivations from the educational system. In more experimental schools, the vision forms the foundation upon which the establishment process is based (Tubin, 2008). For example, an experimental school may involve innovative curriculum, teaching methods, classroom size, and technology.

School management structure is another specific requirement of developing a K-12 private school (Tal & Tubin, 2021). Rowe and Dato-on (2012) provided an introduction regarding how nonprofit organizations are to be managed. In this circumstance, the students have the capability of gaining an understanding of nonprofit management by offering contemporary examples around the world. In it, the researcher described current trends, including social entrepreneurship, advocacy, leadership, earned income strategies, and lobbying.

In the school management process, recruitment is one of the most important elements (Sun & Chiou, 2019). Management plays a key role in the dynamics of K-12 private school recruitment, selection, and retention. During the early stages of development, a new school requires the appointment of a principal, recruitment of teachers, and staff for training teachers specific to the school's mission and goals (Klein & Shimoni-Hershkoviz, 2016). Usually, the principal is chosen first, and helps the supervisory committee in the recruitment of teachers and in the process of providing training to teachers (Shaw, 2020). During this training, the culture and norms of the new school are emphasized in one part, while the subject matter work is the focus in another part (Tubin, 2008).

With respect to school management, Guarino et al. (2016) detailed the dynamics of the management of private schools in the early stages of development. Guarino et al. argued that recruitment, selection, and retention of students, teachers, and staff is an essential aspect of

private school management. Strategies for recruitment, selection, and retention must be considered when starting a new private school because, unlike public schools, the government is not greatly involved in the support of private schools. Guarino et al. revealed information on payment structures, mentorship, and supervision of personnel in the school as important aspects of the recruitment, selection, and retention process.

When recruitment and school management are finalized, the need for a management system, company, or process come into play. Private School Management Organizations (PSMOs) are becoming a popular method to outsource management services in nonprofit organizations and can be quite advantageous to smaller private schools whose administrators have little experience running a school and may not have adequate funding to hire a full-time manager. Squire et al. (2015), in association with Friedman Foundation, concluded that it is “essential to understand the nature of existing networks so we can rate their effectiveness and support them as they grow and as new networks form” (p.23). There is a myriad of private schools today that use PSMO’s as it is more cost effective to outsource these duties versus hiring someone full-time at the school.

### **Summary**

With respect to school infrastructure and management, starting a new K-12 private school involves developing the infrastructure, obtaining resources (Tubin, 2008), prioritization of goals (Shaw, 2020; Tubin, 2008), and the development of a vision (Yemini, 2017). Further, school management structure (Tal & Tubin, 2021) and staff recruitment (Sun & Chiou, 2019) have also been mentioned in the literature as crucial elements in the process of starting a new K-12 private school.

## Curriculum Development

For new schools, which goals are prioritized in curriculum development may depend on regulations and standards for educational purposes that are already established (Yemini, 2017). Additionally, the previous experience of teachers and principals may allow them to begin a new school through a relatively easy process (Chen, 2010). A teacher may be selected for each classroom to take charge. National or state level curriculum may provide solutions for guidance in meeting the needs of different types of students, whether regular, gifted, or special (Tubin, 2008). While some work on homework evaluation may be done at home, teachers may perform the majority of this task within the school itself (Wang et al., 2014). Over time, a school may develop a peculiar culture with the help of the principal and other leaders, highlighting the different elements of school life (Sims, 2005). At the beginning, however, what is prioritized is determined by regulations accompanied with the experiences of the school staff (Eyal, 2008).

Learning materials and equipment serve the standards that exist at state or national levels (Yemini, 2017). They are ordered before a school opens (Tal & Tubin, 2021). The design of the classroom affects arrangements related to space and time, while the curriculum requirements determine how many computers may be ordered (Tubin, 2008). Further, different subjects are given priority during allotment based on how many hours of teaching may be devoted to them (Sun & Chiou, 2019). The forming of resources may be affected, in addition to state or national standards, by the school staff if they are directed by a pedagogical vision (Tubin, 2008).

K-12 curriculum programs can vary from public schools' programs, music programs, technical programs and other. The establishment of these programs is a helpful tool to review when formulating a plan on how to best develop a private school. In this regard, Polk (2019) conducted a study and applied a qualitative research approach to investigate enterprising

teachers' imaginative reasoning abilities applied during their endeavors to actualize new and creative music training programs inside K-12 schools located in the United States. In particular, the investigation revealed how these trailblazers defeated various obstacles while creating inventive techniques for delivering music education. Organizations tasked with improving the delivery of music instruction may find that an understanding of how entrepreneurs engage with creativity is useful in developing training and allotting resources for those engaged in entrepreneurial endeavors within music education. “Organizations tasked with improving the delivery of music instruction may find an understanding of how entrepreneurs engage with creativity is useful in developing training and allotting resources” is an example from Polk on how the schools and organizations can work together to create first-rate programs.

To gain this insight, Polk (2019) conducted interviews and concentrated on traditional guitar instruction, which was the primary source used to gather information for the study. Teaching methods comprised several steps, which included video and animation creating, as well as text production for subtitles. The data was analyzed using a three-cycle coding process, which then revealed four prominent themes: a prioritization of personal relationships, shared pedagogical values, increasing cultural accountability, and a pro-social agenda. The study concluded with suggestions for research, practice, and reflection.

Teaching methods are an important tool and can be very insightful with the development process. Additionally, reviewing frameworks within a classroom setting can be very perceptive. An et al. (2020) discussed designing actual teaching growth for K-12 classrooms. The researchers indicated that classroom education is a complicated job where tutors should frequently invent and always seek the most elegant fit amidst the actions of their scholars. In making their study credible, the researchers designed a Teaching Augmentation (TA) framework

by analyzing the TA system design's diverse range. The research analysis spanned multiple literature bodies which introduced novel teaching. The researchers presented the TA framework comprising five dimensions revealing a vibrant model for TA systems.

According to An et al. (2020), the TA framework offers a full framing of the teaching framework for facilitating design and analysis of various system ranges, developed across multiple researching communities. The developed TA was aimed at encouraging researchers and designers in a comprehensive exploration for teaching augmentation systems. Hence, An et al. had a more significant impact due to supporting designers in merging perceptions from prevailing TA designs that have developed across diverse fields. Teaching frameworks are important to distinguish the quality of a program.

With respect to quality, Epstein (1999) discussed pathways for accomplishing quality in a head start program, a public school, as well as private nonprofit initial childhood programs. Epstein examined differences in teacher qualifications, program quality, children development, and in-service training. The researcher examined 109 heads, 110 private nonprofits, and 72 public school nonprofit early childhood classrooms. The researcher noted that teachers in nonprofit programs and the public school had more formal schooling, whereas those in head start often had initial childhood identifications. From the study, the researcher observed that in-service instruction was better at a head start compared to other settings. The researcher also observed alterations in program eminence and child development, which usually favored public schools whereas nonprofit scenarios had little access to diverse material.

### **Technology and Innovation in School Programs**

With the multitude of K-12 programs available, multiple innovative elements have emerged in the past decade, including the role of technology in and outside of the classroom

(Kebritchi et al., 2017; Luburić et al., 2021). The research available within the innovative education realm is plenty, and therefore it was important to provide it its own section. Innovative education can be expressed in various distinctive facets.

With respect to technology in education, Schaffhauser (2015) examined four features to be looked upon in a 21st-century learning management system. According to Schaffhauser, if a sheer voice is a gauge, there is a better period for institute systems adopting a learning management system. The researcher noted that traditional marketplace leaders have brought LMS into advanced education for years leading to an expansion of reaching to supporting K-12. Schaffhauser noted that most public-school districts in the US have not adopted an LMS system. Therefore, there is a ripe market prospect for vendors. The researcher noted that LMS provides course-management basics that are needed for any school moving into the 21st century and offering online capabilities. Therefore, it offers ways for learners to submit assignments and for teachers to run online discussions as well as delivering announcements. With a capable LMS system, a school can then move into the space of virtual education.

A focus in existing literature with regards technology and innovation in school programs has been virtual classes. For instance, DiPetro et al. (2010) presented an investigative study utilizing existing research about best practices within virtual school settings. The existing research, which is rooted in the same content that is utilized in face-to-face teaching, proves that it is not transferable to online teaching, as it fails to use data from the online teachers themselves. DiPetro et al. compared a study of 16 virtual schoolteachers from the Michigan Virtual School (MVS) system, discussing the best practices from the interviews conducted with the MVS teachers. Virtual education can have many challenges, one being creating a community within a

virtual environment. DiPetro et al. arrived at the conclusion that additional research was needed to implement policies and practice that meet the cornerstone of online education and teaching.

In the context of virtual classes, the process of starting a virtual school was discussed by Mittelman (2001). Mittelman noted that the virtual school was established with a number of goals. These including experimenting with the operating of a virtual school by implementing different models and adopting them across a wider scale, examining the ways in which cooperation in the implementation of school would confer benefits for schools, teachers, and students, developing and accessing experimental interactive pedagogical models and techniques that exploit the potential of the internet in order to enhance the traditional processes of learning while also developing new process, developing an economic and organization model for administrating a virtual school, developing norms to ensure quality in virtual school programs for the processes involved in distant learning, expanding the existing knowledge of teachers with the purpose of allowing them to teach and plan virtual courses, and presenting the utilization of internet as well as virtual courses as beneficial complementary or alternative tools for pedagogy within the educational system.

Mittelman (2001) noted that the new virtual school studied intended to develop on the premise that teachers are developers in the provided courses that they taught. The school included 15 teachers trained in virtual courses. The purpose of the training was to help teachers be able to develop virtual courses for students. Overall, six virtual courses were developed by the teachers in a collaborative process. The teachers taught the courses to 30 students with the help of technological tools and pedagogical technique developed at the school. Findings from the study covered various elements in starting a virtual school. The researchers noted that the administration of the school involved organizational framework, technological development, and

pedagogical tools working with the various stakeholders in the project. The task of the administration was to manage the education provided through the virtual courses, ensuring an organization framework similar to that of regular school is maintained. The researchers noted that close coordination between teaching staff and administrative staff and how they formed a team in operating the virtual classrooms.

Working together with the school administrators were coordinators, who helped with the marketing of the virtual courses, student registration, and maintenance of cooperation (Mittelman, 2001). The teaching staff at first included specialist teachers who had extensive experience in teaching who played an important role in realizing and establishing the educational framework. Later, teachers helped develop as well as teach the virtual courses. Teachers obtained comprehensive training in various elements related to virtual classrooms, including teaching on internet, distance teaching, preparing lessons for virtual environment, and assessing in the context of virtual classrooms. For providing training to the teachers, the same environments and tools were used that they would later use to teach students.

An important element of the process of starting the virtual school was the technological environment for learning (Mittelman, 2001). To ensure effective learning was provided on the internet, the information related to communication and activity for all courses was coordinated, which included tools to ensure transmission and development of the courses. It was noted that the tools that were used in this virtual school consisted of those previously developed and utilized, in addition to unique environment developed by the school. A major element in building the infrastructure when starting the school included selecting the technological tools, their improvement, their design, and their integration in the courses. Within the first year of starting the school, the teachers had developed six courses which were provided to the students for Grade

9 and 10. The subjects being taught were selected in order to prepare the students for matriculation exams. Overall, the principals, teachers, and students found the project interesting. The popularity of the new school was evident from the fact that the number of students seeking admission outpaced the capacity to accept them.

Researchers have also studied establishing online courses. For instance, Overstreet (2020) examined strategies for establishing community among apprentices in online courses. According to Overstreet, the building of online courses' relationships might be challenging, especially courses restricted by time constraints. The researcher noted online education in the US has grown consistently and considerably. The researcher also reported that many students depend on online classes, especially those who attend large public universities and in rural areas of the southeastern US. Overstreet indicated that 40% of the state's K-12 scholars live in rural regions which offer teachers in such distant communities to provide online programs. Overstreet provided examples concerning his teaching experience for illuminations of the specifics or effectiveness for each strategy. The researcher noted that the strategy for building a community among learners is being organized, initiating regular communication, and utilizing social networking. Creating a community is an important aspect of an online education, as is the curriculum and monitoring student progress in such a virtual environment.

Researchers have also noted the challenges facing online classrooms. Among these, the most significant concerns the preparedness of teachers as well as the attitudes students have towards online education (Kebritchi et al., 2017; Luburić et al., 2021). It has been noted that, when properly designed and implemented, students can learn in online classrooms as effectively as in regular courses (Tukan, 2020). However, if the students do not view online classroom technology to be useful, their reception of online classroom will not be favorable (Valenti et al.,

2019). Another issue concern geography. Although distance learning enables the transmission of knowledge across vast distances, challenges related to learning systems, norms, and cultural rules must be overcome (Houston, 2018).

Online education programs are negatively affected by teachers' failure to adopt (Arasaratnam-Smith & Northcote, 2017). Teachers may view technology in a negative way, may fail to develop the skills necessary for teaching in online classrooms, or may fail to develop pedagogy meant for online classrooms (Houston, 2018). Additionally, issues remain related to technology and curriculum (Luburić et al., 2021). For the development of effective online classrooms, it is important to plan content development, learning delivery systems, credentialing systems, evaluation systems, and choice of hardware (Tukan, 2020).

With regards curriculum, web-based curriculum design was explored by Goo et al. (2012), who provided a guide for selecting web-established curriculum-based measurement (CBM) for a classroom. The researchers noted that accountability for scholar progress has increased gradually due to implementing curriculum-based analysis for monitoring individual growth and making suitable instructional changes. Goo et al. offered educators a means of collecting data about student growth within curriculum ranges. Similarly, it allows teachers to make normal decisions concerning programs, scholar placement, and current requirements. The CBM power offers teachers a reliable and valid way of determining a scholar's performance rate towards individual specific goals. Therefore, there is comprehensive knowledge concerning the ability to offer a similar platform when developing K-12 virtual programs. However, the technologies are ever changing, and rapidly. Online learning has opened the door to advancement in not only student learning, but how data is received, organized, and analyzed.

The use of technology extends beyond courses transmitted online. For instance, Jovanovic (2020) examined using wearable technologies in K-12 education. Jovanovic conducted a systematic literature review using the PRISMA framework in conjunction with thematic narrative analysis. In this study, Jovanovic reviewed fifty-two articles from 2003-2009, where he used five categories for organizing thematic synthesis of narrative and empirical data from the perspective of students and teachers. The study results showed that wearable devices might be applied in various subjects to improve students and teachers. The researcher noted that wearable technologies aided in monitoring child physical safety, environmental factors, and neurodevelopment. Consequently, they improved the emotional learning experience by targeting academic emotions for better affective-based learning and teaching strategies.

With respect to technology-enabled education, researchers have also examined the programs in which technological devices are provided to students (Kalonde, 2017; Lu et al., 2017). Such programs are frequently conducted with the help of tablets, which are to be used both in home and school (Michael K. et al., 2017). In such environments, teacher post information related to curriculum and courses as well as assignments within websites or applications (Lu et al., 2017). They may also facilitate discussions online and conduct tests online. Findings show that such programs allow students to improve their learning (Johri & Misra, 2017).

Teachers in such programs have found that the use of tablet in the classroom results in an increase in both the participation and motivation of students (Higgins & BuShell, 2017). The use of internet-enabled devices in learning has been found to increase student engagement (Lu et al., 2017). Teachers have reported student improvement in the literacy skills of students as well

(Michael K. et al., 2017). Additionally, teachers have also found the use of such devices useful, such as for preparing lessons (Higgins & BuShell, 2017).

When enabled with internet-enabled devices, learning can lead to improvement in particular subject areas, such as science, mathematics, and English. Such subjects are more favored by technological support due to the presence of apps dedicated to them (Drennan & Moll, 2018). Further, students may also be motivated by the fact that technology allows them to collaborate with their friends (Higgins & BuShell, 2017). Through a device like tablet, students are able to work with each other when editing files (Johri & Misra, 2017). Further, students find the use of technology helpful for the presentation of their work and for taking notes (Drennan & Moll, 2018). Studies show that the use of technology in learning also improves the writing of students due to additional aids (Johri & Misra, 2017; Kalonde, 2017).

In technology-enabled learning environments, teachers may be trained and encouraged to use devices to create a learning that is student-centered (Michael K. et al., 2017). Through such products for knowledge improvement as mind maps, teachers are able to create better courses (Johri & Misra, 2017). Research findings show that skills enhanced by technology in learning may often be ignored in the environment of traditional classroom, such as communication, creativity, and digital literacy (Drennan & Moll, 2018; Kalonde, 2017). Overall, the studies conducted by previous researchers individually and collaboratively were helpful in building the framework for starting a K-12 private school for the current study. In this study, the goal is to utilize previous findings to assist with the reframing of the original framework in an effort to create a more detailed and more cohesive and comprehensive strategy in the application of the K-12 private school framework.

## **Research Gap**

In the existing literature, studies have been conducted in industry and business focused on the initial phase of organization development. However, within education, relatively fewer studies have focused on this period in school development. The studies that have been conducted have lacked a focus on private schools. Research on elements that influence the establishment of a school point to various factors, including the development of a school's identity, the recruitment of a competent principal and teachers, obtaining required resources, and obtaining support and cooperation from staff. An exploration concerning the framework of the specific process of starting a private school has been missing from the literature.

Although the process of starting a public school may be relatively straightforward, this may not be the case with charter and private schools. While researchers have examined the complex process of starting charter schools, similar research is lacking for private K-12 schools. The process of starting a private school represents an important part of entrepreneurship, involving some of the same risks and challenges found in other startups, such as potential of failure. While new private schools are being opened to meet the increasing demand, the process of starting a new private school remains understudied. The examination of the framework developed in this study based on previous literature will thus address a key gap in the existing literature while also expanding the current knowledge on starting new private K-12 schools. Through such an exploration, details concerning specific questions that founders of such schools may have, such as when to begin ordering curriculum, when to appoint a principal, and how to train teachers, can be illuminated. Thus, the findings of this study may also help future founders obtain a better understanding of the process of starting a new private school.

## Chapter Summary

In this literature review, literature on to various themes relevant to starting new schools in the existing literature were discussed. The review began with a discussion of the theoretical framework, in which it was noted that the theoretical framework for the study was based on the four-stage theoretical framework by Tubin (2008) consisting of building construction and attaining resources, prioritization of goals, developing staff, and formulating vision.

Next, the literature on nonprofit organizations was discussed, It was noted that most schools choose to be nonprofit and thus the processes involved in starting a nonprofit would provide an understanding concerning the processes involved in starting a K-12 school.

In the next section, a discussion of starting charter schools was presented. Multiple themes were identified concerning starting a new charter school, including leadership, curriculum, school vision, culture, and infrastructure (Cohodes et al., 2021; Jerome, 2019). It was found that a negative relationship between leaders and teachers is one of the challenges when starting a new charter school, as this may make teachers resign (Cohodes et al., 2021). The role of teachers and the development of school identity (Levin, 2012) were discussed. Challenges related to infrastructure, resources, and curricula were noted (Cohodes et al., 2021; Jerome, 2019; Levin, 2012).

Next, literature on the role of school infrastructure and management in starting a new school was discussed. It was found that one of the important processes in starting a new school involves infrastructure development and attaining resources (Tubin, 2008). With respect to infrastructure, furniture, equipment, proper building, learning materials, and funding (Tal & Tubin, 2021) were noted. Additional elements discussed in the establishment of a new school were the prioritization of goals (Shaw, 2020; Tubin, 2008) and the development of a vision

(Yemini, 2017). Specific requirements related to school management structure were discussed (Tal & Tubin, 2021).

In the next section, curriculum development was discussed, and it was noted that, for new schools, goals are prioritized in curriculum development depending on regulations and standards for educational purposes that are already established (Yemini, 2017). Further, it was noted that K-12 curriculum programs can vary from public schools' programs, music programs, technical programs and other.

Next, the role of technology and innovation in school programs was discussed. Specifically, the rise of virtual schools and online classes were mentioned (DiPetro et al., 2010; Mittelman, 2001). The challenges related to online classes were reviewed, including student lack of interest and teachers' lack of preparation (Kebritchi et al., 2017; Luburić et al., 2021). Finally, the use of internet-enabled devices in learning and their benefits were discussed (Kalonde, 2017; Lu et al., 2017). Noting the gap in the literature, it was found that within the field of education, relatively fewer studies have focused on the initial period in school development. By focusing on the framework developed in this study based on previous literature, this key gap in the existing literature will be addressed while also expanding the current knowledge on starting new private K-12 schools. In the next chapter, the details on the research methodology are discussed.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology for this qualitative multiple case study regarding evaluating a framework for starting a K-12 private school. By collecting multiple sources of evidence, the multiple case study research approach allowed for the exploration of the components required to start a K-12 private school as well as perceptions on the varying modalities used to complete the process. The applicability of the qualitative methodology for this study is discussed in-depth in this chapter. The research plan, including the methodology chosen, participants studied, procedures used, analysis method, and other variables are also discussed within this chapter.

#### **Research Methodology**

##### **Qualitative Research**

Qualitative methodology was used in this study to collect in-depth data from users of a framework for starting a private school. The nature of the study requires the collection of rich data as collected in qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Glesne, 2015). A qualitative approach is more appropriate than the exploration of the relationship between variables that would be facilitated by using a quantitative approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Glesne, 2015; Hatch, 2002).

The qualitative research methodology is appropriate for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Neuman, 2009). As outlined in Creswell and Creswell (2018), a quantitative approach is appropriate when a researcher seeks to understand relationships between variables. In contrast, qualitative methodology is utilized when the researcher is interested in

exploring a phenomenon or topic in-depth (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Because the purpose of this study was to explore the perceived usefulness of a framework for starting a K-12 private school in terms of perceived effectiveness and modalities used, a qualitative research methodology was the most applicable choice as the qualitative approach allows the researcher to explore and understand the phenomenon of interest from the perspective of users of each modality as study participants.

### **Action Research**

Action research refers to the use of methodology in which the researcher uses their scientific inquiry to provide practical recommendations that can be implemented (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). In participatory action research, the researcher participates in the implementation of the action, which is informed by their results (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998; Rowell et al., 2017; Sandelowski, 1996). Action research allows the researcher to be involved in change based on the results of their research (Rowell et al., 2017). A disadvantage of the action research approach is that the researcher does not separate their scientific inquiry from their recommendations, which presents the risk of subjectivity (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). The use of participatory action research was appropriate because, as a researcher within the field, I actively participated in the implementation of a framework within the K-12 setting, based on challenges identified within the site of my research.

### **Constructivist Philosophical Approach**

The qualitative case study was performed using a constructivist philosophical approach. The constructivist worldview was selected as it allowed the researcher to develop interpretations from the collected data. The constructivist worldview is based on the idea that research, due to

the subjective influence and worldview of the researcher and participants, will always be biased by the way the researchers and participants create their understanding of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). By utilizing the constructivist approach this study was able to develop interpretations of the experiences and perspectives of study participants from the information provided by the participants.

Because this study was based solely on the participants' experience of a modality of learning selected to be used for starting a K-12 school, it was important to use an approach that functioned within these perimeters. Specifically, participants used different modalities and had their own subjective experiences of the use of the framework for opening their open K-12 private school. The constructivist approach allowed the researcher to deduce conclusions from the data collected from the participants. The data were collected from four cases – two within each modality for using the framework for starting a K-12 private school.

### **Multiple Case Study Research Design**

The study employed a multiple case study research design. In case study research, one or more cases is utilized as a unit of analysis (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). The unit of analysis or case may be at the level of the individual, a site, organization, or community (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014). In this study, schools were used as the unit of analysis comprising a case.

A single case study involves the use of a single case. In contrast, the use of more than one case is a multiple case study. Using a multiple case study research design allowed the researcher to identify patterns within and between cases based on the two modalities chosen by users of the framework.

In case studies, two or more sources of evidence are collected and analyzed (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Data should be collected from two or more sources so that

triangulation across sources and convergence of findings can be explored (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). The sources of evidence researchers use to collect their sources of evidence in case studies include documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2014). In this study, the two sources of evidence will be documents, which will be obtained from open-ended questionnaires (documents) and participant feedback sessions. Data will be collected from each of the four cases across the two modalities.

A total of four cases – two within each modality – was used. As multiple cases were utilized in this proposed study, a multiple case study approach was utilized (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014).

### **Researcher and Research Participants**

#### **The Researcher**

At the time of the study, the researcher had over 25+ years of experience in education and 12 years of experience in developing schools. By the time of the publishing of this study the researcher holds a Doctorate in Education, Master's in Education, and a Bachelor of Science degree in International Business. The researcher also holds a certificate in School Management and Leadership (CSML) from Harvard Business School and a teaching certificate from the state of California. The researcher is the founder of JAG Consulting, a consulting firm providing support to private schools. The researcher's skills include staff training, administrative abilities, business development, and other corporate proficiencies. Since 2006, she has been developing K-12 schools within both the public school and private school sectors.

#### **Researcher Positionality**

No participant had a direct relationship with the researcher that represented a conflict of interest, such as a relationship that may impart bias on the study. However, the researchers' positionality

was that of a participant observer as an insider within this study. A participant observer occurs when a researcher is engaged within the research phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Herr and Anderson (2005) explained that in action research, a researcher falls within a continuum of their positionality as an insider or outsider in relation to the research setting. The researcher played a role as an insider and as such, documented any potential biases within the process of conducting this study.

### **Study Participants**

The participant sample was drawn from a small population of people who had either purchased a workbook from JAG Consulting Services or hired consulting services to develop a K-12 private school from JAG Consulting Services. Participants included education executives, educators, and investors. Participants lived within the United States, and all had experience in the education field. The researcher gained informed consent from all participants.

Participants were recruited through the researcher's existing professional networks and included all people who had a current connection with the researcher's consulting company, JAG Consulting Services. Participants were asked to respond to a brief demographic questionnaire, as shown in [Appendix A](#), via email to help the researcher document the level of diversity in the study. The researcher gave consent by completing the questionnaire, as shown in [Appendix B](#). The sampling pool was extremely narrow due to the limited niche of this theme.

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

### **Modality**

Data was collected from study participants in based on their use of the workbook and/or consulting services from JAG Consulting services.

### ***Workbook/Framework***

The workbook modality is the Private School Blueprint developed by JAG Consulting Services. The workbook is described as a step-by-step guide that provides information for individuals to start their own private school. In addition to the information provided within the workbook, individuals using the workbook are provided with exercises to critically think through how to apply the practices and recommendations from the workbook within their own plan to start their private school. The workbook is provided in combination with online materials for the participant to use to support the process of opening their private school. The framework consists of 6 phases with 6 lessons in each phase: (1) Pre-planning Phase, (2) Conception Phase, (3) Development Phase, (4) Implementation, (5) Establishment, (6) Launch. Table 1 in the previous chapter details the specific elements of each lesson of each phase. This workbook has a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) approach whereas the participant can follow directions with a clear path to the end result of a fully developed K-12 private school. This option is a cost-effective model and can be completed at the leisure of the participant with no well-defined timeline.

### ***Consulting Services***

The specific support provided by JAG Consulting Services includes leadership, operations, and management support. As a modality, JAG Consulting Services provides specific services based on participants' identified needs to support their progress in starting their private school. The use of consulting services may be used alone or in combination with the workbook provided by JAG Consulting Services. The services are provided in six phases: planning, conception, development, implementation, establishment, and launch, to support clients along the continuum of starting their private school. In this process, JAG Consulting Services developed the private school for the client along the phases over a period of approximately three to six months.

## **Open-Ended Questionnaire**

The researcher used an open-ended questionnaire containing 11 questions (see Appendix B), which participants completed following culmination of either the workbook or the consulting services. Open-ended questionnaires allow the respondent to provide a short answer response using text, rather than restricting their response to a predetermined selection (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Neuman, 2009). Moreover, open-ended questionnaires were selected over the use of interviews due to feasibility, particularly in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The use of open-ended questionnaires also ensured consistency in the instruments used to collect data. The open-ended questionnaire method was chosen as it offered an opportunity for participants to submit unrestricted answers in additional detail. Participants were asked to answer each question in their own words. For example, during the process of developing your school, what was the most important section that you felt helped you the most?

Participants were given questionnaires through email only. Both the researcher and the participant were separated. The questionnaires were reviewed by the researcher only and no other individuals were involved. Participants were not part of the writing or editing of the analysis and no participant had access to other participants' questionnaire results. The participants were not given any information about differing perspectives.

## **Data Analysis**

In the analysis of case study data, the purpose is to identify patterns within and between cases (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014). In this study, as open-ended questions were used, the coding of the responses was conducted and iteratively refined to develop themes (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014). Additionally, the data were triangulated within and between the four cases to build support for the identified themes as well as to compare and

contrast the cases. Triangulation can be defined as the use of multiple theories, data sources, methods, or investigators within the study of a single phenomenon. An example of triangulation would include a researcher using two different approaches to explain the same phenomenon, such as the two modalities use in this study to explain the same phenomenon of starting a K-12 private school. In this study, triangulation was used to review the four responses and how the two modalities were similar and/or different and how they impacted the outcome of starting a K-12 private school.

Responses were then categorized into a smaller list of responses which were counted for exploratory descriptive statistical analysis to present alongside the in-depth qualitative findings. Questionnaires were then examined and recorded to systematically discern the questions and answers. Questionnaires were conducted electronically using an online system. No questionnaire was completed without confirming the written consent of the participants. Each participant completed a separate questionnaire.

### ***Triangulation***

To analyze the data, following Yin (2014) and Patton (2002), a case study database, which consisted of the data for all cases, was developed to support the triangulation of the data sources. The purpose of using data triangulation within and between cases helps to corroborate the phenomenon with the support of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2014). Triangulation thereby can be used to overcome issues of construct validity to identify converging findings across the data sources (Yin, 2014). To present the findings and patterns identified from the cases, a case study database will be developed across the multiple sources of evidence following (Yin, 2014). From this case study database and triangulation of the data, the researcher will develop a case report (Yin, 2014). The case report will be a summary of findings from the case

study and a discussion of converging evidence from the multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2014). In presenting this data, and descriptive approach (Yin, 2014), will be used to present the findings from the cases.

### ***Coding***

The coding of the participants' responses to the questionnaires was completed in the order they were received. Each question was added to a database and answers were placed under each question. No participant names were added to the database, only content. The data were coded in the following manner: 1) modality (workbook or consulting), 2) question, 3) participant category (school official, educator, investor).

Coding by modality was essential to get an overview of respective modality feedback. Codes were developed after reading the research data rather than a priori. Once the modality was determined, coding by researcher question became the next component of organizing the codes into themes that answered the research questions. Lastly, it was important to know the demographic of the participant to see if a pattern would emerge based on the participants' background. For example, a question that the researcher explored in identifying patterns was: are all investors choosing consulting services while educators are favoring workbooks?

### ***Theme Development***

After developing initial codes, the researcher grouped the codes into themes based on the identification of common patterns between themes. The researcher grouped the themes based on the modalities in order to provide clarity in the differences in the themes identified across different modalities. After initial grouping of codes, the researcher determined whether the themes were consistent with the data collected across data sources and regrouped the codes, as

needed, to ensure improved fit to the data. The researcher then named the themes to reflect the code groupings and respective patterns.

### ***Research Questions***

The following research questions were explored in this study:

**RQ1:** What are user perceptions of the framework of starting a K-12 private school?

**RQ2:** Which modality is best for applying the framework of starting a K-12 private school, based on the perceptions of users of each modality?

**RQ3:** Of the two modalities, what motivates a subject to choose one over another?

**RQ4:** How do the two modalities differ? How are they similar?

### **Trustworthiness and Ethical Concerns**

#### **Trustworthiness**

The trustworthiness and validity of qualitative research are contingent on what the researcher sees and hears. One way to establish substantiation is to ensure no researcher prejudice. It is important to deduce what the data tells the researcher in an unbiased way. Coding questionnaires and entering them into a database without participant names helped to ensure the content was recorded in an unbiased way. Additionally, as mentioned previously, triangulation of the data across sources of evidence as well as within and between cases was conducted to ensure that there is support for the identified patterns within the data.

#### **Ethical Concerns**

The researcher ensured ethics remained the utmost priority throughout the study. Following the methods outlined in this chapter was vital in ensuring the legitimacy and reliability of the study. The informed consent form signed by each participant is shown in Appendix C. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before they participated in this study. The

letter of Informed Consent follows the US Federal guidelines. Institutional Review Board (IRB) and required site permissions were obtained before conducting this research.

The risks to human subjects associated with this study were negligible. All participants were over the age of 18 years old and did not demonstrate any impaired mental capacity, as determined by their ability to perform in their positions held at their workplace. Additionally, all questionnaires will be destroyed after two years, following final approval by the research committee, minimizing any future risks related to confidentiality.

### **Chapter Summary**

The goal of this chapter was to outline the research method used to answer the research questions. An overview of the procedure, participants, data collection, and questionnaires outlined the specifics of how the research study was conducted and who participated in the study. A constructivist worldview was applied in this qualitative case study. The collection of data from multiple sources of evidence in this qualitative multiple case study was used to explore participants' perspectives and experiences regarding the modalities and framework for developing a K-12 private school. All participants contributed to this study by sharing their experiences with one of the two modalities for the framework. The goal of Chapter 4 is to present and discuss the study results based on the methodology that was used as described in Chapter 3.

## **Chapter 4: Findings**

This chapter presents the findings of this study, which evaluated a Framework of Starting a K-12 Private School; Varying Modalities of Applying the Framework. The findings are presented and discussed in line with the study's four research questions:

**RQ1:** What are user perceptions of the framework of starting a K-12 private school?

**RQ2:** Which modality is best for applying the framework of starting a K-12 private school, based on the perceptions of users of each modality?

**RQ3:** Of the two modalities, what motivates a subject to choose one over another?

**RQ4:** How do the two modalities differ? How are they similar?

This chapter also includes discussion that the analysis conducted was consistent with qualitative multiple case study research analysis and how the analysis ties back to the research questions. Additionally, this chapter includes sample demographics, using tables to complement the summary. The process used to analyze the questionnaires from the 4 individual participants to uncover the relevant themes is described in this chapter. Thematic coding was used to find themes in the questionnaire answers by analyzing the meaning of the words and sentences. These categories or patterns or themes were directly expressed in the text and then themes were derived from them through analysis.

### **Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

Four participants contributed to this study. In order to collect the data needed to answer the research questions, the researcher used two questionnaires. The first questionnaire, Appendix A, was created to collect data with respect to demographic variables. The second questionnaire, Appendix B, was constructed to collect data for answering the research questions. Three of the participants were educators and one participant was a school administrator.

Table 2 shows a summary of the demographic data that was collected from the 4 respondents.

**Table 2**

*Demographic characteristics of the respondents*

<b>State</b>	<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>Professional Background</b>	<b>Modality</b>
<b>Florida</b>	K-12	Educator	Workbook
<b>Texas</b>	K-12	Administrator	Private Consulting
<b>Florida</b>	K-12	Educator	Workbook + private consulting
<b>California</b>	K-12	Educator	Workbook

The researcher was interested in four aspects of the respondents' demographic characteristics. First, the researcher sought to discover the location or state of the school. Two of the respondents' schools were located in Florida, one school was located in Texas, and one school was located in California. Because the study's sample was geographically diverse, there was a likelihood of reducing the amount of bias in the data as well as the study's sampling error. As Etikan (2017) points out, the more diverse a sample is, the more likely it is that the sampling error will be reduced because the experiences of the participants will be diverse. When the sampling error is reduced, the findings organized have an elevated degree of reliability. The findings that have been prepared from a sample that is diversified from Florida, Texas and California can be generalized for the entire US population.

Second, the researcher sought to understand the grade levels offered at each respondent's school. All four schools were expected to offer kindergarten through high school (K-12) levels of education. This characteristic demonstrated the uniformity of the dataset, which is a strength with respect to cohesive data points. Uniformity in a dataset creates what (Etikan, 2017) refers to as consistency.

Third, the researcher was interested in understanding the professional backgrounds of the respondents. In this study, professional background referred to the position or job that each respondent held in their school at the time of the study. Essentially, the researcher wanted to distinguish between respondents who were educators and respondents who were administrators. This distinction allowed the researcher to determine whether there were differences between the views of administrators and educators as far as a framework for building a K-12 school was concerned.

Fourth, the researcher sought to ascertain which developmental modality each respondent's school preferred or found most successful. There were two modalities emphasized in the study. The first was the use of a workbook created by the researcher, which three of the four participants utilized, and the second was the use of one-on-one private consulting provided by the researcher, which was utilized by two of the participants. Note that one participant utilized both the workbook and consulting services as a combination. The researcher specifically aspired to determine the opinions of the respondents with respect to these two modalities. The researcher also wanted to determine what motivated the respondents to choose one modality over another and to understand the perceptions of the respondents on the practical functionality of the two modalities. The researcher identified this parameter as the pivot of the study since all other parameters were used to explain modality. Since all the participants were developing a K-12 private school there was consistency in this area of the study; however, diversity was prevalent in all other areas. Of the participants two were located in Florida, one participant in California and the fourth was located in Texas. Because the study's sample was geographically diverse, there was a likelihood of reducing the amount of bias in the data as well as the study's sampling error. Three of the participants were educators and one was an administrator. All the participants wanted

to develop K-12 private schools. These differences and similarities allowed for a robust balance of comparison and contrast with the findings.

### **Participants' Perceptions of the Framework**

The study's first research question asked, what are user perceptions of the framework of starting a K-12 private school? The first research question sought to establish user perceptions of the framework for starting a K-12 private school. Here, the researcher aspired to evaluate the perceptions of respondents on distinctive aspects of K-12 schools, specifically with respect to the framework of starting these schools. The framework being the blueprint created for participants to follow and utilize to develop their K-12 private school and includes specific steps on how to develop a K-12 private school. As noted in Chapter 3, the framework consists of 6 phases with 6 lessons in each phase: (1) Pre-planning Phase, (2) Conception Phase, (3) Development Phase, (4) Implementation, (5) Establishment, (6) Launch. Please refer to Table 3.1 in Chapter 3 for more detail.

### **Framework Modality**

There were various perceptions communicated by the respondents that revealed how they perceived the process of starting their schools. To begin, some perceptive statements conveyed by respondents concerned the modality of starting and operating these schools. Two out of the four respondents felt that the best modality for starting and managing a school was application of the workbook. One respondent felt that use of consultants was the best modality for developing a school. Another respondent was of the view that combination of the two developmental modalities was the best way to develop a school. From the responses obtained, it can be noted that all four participants wanted to start a school with a successful outcome, and all four respondents were determined to ensure that the modality chosen was effective in accomplishing a successful outcome. However, constraints directly to the framework emerged. Most commonly

noted were budgetary strains, which limited one respondent's ability of modality choice. One respondent explained, "We did not have the manpower to handle this school development project on our own and therefore needed to pay a consulting agency to this for us." Another respondent stated, "Our team wanted to do as much as we could on our own due to budgetary concerns, so this option was perfect for us as we were able to get feedback from the consulting firm as well as do it on our own."

### **Cost Optimization**

From the above quotes, it can be noted that the most appropriate modality for success of a K-12 school was consulting with an expert. One respondent expressed that they did not have the required skills to handle the process of school development, which resulted in hiring the researcher as a consultant instead. From this response, it can be deduced that the perception of the respondent was that the consultant was an expert and therefore a guaranteed path at the school's successful outcome. Another respondent stated that the school chose the workbook modality for school development, not because it was the preeminent choice, but because of budgetary strains that the school was experiencing. The school development team, according to the respondent, wanted to complete as much as they could on their own so they could minimize the cost of developing the school.

Using a consulting agency means that a school will make a larger financial investment into the process and therefore the development costs will be elevated. In a scenario where cost is a constraint, the best approach is to utilize the option that minimizes cost. As Ling (2019) pointed out, cost optimization is an important tool in school development. It is true that costs are associated with returns and success. For instance, if a school employed a consulting agency to coordinate the school development, the likely event is that there will be a more successful

outcome. However, where cost is a constraint, proper resource allocation should be made in order to ensure that financial stability is retained. This is referred to as cost optimization.

### **Overall Satisfaction**

Overall satisfaction is another perceptive issue that can be established from the responses given by respondents. The responses demonstrated that each respondent was satisfied with the modality applied in starting their prospective school. Two of the respondents were extremely satisfied, while two others were satisfied. One of the respondents said, “We felt the way the [workbook] compartmentalized the functions of how to start the school was very helpful. Additionally, we found the resources helpful.” Another respondent stated, “The team at the consulting firm that did most of the work for us. This was key for us.” From the responses, it cannot be quantified which of the two modalities - the workbook or one-on-one private consulting - was the most satisfying as the respondents each has varying reasons for choosing one modality over another. Additionally, all respondents vocalized their satisfaction with their choice of modality. All four respondents used either the workbook or one-on-one consulting or a combination of both and expressed varying levels of satisfaction. It can be concluded that satisfaction was based on other parameters but not specifically on the modality chosen. Studies show that in school development and implementation of the initial stages, developers should select a methodology, or in the case of this study, a modality, that will offer security and satisfaction. For example, McCarthy (2017) explained, “If the developers start the school on a tiring and stressing methodology, the likelihood is that the school will derail in terms of performance and will thus not be able to perform to the expectations of stakeholders” (p. 325). The school is a sensitive institution with many stakeholders and therefore should be handled in a manner that will give them satisfaction.

### **School Development Process**

The last issue that can be derived from the respondents' answers, with respect to perception, is the process of school development. Every respondent offered a different perception on what he or she believed was the most important aspect of school development. One respondent felt that the most important aspect of school development was the timeline of implementation. This respondent felt that the implementation process should be planned for and executed within a specified time. For this respondent, the ability to meet time requirements were the most important aspect. The perception of this respondent is supported by the statement made by Ling (2019) that in the process of school development, a timeline should be set for achieving different milestones. Another respondent felt that team involvement was the most important aspect in the process of school development. The viewpoint here is that every person should be involved in the process in order to provide holistic development of the school. To successfully develop a school institution, there are many individuals involved. Wood (2020) wrote, "The most important thing is that every party should have a role to play, and these roles should be played within a specified time frame" (p. 126-127).

For the respondents who used the workbook modality rather than the consulting services, there was a general sentiment that understanding the workbook was a key aspect in implementation of the school. Comprehension of the workbook means that those involved in the process of implementing the idea of a school can extract information from the guides provided, conceptualize that information within their specific environment, and apply the information to develop the school. McCarthy (2017) stated, "The issue of context is very important in school development because there are many contexts within which schools are developed" (p.127). An impeccable team should look at the environmental aspects of the prospective school and recommend, with clear context, opportunities that will differentiate their school from the others.

Schools are differentiated according to contextual elements like target market, goals, mission, and objectives among others. When implementing the idea of a school, whether using a workbook or a consulting agency, it is important that the implementing team is able to differentiate their situation with others.

As far as research question one is concerned, it can be concluded that the respondents had different viewpoints regarding the framework of K-12 private schools. However, it is also clear that the converging point of these perceptions is that all the respondents wanted to have an implementation procedure that would fit their situation. Of the four emerging themes, all respondents wanted to carry out the school development process in the manner that favored them. Therefore, they chose different approaches and modalities. The first theme focused on the modality chosen by the participant and had a direct tie to background and budget of the stakeholder. The second theme was a leading factor in a participant choosing one modality over another due to cost. The third theme is the dimension of respondent satisfaction of the framework, which all participants were satisfied with, whether very satisfied or satisfied. The fourth theme occurred as a result of the overall process of the framework and the ease with which the participant was able to follow along, comprehend and implement.

### **Perceptions on the Best Modality for Starting K-12 Private School**

The study's second research question asked, which modality is best for applying the framework of starting a K-12 private school, based on the perceptions of users of each modality? In the second research question, the researcher wanted to establish the best modality according to respondents. From the responses obtained, there are several findings relating to the modalities of implementation. The most important conclusion formed was that every modality has its own limitations and benefits considering the situation in which it is being implemented.

**Workbook**

The benefit of a workbook approach is that it offers administrators and other team members a chance to take part in school development (Ling, 2019). From the responses, it can be noted that those who used this approach felt that they were more involved in the process and experienced a more sophisticated understanding of the process. One respondent said, “We felt the way the handbook compartmentalized the functions of how to start the school was very helpful.”

Another benefit of the workbook approach that can be deduced from the responses that were collected in this study was that was a more effective approach; thus, applicable in situations where there are financial restrictions. With a goal of maximizing funds, anything that saves on cost is a fundamental factor. A respondent said, “Budget as we could only afford a handbook vs consulting service.” A key limitation of the workbook approach, as noted from the responses, is that it eliminated the prospective school team ability to ask questions or receive support from an outside expert. When key stakeholders are involved in processes of starting a school without expert guidance it may cause problems with the successful outcome of the school as many of these stakeholders may not be experienced with the process. The only experience that is applied is theoretical reasoning from case studies that are presented in the workbook. This is one reason why some respondents said they would have preferred the consulting method of school development or a combination of the two approaches.

**Private Consulting Services**

From the responses that have been obtained through the questionnaire, two of the respondents preferred the consulting approach because it introduces experience into the process and creates a contextual difference between the planners of the program and the implementers. One respondent said, “I don't know how we would have done this without the support of an

expert.” When this differentiation is created, the conflict of interest that could have otherwise been created is avoided. The process of school development then becomes transparent since the administrators will evaluate the effectiveness of the process carried out by consultants.

As (Karyagin, 2021) argued, “The main benefit of consulting as a strategy for school development is that the process of developing the school will be delegated and thus, there will be no conflict of interest on the side of the administrators” (p. 39). Administrators who take part in school development have the role of developing strategies for the school and performing evaluations to determine whether these strategies are being achieved. In a situation where the same administrators are involved in evaluating the success of these strategies, there can be a conflict of interest because they will be evaluating themselves.

### **Contextual Differences**

There are contextual differences within a school development project that are an important determination when evaluating the most effective modality. Those who used the workbook approach pointed out budgetary issues and involvement in the process as the main factors. They contended that they chose the workbook modality in an effort to control costs and ensure the process of school development was carried out in an efficient manner. The respondents who utilized the consulting services modality were more interested in the success of the implementation process and an expedited school launch timeline. Considering that there were no budgetary constraints for this group, the main consideration was to ensure that school development process was quick and successful. By using a third party in the development process there was coherence in the process and, therefore, an enhanced opportunity for evaluating the process and controlling the implementation to achieve improved findings. From the responses provided in the study, to answer the question of which modality is a better option in the process of school development appeared to be utilizing consulting services. It could also

be argued that a combination approach maybe the most beneficial method. One response that demonstrates these differences, “Our team wanted to do as much as we could on our own due to budgetary concerns, so this option was perfect for us as we were able to get feedback from the consulting firm as well as do it on our own.”

From the above testimony, one can see that consultation services creates room for inclusion of experience and consequently a better chance of success. Using independent consultants creates a technical gap between the formulators of policies and the implementers and hence there is greater opportunity for evaluation. However, using the workbook appears to create added team inclusivity. Stakeholders who took part in the school implementation were involved in the formulation of the process and, accordingly, had an overall improved understanding the of the process. With this understanding, stakeholders gained a more complete understanding of developing and sustaining the school. By understanding what the essential steps are required to start a school, such as practical advice on running a school, grant-writing, communications, fundraising, quality management, insurance, marketing, personnel, fiscal management, and more, stakeholders can effectively use this information to accurately start a school (Grobman, 2002). When comparing the two modalities, it can be noted from the responses that there was a difference and that the use of the consultation services emerged as a more advantageous choice verses the workbook option, financial constraints aside.

### **Motivation for Choice of Modality**

The study’s third research question asked, from the two modalities, what motivates an educator or administrator to choose one over another? In research question 3, the researcher sought to determine the motivation factor in the selection of the modality chosen for starting and operating a K-12 school. The researcher felt it necessary to distinguish if a difference between

educators' and administrators' opinions about the framework for K-12 schools would surface. Differentiation between the two, allows for usable information for the researcher to determine whether differences in opinions emerged and to then explore those differences. From the responses, it can be noted that of the four participants, there were three educators and one administrator. Educators were defined as people who are trained to teach and understand the mechanics of teaching and learning. Because the project was the development of K-12 school, an educator may have an upper hand to that of an administrator as he or she understands the theories as well as practices that will be applied to ensure success of the process. However, an administrator understands the school from a business angle as well as educational theories. Furthermore, some administrators have previously been teachers and therefore also have classroom experience. The role of administrator is developing, implementing, and evaluating school systems and policies. The difference between the educator and the administrator is that the educator has an idea on what is taking place and how the implementation should take place. The administrator works by combining factors of production and playing the role of an entrepreneur.

From the responses provided, it can be noted that all participants who are educators utilized the workbook modality. It can be implied that this is because of financial restrictions and lack of business experience. The administrator, on the other hand, utilized the consulting services. The reason for this is that the administrator had a large team of stakeholders with a larger budget and business plan. From these findings, it can be inferred that one of the motivating factors for selection of modality is background. People with a background in teaching and with budgetary strain are opting for the workbook modality while those with background in administration and with larger budgets are opting for the consultation services.

### **Similarities and Differences of the Two Modalities**

The study's fourth research question asked, how do the two modalities – workbook and consulting services – differ? How are they similar? In research question 4, the goal was to compare the perception of respondents for the two modalities. The two modalities have differences as well as similarities. The key similarity between selection of either modality is the goal that both seek to achieve a private K-12 school. Use of the workbook is a beneficial tool for schools with smaller budgets and those with people who have extensive knowledge in the field of education. By using the workbook, educators and administrators will understand both the theories that are used to generate the process and the procedural practices that will be carried out to ensure that the project is a success. After reviewing the workbook, decision makers are equipped to implement and sustain the school project. As Karyagin (2021) points out, the goal of school development is to come up with the best atmosphere including skills that will create room for imparting knowledge to learners. The workbook introduces the readers to the process and guides its implementation. At the end of the process, those who used the workbook to are prepared to create a successful K-12 private school.

On the other hand, consultation services focus on using experiences that were created in the past by an expert consultant, in this case the researcher, to guide future implementation of school developments. The consulting services also utilize the workbook, but at a much-advanced level. When a stakeholder utilizes consulting services, they are engaging an expert to manage the school development process for them and ensure that the school is development and delivered based on the specified timeline. A stakeholder choosing consultation services as a school development modality opts not to utilize his or her experiences, but in turn use the experiences from a consultant in the field.

**Use of Teams**

An important similarity worth mentioning between the two modalities is use of teams. Both modalities made use of teams as it is important to have a team of stakeholders involved in such a large project. In the workbook methodology, teams of implementers are needed to read the guide and to determine the best process for implementation. In the consultation services methodology, the consultant, as well as the implementing parties, work in conjunction to complete the project.

**Implementation Differences**

A major difference between the two modalities was implementation. The procedure, as well as the timeline for implementation of the two modalities varies. For the workbook modality, the implementation team is required to conduct forums to read, discuss and conceptualize the information provided and to embed them into the school context. This is a lengthy process and requires determination and time complete. For the consultation services modality, the consultants are knowledgeable with the process and have strategic techniques that allow the process to be accelerated and concise. There is no need for the stakeholder to research as they are relying on the experience of the consultants. From what can be perceived from the responses, those who selected to use the workbook methodology were prepared to spend additional time and effort with the development process because of budgetary constraints. Those who used the consultation services had no budgetary constraints and were willing to spend more in order to acquire expert outcomes.

Despite there being constraints with both modalities, all four participants were optimistic that the method that they selected and utilized resulted in a successful outcome.

## Overall Analysis

The data analysis was conducted to provide concrete responses to the research questions as well as to link the findings with existing theories and other empirical research on creating K-12 private schools. In terms of the study's action research methodology, the data analysis and comparison of the findings to relevant research literature, presented here as the study's overall findings, offered insight to the researcher on ways to improve services to clients who are developing private schools.

In the study, it was determined that both educators and administrators have different perceptions regarding the framework of starting K-12 private school. These perceptions are shaped by the framework/modality chosen, cost optimization, overall satisfaction, and school development process. From the researcher's perspective, this was valuable information that offered additional insight into improving both the workbook and the consulting strategies to maximize the overall benefits and outcomes to clients. These strategies will be elaborated as implications for practice in chapter 5.

It was established from the data analysis that the participant with a background in administration had a different perception compared to those with a background in teaching. As far as the modalities of school development are concerned, it was determined that there were participants who preferred using the workbook modality while others preferred using the consulting services option. Additionally, there was data to suggest that a combination of both modalities could be the best approach. Therefore, it can be quantified that the framework of developing a K-12 private school is guided by the objective of the stakeholder while considering the contextual challenges and opportunities. Throughout this findings section, the researcher illustrated that both methods have strengths and limitations. The choice of which method to

implement appears to be contingent on the financial capability of the prospective school to implement, the availability of the required stakeholders for the process of implementation, and the timeline requirements of the project.

### **Budgetary Constraints**

Of the four themes that emerged throughout this study, budgetary constraints were the top of the list. Budgetary limitations were the leading reason why a participant chose the workbook modality over the consulting services option. This theme emerged from the educators of the study, who all had limited resources including budget, team, and stakeholders. The administer of the study was the only participant that did not have a budgetary constraint and had a larger team and stakeholders involved. Additionally, the administer had a very clear business plan with clear goals and a clear vision.

The existing theory of the life cycle approach which focuses on the process through which organizations emerge (Aksom & Tymchenko, 2020). By focusing on the early stages, the form of later development of an organization is understood (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018). This study highlights the connection between implementation of a new school and the planning methods that are utilized in the early stage of starting an organization, the significance of developing identity and discovering an appropriate niche, and the challenges that need to be overcome in altering an energetic early phase into stable institutionalization (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018; Bogaert et al., 2014; Lander & Heugens, 2017). With any organization a suitable budget is required to develop the institution to meet the requirements of the overall vision and goals.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the findings of this study, which was aimed at Evaluating a Framework for Starting a K-12 Private School; Varying Modalities of Applying the Framework. The findings were presented and discussed in line with the study's four research questions and

connected the analysis back to the research questions and demonstrated consistency of the analysis. Chapter 5 will draw conclusions, discuss implications for practice, identify the study's limitations, and make recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the perceived usefulness of a framework for starting a K-12 private school in terms of perceived effectiveness and modalities used. The study was guided by four research questions listed below. This chapter includes a discussion of major findings as related to the literature on starting a K-12 private school. In addition to that, the chapter has areas for further research and limitations of the study and possible solutions to those limitations with a final brief summary.

This chapter contains discussion and future research possibilities to help answer the research questions:

- (R1) What are the perceptions of the framework of starting a K-12 school?
- (R2) Which modality is best for applying the framework of starting a K-12 private school?
- (R3) Of the two modalities, what motivates a participant to choose one over another?
- (R4) How do the two modalities differ/similar?

The data analysis conducted in this study provided concrete responses to the research questions as well as linked the findings with existing theories and other empirical research on creating K-12 private schools. In terms of the study's action research methodology, the data analysis and comparison of the findings to relevant research literature, presented here as the study's overall findings, offered insight to the researcher on ways to improve services to clients who are developing private schools. One of the key findings included the fact that educators and administrators have different perceptions regarding the framework of starting K-12 private school which were shaped by school context, budgetary constraints, and the professional background. It can be quantified that the framework of developing a K-12 private school is

guided by the objective of the stakeholder while considering the contextual challenges and opportunities.

### **Interpretations of the Findings**

After analyzing the study's findings, it is understood that the various stakeholders had different points of view regarding the organizational structure required to launch a K-12 private school. These perceptions were shaped in part by the context in which they were formed, as well as by any relevant constraints and the past experiences of the educators and the administrators. After analyzing the data collected, it was found that participants with a background in teaching had a different perception than participants with a history in administration. It was revealed that two participants liked the modality of using a workbook, one preferred the option of employing advisory services and one favored the combination approach. Concerning the various approaches that can be taken to startup schools, it was discovered that three of the educators' stakeholders supported utilizing the workbook approach, which predominantly resulted because of budgetary constraints.

In addition, there was evidence in the form of data that suggested a combination of the two modalities may be the most beneficial option as it allowed for autonomy of the participant, while offering support from a consulting firm. Furthermore, it was more palatable for participants with budgetary constraints. In conclusion, it is possible to quantify that the objective of the participants drives the framework for constructing a K-12 private school while also addressing the contextual problems and opportunities such as finances and environmental aspects. The researcher established, on several occasions, throughout the data section, that both strategies contain advantageous and disadvantageous characteristics. The decision as to which strategy should be put into action appears to be contingent a few key factors; the financial

capacities of the potential school, the availability of the relevant participants for the process of putting the school development into action, and the timing needs of the project.

After investigating the two modalities it became clear that consultation was the most suitable choice for establishing a K-12 private school for stakeholders with larger budgets and a clear plan on the objectives of starting a school. This option enabled the communication between the consultant and the client; consultation is preferable to the use of a workbook when it comes to establishing a new private K-12 school when the participant wants one-on-one guidance. Moreover, since this contact is two-way, it enabled the sharing of information and thoughts between the two parties, which contributed to developing a more efficient strategy for getting the school off the ground. Furthermore, consulting made it possible to tailor the school development plan to the individual client's requirements, which is not achievable with the workbook modality. Compared to utilizing the workbook modality, employing consultation allows the people involved in the construction of the school to examine all aspects, with each having a role to play (Liang, 2019).

Communication aside, a new K-12 private school should be constructed in a manner that is both realistic and workable. Aspects like the requirements for finances, profit and loss projections and random questions that arise can be resolved effortlessly through consultation, which is not the case with the workbook modality. Because of this, the study's conclusions indicate that consulting is preferable to using a workbook, even though the expected cost are higher than that of using the workbook option. Consequently, consulting will result in a well-functioning and successful educational structure and system.

### **Participant Backgrounds**

Various backgrounds of participants had a distinct effect on the outcomes and results of the study. Since the study participants came from various contexts and backgrounds, it was reasonable to anticipate that their personal experiences would influence their responses. Because opening a K-12 private school involves considerable complexity, it would be beneficial for stakeholders to understand educational theory, educational practices and have some business understanding.

Of the four participants three were educators and one was an administrator. A school administrator is familiar with education theory and understand the institution from a business viewpoint because of their work to create, enforce, and evaluate its processes and policies. Additionally, some administrators have also been teachers in the past and can draw from classroom experience. On the other hand, teachers have a solid understanding of educational theory and practices as they are in the classroom, but typically lack in business savvy. These varying backgrounds determined the modality that the participant chose.

The workbook format was more likely to be selected by participants who were educators than those with administrator experience. However, those with prior administrative experience and a more substantial budget are more inclined to choose the consulting services modality. Furthermore, participants with smaller budgets chose the workbook modality whereas those with larger budgets opted for the consultation modality. Based on this information it can be inferred that educators tended to select the workbook modality while the administrators utilized the services of a consulting firm.

### **Modality Similarities**

After analyzing the study findings, the following is a list of similarities established between the two modalities. First, both the workbook and the consultation modalities are

designed to assist stakeholders in establishing a private kindergarten through the twelfth-grade educational facility. Both modalities provide guidance and tools on how to develop a K-12 private school, what factors to consider, and how to move forward with the process.

Secondly, both modalities emphasize how important it is to have a team to implement the development of a school. The school establishment will eventually serve and ensure that all relevant stakeholders are on board with the overall vision for the school. Developing cohesive teams (educators, administrators, and investors) and accomplishing predetermined objectives were essential in both modalities.

Thirdly, both modalities emphasize the same process for developing a K-12 private school. Whether utilizing the workbook on its own or using consulting services, the process is the same.

### **Modality Differences**

Difference also surfaced during the research. The first difference surfaced with the overall approach or implementation of starting a K-12 private school. The workbook modality offers an approach that is broader in scope and more systematic. It provides a step-by-step guide to developing a K-12 private school which includes identifying your goals and target market, developing a business strategy, and locating the resources you require to get started in the education industry. This workbook approach requires sole implementation of that of the participant. It is more of a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) approach.

In contrast, the consultation service utilizes the same process, but the implementation is less all-encompassing and more flexible as it is fulfilled by the consultation team. The client has the opportunity to speak with an expert about their particular requirements and circumstances and receive specialized advice and guidance for establishing a private school for kindergarten through twelve.

A second difference is the aspect of budgetary concerns. Many founders of private school's work with limited budgets and are essentially developing a school on a shoestring budget. These participants have less choice on options and therefore usually end up choosing the workbook modality. While this modality is less expensive it must be noted that it is still rich in information and offers a step-by-step guide on how to start a K-12 private school. The information in the workbook modality is the same process that the consulting firm utilizes when creating a school for a stakeholder. It was deduced that stakeholders with larger budgets tended to opt for the consultation modality, while those with limited budgets selected the workbook modality.

A third difference was that of time. Time played a role in the study as those participants who had specific timeframes of when they wanted their private school open were more apt to choose consulting services as a modality so that the assurance of the school development completion guaranteed. Whereas those participants who did not have a specific time of completion of their K-12 private school were more apt to choose the workbook modality. It should be noted that participants who were unsure of starting a school in the first place found the workbook modality more appropriate.

### **Consulting Services Skill**

Regarding the consulting services modality, the consultants are well-versed in the process. It is concluded that the consulting firm is equipped with the strategic strategies that make the process achievable. It can be noted that utilizing consulting services makes it possible for the process to be completed in a shorter amount of time. Since the consultants' knowledge will be relied on by the stakeholders, the stakeholder does not need to perform any research. According to the inferences drawn from the responses, the educators who decided to utilize the workbook modality were already prepared to spend more time and effort developing the school.

The above was a result of the constraints that were imposed by the budget. Those who used the consulting services did not have any financial constraints and were willing to pay a higher price to have the outcomes of the work completed by an expert.

### **Research Implications for Practice**

The study's conclusions have significant repercussions, not just for current and future research and theory, but also for practice and policy. The study is crucial as it will add to future research and help anyone interested in founding private K-12 schools. In addition, to improve the standard of education offered by the private schools that are already in operation, it will be essential to have access to the information presented in the study. The information that was gained through the workbook and the consultation might, in general, improve the quality of existing private schools by presenting innovative insights and suggestions for how to manage a school efficiently. The above could be accomplished by providing new perspectives.

In addition, the framework may help ensure that private schools meet all of the operational standards necessary to continue existing, which may lead to an overall improvement in the quality of the schools. It could be inferred that the above could increase the number of students who graduate with a higher level of competence based on the improvements that a school implements. One example of this would be the recommendations offered in the framework on constructing and administering an efficient curriculum, which then private schools could utilize to enhance the quality of the courses they offer. Furthermore, the framework provides guidance on effectively managing finances and adhering to a budget. Private schools can employ this information to create a financial plan that is most beneficial for their school.

Stakeholders interested in personalizing the structure established as a result of this study can use the framework established to implement changes that are most appropriate the schools'

requirements. The implementation of a budget, the location of a facility, the development of an instructional plan, and the hiring of staff are all necessary steps in starting a new school.

Accordingly, the results of this study will guide stakeholders on developing a private K-12 school resulting in a more successful outcome.

The findings of this study have several important implications for practice. First, the study provides a road map for establishing a private institution that provides education from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Practitioners can use this framework to ensure that all the necessary components are in place before launching a new school. This maximizes the likelihood of the school's success. Second, the study's findings highlight how essential it is to engage in continuous dialogue with various stakeholders throughout the planning stage. Participation and consultation are of the utmost importance for stakeholders, as they may have different points of view regarding the most efficient approach to launching a brand-new school.

In summary, the study's findings emphasize how critical it is to devise a strategy that is all-encompassing and meticulously thought out before launching a brand-new educational establishment. The school development plan should not only include a detailed strategy for the school's finances, but it should also clarify the institution's goals and vision. The study also reviewed a considerable amount of prior research, which may prove beneficial in developing public schools, charter schools, and non-profit organizations. The studies reviewed in the literature review apply to the development of new schools, regardless of government or private organizations funding. The framework provides step-by-step guidance for establishing a private kindergarten through twelfth-grade school, including information on selecting a school model, preparing a curriculum, and obtaining funding. Information about selecting an accrediting model

is also provided in this guide for the convenience of anyone who might be interested in starting a K-12 school.

In addition, the developmental modality options include consultation services to people interested in developing a K-12 school but require additional support or prefer to have an expert in the field involved. People interested in starting a K-12 school will find the information presented in this article valuable because it will guide their future endeavors (Hummel, 1996). The article offers guidance on establishing a school and the educational program that should be implemented. The relevant stakeholder will also be able to comprehend the legislation and processes that are related to developing a private school with the assistance of the consultation and the accompanying workbook.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

While the researcher still agrees that qualitative research was the right choice for this study, qualitative research tools are not designed to capture hard facts. More credibility could be given to this study if additional research is completed in the development of private K-12 schools. The results of this research study have shown that there are limitations in the already available body of literature, which researchers could use to their advantage by extrapolating pertinent information from varying similar entities (non-profits, charter schools, public schools). The above finding may have repercussions for study in the future.

Several areas for future research on developing a K-12 private school could add to the findings of this study. As previously mentioned, one of the issues is a lack of comprehensive information on developing private school programs, and it is a significant concern that needs to be addressed. Another gap is the shortage of information regarding the continuously developing private schools that already exist worldwide. Furthermore, information is scarce regarding the

formulation or change of foundational structures for establishing private educational institutions, which contributes to the lack of knowledge. Lastly, future researchers will be able to build upon the framework established because of this investigation and make further adjustments. As a result of additional research, the framework can realize its full potential and provide a higher degree of use.

From a participant perspective, this study lacked contributors due to its small size. It would be helpful to have a larger sample size to obtain additional insight on the framework and varying modalities. Additionally, it would be beneficial to focus more on the financial aspects of starting a school, including information on fundraising and budgeting as the lack of funding was a prominent theme in the study.

There is a knowledge vacuum with regards to developing private schools. Most accessible materials are geared toward public schools and organizations that are not-for-profit. Consequently, this creates a complex environment for those who want to develop new schools. The researcher developed the framework based on the researchers' personal experiences, and this was the motivating factor on the creation of the framework. It is suggested that additional research be conducted on private schools to fill this current void in the future. As a result of this study, several questions have been raised, highlighting the need for additional research and study to the advantage of stakeholders who want to establish a private kindergarten through twelfth-grade school. This study uncovered several holes in existing studies, including but not limited to the following:

1. How functional is this structure for getting a new private kindergarten through twelfth-grade school off the ground?

2. Which essential building blocks produce the best results when establishing a private kindergarten through a twelfth-grade institution?
3. Should any extra components be added to this structure to make it more efficient? Which ones are these?
4. How friendly and intuitive is this framework to use? Is it simple to understand and put into action?
5. How much does it cost to purchase this framework in terms of the consultation fee and the cost of the workbook? Is it a feasible option to open a private kindergarten through twelfth-grade school on a budget?
6. How thoroughly has this framework been researched? Are the modalities backed by research, and do they use evidence to make their decisions?
7. To what extent does this framework cover everything? Does it cover all the necessary stages for beginning a private kindergarten through twelfth-grade school?
8. Is there the possibility of gaining further potential benefits by utilizing this structure and these modalities to launch a private elementary through secondary school?

### **Limitations**

The following list some of the restrictions and setbacks this study has undergone. First, the reliability of the conclusions is directly proportional to the amount of experience each participant had. Educators are only knowledgeable about the school's educational quality in terms of performance, while the administrators have more experience in the financial aspects of the school. Being a private school, administrators have the upper hand as the school is also profit-oriented despite being academic-oriented. As a consequence, the study's findings can only be applied to a limited number of situations (Simon & Goes, 2013). The participants' experiences

and perspectives may differ from those of others, which will limit the study; thus, other people may not be able to apply the finding to their project.

The small number of people in the sample is still another constraint. The sample size was small, and the participants were restricted to teachers and administrators from private kindergarten through grade twelve schools. The total number of participants being four does not give an excellent representation to make an analysis that concerns a more significant population. A qualitative study can be conducted with any sample size; however, a more significant sample would provide incredible feedback. There is no "optimal" sample size. In addition, the research was carried out using a workbook or consultation modality; two methods that might not apply to or are indicative of all private K-12 school beginnings. Because of these constraints, it is possible that the findings of the study do not generalize to all private kindergarten through grade twelve school beginnings. In addition, public schools may also not apply the modalities of the framework.

The study is subject to some limitations typical of qualitative research, which is apparent. One of these restrictions is sampling bias, which happens when the sample is collected. The above situation means that specific individuals are more likely to be included in the research than others (Fisher et al., 2014). It is impossible to take a sample representative of the whole population since there are many obstacles to overcome in logistics, and there are not enough resources available. Suppose the study's design or the method used to collect the data gives preference to gathering data from certain conditions, individuals, or classes. In that case, this can be a significant contributor to sampling bias. Case in point, the researcher, should avoid using judgment sampling, more commonly known as convenience sampling, to reduce the amount of error introduced into the sample. It is also necessary to adopt the appropriate definition of the

population that will be the focus of the study to remove any sampling bias. The suggestion above should be observed to assurance that the sample frames appropriately represent the population that is being targeted.

Another issue connected to qualitative research methodologies is the possibility of self-selection bias. The researcher had difficulties as a result of the fact that the data can only be acquired from those who are willing to take part in the study. The above factor also contributes to sample bias, affecting the overall number of persons participating in the study and the information that was subsequently compiled (Panzeri et al., 2008). The third and final scenario is where the research endeavor has specified aims, and the findings should either address those goals or affirm them. One benefit of conducting research is that it might shed light on the challenges faced by individuals who want to start a K-12 private school. It's feasible that participants in such an investigation would have their attention so narrowly focused on the objectives that they overlook additional important information that could be beneficial (Panzeri et al., 2008).

There is a possibility that some of the data could indirectly influence the primary focus of the investigation. The above challenge can be overcome if the researcher is willing to consider inquiring about a wider variety of subjects associated with the research to gain additional information that might be relevant to the investigation. Constructing a robust testing hypothesis is possible using the data and quantitative data collection methods.

### **Recommendations**

Some recommendations are essential for the research study to mitigate the effects of these restrictions and challenges. One technique for addressing the limitation of subjectivity imposed by the participants' experiences is to review the findings with other peers. It is essential to discover other people's points of view regarding the findings that have been given. The

suggestion will also help identify prospective gaps that need to be filled in at some point in the future. In addition, the conclusions that have been drawn will receive more powerful affirmations from the peer-reviewed studies, which will guarantee that these conclusions are rational and have a strong basis. The researchers should offer a database that allows for an evaluation of the study's applicability to other settings so that it may be determined whether or not the findings can be applied to those settings. Implementing the above suggestion will help ensure that the study's findings can be applied to various contexts and that the information can be transferred (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Consideration of the study's components is another strategy for overcoming the sample size limitation. The above indicates that the sample size is dependent on the underlying causes and is subject to the study currently being carried out. A larger sample size cultivates more accurate and reliable results than that of a smaller sample size. For this study, the researcher would have included a wider variety and number of participants if available. It is also vital to analyze previous research analogous to the study carried out to determine the kind of samples utilized in those studies. The above information will be critical in determining the appropriate size of the sample to use.

The researcher could have proposed using a workbook in conjunction with various consultation strategies to maximize the likelihood of success associated with opening a brand-new private school compared to separating the modalities. With the help of these tools, the researcher would be able to keep all stakeholders informed, adhere to a timeline, and ensure that all necessary actions are completed. When developing at a private school, the workbook modality can be a fantastic resource and provide invaluable direction. Before any choices regarding school development can be created, all stakeholders must have a designated plan of

implementation. Applying consultation services ensures that the workbook is utilized effectively and that all personnel responsible for making vital choices are on the same page. The workbook and consulting made available by the framework can significantly assist in arranging and carrying out the process of developing a K-12 private school.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to evaluate, from the point of view of individuals who have utilized the framework, the perceived value of the framework for establishing a K-12 private school. In addition, one of this research's key goals was to identify the modalities' perceived effectiveness (based on a favorable assessment), which was one of the framework's components (workbook and consultant services). The results of this study suggested that there are four major themes relating to evaluating a framework for starting a K-12 private school and the varying modalities of applying the framework: (a) the background of the participant influenced the modality chosen, (b) budgetary restraints was critical in the modality selected, (c) overall satisfaction of the modality chosen, and (d) the ease of the school development process. For the first, the background of the participant was an essential element of the modality selected. Educators tended to choose a workbook modality while administrators choose the consulting modality. For the second, budget was a key reason of why a participant chose a particular modality. Those with small budgets selected the workbook option and those with larger budgets elected the consulting option. The third theme involved the overall satisfaction of the participant with the modality chosen. The participants had a range from 1 being Very Satisfied and 5 being Not Satisfied. Two of the participants chose 1, Very Satisfied and the two remaining chose 2 Satisfied. The later of the two participants said they did not choose Very Satisfied as they felt they would have benefited with more support. These were

also the two participants that chose the workbook modality with no additional consulting support.

The development of a K-12 private is an immense undertaking and requires dedication and knowledge from the stakeholders. With the lack of materials and resources available to founders of private schools this create a major challenge. The invention of the framework was designed to fill this gap and offer stakeholders a blueprint on which to follow to help them in their journey of starting a private school. Hopefully, in future studies, additional resources and information will be available to those tackling this enormous mission. Until then, the framework is available to assist those who are looking for a framework to follow when establishing a K-12 private school.

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**APPENDICES**  
**APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE 1**

Participants are sent to an online questionnaire to complete before beginning the participation in the study.

<https://forms.gle/6DuqmdDXKUdfu7Fi7>

The questions are as follows:

1. Name
2. Email
3. What state will your school be located?
4. What grade levels will your school offer?
5. What best describes your background?
  - a) Educator
  - b) Investor
  - c) Administrator
  - d) Other
6. What option did you choose to learn how to develop your school?
  - a) Workbook
  - b) Online Course
  - c) Private Consulting

## APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Participants that are chosen for the study will be given the follow questionnaire upon completion of the modality they chose to develop their private school. The questions can be found online <https://forms.gle/cGuWyJZURAsTbQkdA>.

The questions are listed below and were short answer unless otherwise noted.

1. Which option did you uses to develop your private school?
  - a) Workbook
  - b) Online course
  - c) Private consulting services
2. How satisfied were you with your choice?  
1 being Very Satisfied and 5 being Not Satisfied
3. Please tell us why you chose this particular modality of developing a school versus the other options available to you?
4. During the process of developing your school, what was the most important process that you felt helped you the most?
5. What were your key takeaways from this process of creating your private school?
6. Were you able to keep up with the content the way it was presented?
7. How satisfied were you with the following? Rate 1-5, 1 being Very Dissatisfied and 5 being Very Satisfied:
  - a) Layout
  - b) Organization
  - c) Quality of content
  - d) Templates

- e) Downloadable PDF's
  - f) Links to outside resources
  - g) Resources
  - h) Ability to follow along
  - i) Overall quality
8. What would you like to see improved?
9. What section did you find most relevant/helpful? Rate them Not Relevant to Relevant
- a) Phase 1
  - b) Phase 2
  - c) Phase 3
  - d) Phase 4
  - e) Phase 5
  - f) Phase 6
  - g) Private Consulting
10. How satisfied were you with the overall content? Rate 1 being Poor and 5 being Excellent
11. Name (optional)

## **APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR JAG CONSULTING SERVICES**

This informed consent form is for individuals or businesses starting a K-12 private school and who we are inviting to participate in this research study, titled *"Examining a Framework of Starting a K-12 Private School; Varying Modalities of Applying the Framework"*

**Jeannie A. Gudith**  
**JAG Consulting Services**

**This Informed Consent Form has two parts:**

- **Information Sheet (to share information about the study with you)**
- **Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)**

**You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form**

### **Part I: Information Sheet**

#### **Introduction**

My name is Jeannie Gudith, President and CEO of JAG Consulting Services, and I am completing a study as part of my dissertation with Bradley University. I am doing research on the varying modalities of applying a framework to develop a K-12 private school. I am going to give you information and invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research.

This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me if you need more explanation. If you have questions later, you can ask me.

#### **Purpose of the research**

Starting a K-12 private school is a complex undertaking. I want to find ways to make the process more available to the public. I believe that you can help providing important feedback based on your experience with our products. I want to learn how helpful the product was and what improvements need to be made.

#### **Type of Research Intervention**

This research will involve your participation in a questionnaire that will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

#### **Participant Selection**

You are being invited to take part in this research because we feel that your experience as a school developer can contribute much to our understanding and knowledge of how to create better options for school developers.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not.

### **Procedures**

I am asking you to help us learn more about how our products help you create a K-12 private school. I am inviting you to take part in this research project. If you accept, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire.

The questionnaire will be provided by JAG Consulting Services via a link on google docs and collected by Jeannie Gudith.

If you do not wish to answer any of the questions included in the questionnaire, you may skip them and move on to the next question. The information recorded is confidential, your name is not being included on the forms, only a number will identify you, and no one else except Jeannie Gudith will have access to your questionnaire.

### **Duration**

The research takes place once you complete your school (with a 9-month duration). Once you complete one of the modalities for creating your school you will then complete the questionnaire about your experience. The modality options include: 1) Workbook, 2) Online Course, or 3) Private School Consulting Services.

### **Risks**

I am asking you to share your personal experience using one of our products. If, at any time, you feel uncomfortable with a question on the questionnaire, you do not have to answer any question or take part in the discussion/interview/survey if you don't wish to do so, and that is also fine. You do not have to give us any reason for not responding to any question, or for refusing to take part in the questionnaire.

### **Benefits**

Your participation is likely to help us find out more about how we can improve our products.

### **Reimbursements**

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research. However, we will give you a 50% discount on our product for your time.

## **Confidentiality**

We will not be sharing information about you to anyone outside of the research team. The information that we collect from this research project will be kept private. Any information about you will have a number on it instead of your name. Only the researchers will know what your number is, and we will lock that information up with a lock and key. It will not be shared with or given to anyone except Jeannie Gudith.

## **Sharing the Results**

Nothing that you tell us will be shared with anybody outside the research team, and nothing will be attributed to you by name. The knowledge that we get from this research will be shared with you. Each participant will receive a summary of the results.

## **Right to Refuse or Withdraw**

You do not have to take part in this research if you do not wish to do so. You may stop participating in the questionnaire at any time that you wish.

## **Who to Contact?**

If you have any questions, you can ask them at any time by calling me directly at (805) 380-7949 or emailing me at [info@jagconsultingservices.com](mailto:info@jagconsultingservices.com).

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by Bradley University, which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to find out more about the IRB, contact Bradley University.

## **Part II: Certificate of Consent**

I have been invited to participate in research about the varying modalities of developing a K-12 private school.

**I have read the foregoing information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study**

**Print Name of Participant** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Participant** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Day/month/year**

**Statement by the researcher/person taking consent**

**I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of**

my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:

1. A questionnaire will be sent for their participation

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participant.

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent Jeannie Gudith.

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Day/month/year