

Title of Paper: Caught “Flat-Footed” in the COVID Moment: The Processes, Narratives and Outcomes of Transforming F2F Teacher Training Programmes for Online Delivery in Guyana

Strand/Themes: “Building Resilience”

Session Type: Paper Presentation (Abstract Submission 582)

Key Words: teacher training, design and deliver online courses and programmes, convert face-to-face for online delivery, virtual learning environments (VLE), COVID-19 pandemic, CPCE Guyana, BTVI the Bahamas

Abstract: 228 words

Biography: SCHONTAL MOORE is a consultant for the Commonwealth of Learning. She lectures in language education and is the Graduate Coordinator for the School of Education, UWI, Mona. Her research interests include blended and online education, instructional technology and English Language teaching in Creole-influenced contexts, and teacher training and development in higher education.

Abstract:

The Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) in Guyana, pre-COVID, had only offered face-to-face teacher training programmes, notwithstanding the enduring presence of online education. Despite Guyana’s expansive geographical terrain, the uneven distribution of subject specialists across the country, and CPCE being the only teacher training institution there – conditions ripe for online/blended modes of instruction – CPCE’s programmes, then, consistently remained face-to-face. Given this modus operandi for instruction, it is unsurprising that CPCE was “flat-footedly” unprepared when COVID hit in 2019. Later, faced with either closing classroom doors indefinitely during the lockdown, or transitioning instruction online for sustainable teacher training, CPCE’s response by October, 2020, was to train seventy-five (75) faculty to convert and facilitate, at first, 28 in-person courses for online delivery in eight specializations, namely: Education, English, Enrichment, Science, Social Studies, Mathematics, Modern Languages, and Technical Vocational Studies. With the Commonwealth of Learning’s assistance, facilitating 30 hours of online workshops plus another 30 hours of asynchronous support, CPCE’s faculty gradually built their capacity to design, develop and teach online courses (DTC). Based on their resilience with online capacity building, this paper employs a qualitative design, pulling on case study and participatory action research, to share the processes, showcase the narratives and experiences, and to report on the outcomes of CPCE’s journey of transforming face-to-face courses for online delivery even while bolstering the continuous professional development of its faculty.

Key Words: teacher training, design and deliver online courses and programmes, convert face-to-face for online delivery, virtual learning environments (VLE), COVID-19 pandemic, CPCE Guyana, BTVI the Bahamas

Paper: *Caught “Flat-Footed” in the COVID Moment: The Processes, Narratives and Outcomes of Transforming F2F Teacher Training Programmes for Online Delivery in Guyana*

Introduction, Background, and Problem Statement

In October, 2020, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) contracted me as a consultant to help build the capacity of teacher trainers at the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) to design, develop and deliver quality online education throughout Guyana. This was during the heightened moments of the COVID-19 pandemic, precisely eight months after CPCE had to close its doors to face-to-face teaching because Guyana recorded its first case of COVID-19 in March, 2020, and CPCE was caught unprepared (Boodie, 2020). Pre-COVID, CPCE had only offered face-to-face teacher training programmes, notwithstanding the enduring presence of online education in the Region and globally. Despite Guyana’s expansive geographical terrain, the uneven distribution of subject specialists across the country, and CPCE being the only teacher training institution there – conditions ripe for online/blended modes of instruction – CPCE’s programmes, then, consistently remained face-to-face. With only the face-to-face modality solidly established within the school system, the Minister of Education, the Hon. Priya Manickchand, castigated the previous administration for failing to implement a training programme for online education so as to minimise learning losses during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. She said in a Press Release (Broodie, 2020) that “while most countries in the Caribbean would have completed training their teachers, Guyana [was] playing catch-up”.

Given this modus operandi of traditional instructional modality within Guyana’s education system, it was unsurprising that CPCE was “flat-footedly” unprepared when COVID hit in March, 2019 (Broodie, 2020). Therefore, when faced with either closing classroom doors indefinitely during the lockdown, or transitioning instruction online for sustainable teacher training, CPCE’s response by October, 2020, aligned with the mandate of the Ministry of Education in Guyana for schools to employ an online modality as a response to resuscitate teaching and learning and to reduce learning loss. In fact, the Minister of Education, the Hon. Priya Manickchand, called upon CPCE to convert all of its traditional teacher training programmes to full online delivery: “*CPCE will soon have a full online school to train teachers countrywide*” (Khan, 2021). Minister Manickchand further stated that “*the initiative to offer a full online programme would allow a faster transformation of the education sector as it would enable more teachers to access training and, consequently more trained teachers to enter the school system*” (Khan, 2021).

Clearly, the Minister’s intention, then, was to provide training opportunities for teachers in remote areas who were interested in becoming qualified, as articulated in her vision statements for educational reform:

We are going to be launching off at CPCE, a full online school...We don’t mean teaching on the internet alone with Zoom, we mean it’s a full online school with books and resources and you can register there and tutoring will happen there. The teacher at Kaikan on the border with Venezuela that has been teaching there for eight years,

but can't leave there to come here to get trained at CPCE, we'll train her online. The teacher at Paruima in Region Seven who wants to be trained but can't leave there, we will train online. The Minister expressed her hope that the services offered will be extended regionally and internationally. She noted that the CPCE has already seen an increase in the number of applications with this new initiative. So instead of seeing 800 as our intake, we have already gotten about 2,000 applications for this year so, I just want to point out how this kind of revolutionary move is going to allow us to offer mass training and retraining and upgrading to our teachers. (Khan, 2021)

Given this context of and drive towards resilience building at CPCE, and with the financial support and expertise afforded by the COL, I was contracted as the consultant to train seventy-five (75) lecturers at the College to convert and facilitate 28 of their regularly in-person courses for online delivery in the eight broad areas of Education, English, Enrichment, Science, Social Studies, Mathematics, Modern Languages, and Technical Vocational Studies. The consultancy also included customising and delivering a short online train-the-trainer course for Faculty Leads, entitled 'Training for Faculty Leads', as well as modifying another self-instructional course, entitled 'Getting Started with Online Learning', for learners to be orientated to the online learning environment. Therefore, as a result of the partnership with the COL, CPCE's teacher training faculty was able to benefit from 30 hours of online workshops, plus another 30 hours of asynchronous support over a 5-month period to build their capacity to design, develop and teach online courses to pre- and in-service teachers across the length and breadth of Guyana.

The result of the massive online teacher training drive and opportunity saw at its 87th Graduation Exercise, CPCE graduating its largest batch of trained teachers in the history of the College, as announced by the Principal, Dr. Viola Rowe while presenting the Principal's Report on January 19, 2022. She also noted that enrolment size before 2021 (pre-pandemic) was restricted due to physical space and dormitory capacity for pre-service students. However, with the introduction and effectiveness of technology to deliver online teaching and learning across Guyana or the Region, the number of applications received online for the reporting period increased exponentially (CPCE graduates largest batch, 2022).

Research Questions, Purpose, Significance

Based on the successes of this resilience and capacity building project, this paper employs a qualitative design (Marshall & Rossman, 1999), utilizing case study (Merriam, 1998) and participatory action research (Jordan, 2008) to share the workshop design processes, to showcase the narratives and experiences of selected faculty, and to report on the outcomes of CPCE's journey of transforming their face-to-face courses for online delivery, even while bolstering the continuous professional development of its faculty. In contemplating these research objectives, the following research questions were instrumental to the monitoring and evaluation of the project:

1. What were the needs and skills gap of the CPCE faculty for them to effectively design/develop and teach online courses (DTCO)?

2. Which e-resources and e-activities were utilized in the e-programme to meet the needs and fill the skills gaps of CPCE's faculty during the DTOC workshop sessions?
3. What were the self-reported experiences of CPCE faculty who participated in the online professional development workshops geared at building their capacity to DTOC? And finally,
4. What were the outcomes of CPCE's courses that transitioned from face-to-face to online delivery?

Literature Review

From as early as 1985 when computers began being considered for educational purposes, Bates (1985) predicted that technology, "if intelligently and frequently employed in training and education", would greatly improve the quality of learning as well as "meet the diverse needs of a wide cross-section of learners" (p. 17). Bates (1985) also stressed that teaching and learning methods would need to be "invented or re-discovered" to match the technology in the twenty-first century, and that the choice of technology should depend on students' learning styles as well as on the instructional methods employed (p. 43). Today, in the moment of COVID-19, those claims and concerns still hold true, especially because so much of education has now gone online as either an emergency response, or to ensure sustainability, or as an avenue of responsive resilience.

Training facilitators online (or virtually), because of the COVID-19 pandemic, has become a necessary option for project based organizations. However, what is equally important in this dispensation, is the training of already-online-facilitators or new-to-online-facilitators for managing successful online classrooms. Training helps to boost the confidence of new-to-online or already-online facilitators when they acquire new knowledge about an ICT interface, e-resource or e-tool, or when their technological dexterity is enhanced from navigating a new virtual learning platform. Insisting on training leads to a better teaching-learning experience for all (York et al, 2016). As such, in designing the e-workshop for CPCE's faculty, Bates' (1995) caution expressed nearly three decades ago was carefully considered. Bates (1995) conveyed then that the success or failure of e-learning enterprises will ultimately depend on their management, the learners' levels of preparedness or readiness for the new technology, the way the technologies are introduced and utilized, and the chosen mode(s) of delivery in response to educational imperatives (Bates, 1985).

Given the fact that the CPCE faculty group comprised already-online-facilitators of mixed ICT abilities, and that they were desirous of extending their technological capacity to master Moodle during the pandemic so that they could effectively convert their face-to-face courses for online delivery, the consultant, in planning for the success of their e-training gave urgent attention to these concerns: the appropriate ICT interface or video conferencing tool for hosting the workshop (Engsbo, 2007; Mezirow, 1991; Serhan, 2020; & Zembylas, 2008); the content coverage and programme structure of the online workshop (Twigg, 2003); the actual design – inclusive of flow and lay out – of the virtual learning site so that it adhered to acceptable criteria for effective user navigation for teaching-learning purposes (Boling et al, 2012; Merriam, 2001 & Stavredes, 2011); andragogy strategies that inspire workshop throughput/completion

(Martinez, 2003; & Tyler-Smith, 2006) ; and the fostering of a community of practice that supports e-coaching and e-mentoring (Garrison, n.d.; Rovai, 2002; & Wenger, 1999) for the overall success of the project.

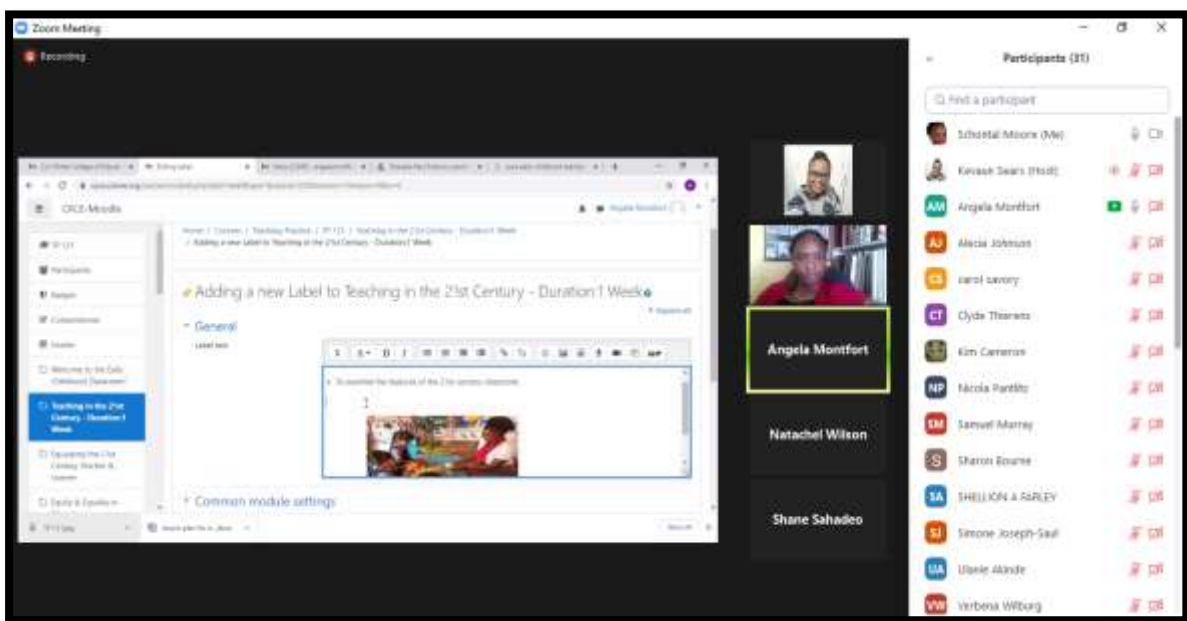
Methodology

The COL, in partnership with CPCE, set out in October, 2020, to train 75 faculty to convert and facilitate, at first, 28 in-person courses for online delivery in eight specializations. The COL outlined a full scope of work for the consultant to carry out with the CPCE faculty. Executing the activities and following the steps were useful for the data gathering and analysis processes as they unearthed the answers for the four (4) research questions. Additionally, ideas for the design of the online workshop also emerged as the data unfolded and the literature was reviewed. As such, these are the methodological steps and activities that were carried out by the consultant/researcher for the project:

1. design, administer and analyse a baseline survey to assess the needs and determine the skills gaps among the CPCE staff (1 day);
2. based on the analysis and using the ‘Designing/Developing and Teaching Online Courses’ (DTOC) module, review and update materials for an online workshop for 30 hours and a further 30 hours post-workshop synchronous and asynchronous online support (2 days);
3. conduct the 30-hour online workshop over a three week period. The workshop should cover: preparation of course outlines suitable for online instruction; navigating Moodle; design and development of online courses including assessment specifically for the Moodle environment; locating, using and creating OER and understanding the licensing arrangements; integrating multimedia and other interactive features into learning materials; facilitating learning, giving feedback and conducting assessment in the online environment (5 days);
4. use the COL *Quality Assurance Guidelines in Open and Distance Learning* and the *Checklist for the Development of Gender Responsive Learning Materials* to guide the development and conversion of courses;
5. provide 30 hours of post-workshop online support and guidance for lecturers in the 30-day period following the workshop activities (5 days);
6. review the materials developed by course lecturers and prepare feedback and a summary of the status for each of the 28 courses;
7. customise the existing coaching course for Faculty leads and upload to the CPCE Moodle platform (1 day);
8. in consultation with the CPCE coordinator for the project, select and coach 12 faculty as Faculty Leads (3 days);
9. modify and customise for CPCE learners ‘Getting Started with Online Learning’, a short online self-instructional orientation course for learners (2 days);
10. design, administer and analyse an endline survey that will generate data on the knowledge and skills gained as a result of participating in the training (1 day); and

11. provide periodic updates to COL over the term of the contract on the status of the activities undertaken, upcoming plans and any issues or problems encountered.

The e-workshop sessions were conducted virtually via Zoom, two days per week. Each week, for the first session, the faculty were engaged in active workshopping as the facilitator delivered content. For the second session at the end of the week, the facilitator allowed for skills building of faculty, whereby they had the choice of either working asynchronously on pre-assigned tasks, or synchronously alongside the facilitator on Zoom to address specific skills. Irrespective of faculty's choice, the facilitator was always logged into the Zoom space so as to meet and consult with faculty for them to benefit from one-on-one consultation to address specific issues linked to designing and developing their course spaces (as seen in Figure 1, below).



(Figure 1: Consultant and CPCE Faculty Interacting with Content in DTOC Workshop via Zoom)

There were two sets of virtual workshops; one for the Faculty Leads/Trainers, while the other set of virtual workshops accommodated all faculty. As part of the process, the consultant dedicated three 3-hour virtual sessions towards logging into CPCE's Moodle Platform to review faculty's course developments and to also provide constructive feedback on ways they could improve their course spaces. In total, the consultant utilized a minimum of 60 hours in workshopping sessions with faculty, and continued to provide additional post-workshop support towards finalizing the 28 course pages specified within the contract, as showed in Figure 2, below.

DATES (3 Hour Sessions)	# of Participants	Gender
Orientation (Nov. 20, 2020) – Trainers ONLY Session	10	(2 males, 8 females)
Day 1 (Nov. 23, 2020)	28	(7 males, 21 females)
Day 2 (Nov. 30, 2020)	41	(6 males, 35 females)
Day 3 (Dec. 7, 2020)	40	(6 males, 34 females)
Day 4 (Jan. 7, 2021) (& Day 5, on Jan. 11, done Asynchronously)	47	(7 males, 40 females)
Day 6 (Jan. 14, 2021) (& Day 7, on Jan. 18, done Asynchronously)	48	(8 males, 40 females)
Day 8 (Jan. 21, 2021) (& Day 9, on Jan. 25, done Asynchronously)	31	(4 males, 27 females)
Day 10 (Jan. 28, 2021) (& Day 11, on Feb. 1, done Asynchronously)	28	(4 males, 20 females)
Day 12 (Feb. 8, 2021) (& Day 13, on Feb. 11, done Asynchronously)	21	(2 males, 19 females)
Consultation Days via Zoom (Feb. 15 & Feb. 18, 2021) – to provide feedback on Faculty’s course pages		
Day 14 (Feb. 26, 2021) Training of Faculty Leads via Zoom	15	(3 males, 12 females)
Day 15 (March 1, 2021) Training of Faculty Leads via Zoom	15	(3 males, 12 females)
Day 16 (March 8, 2021) Training of Faculty Leads via Zoom	14	(3 males, 11 females)
Consultation Days via Zoom (March 12, 2021) – to provide feedback on Faculty’s course pages and Trainers’ Summative Presentations		

(Figure 2: CPCE Workshop Session Dates, Number of Faculty & Gender Ratio)

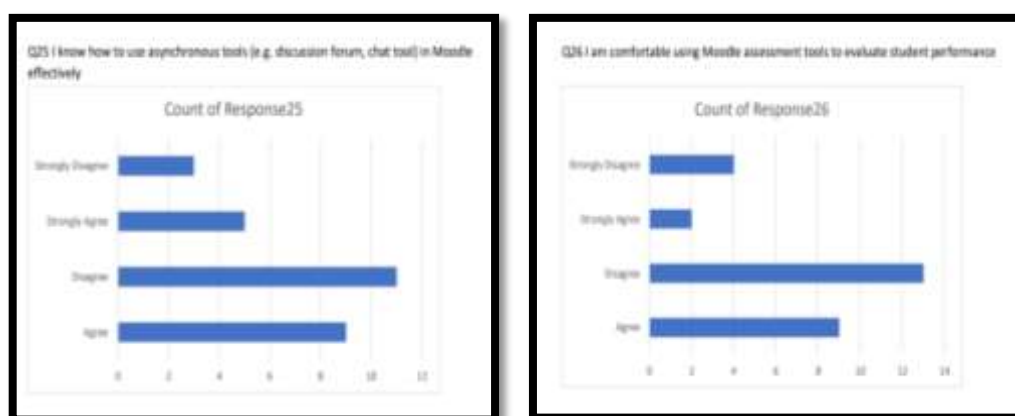
Data Presentation, Analysis & Discussion

The data gathered around each of the research questions are analysed and discussed below.

1. Research Question 1: What were the needs and skills gap of the CPCE faculty for them to effectively design/develop and teach online courses (DTOC)?

Ahead of the workshop start-up, an initial (baseline) survey, entitled *Lecturer Readiness Survey*, was circulated to the workshop faculty via Google Forms and it was completed by twenty-eight (28) CPCE faculty members. Their responses indicated that:

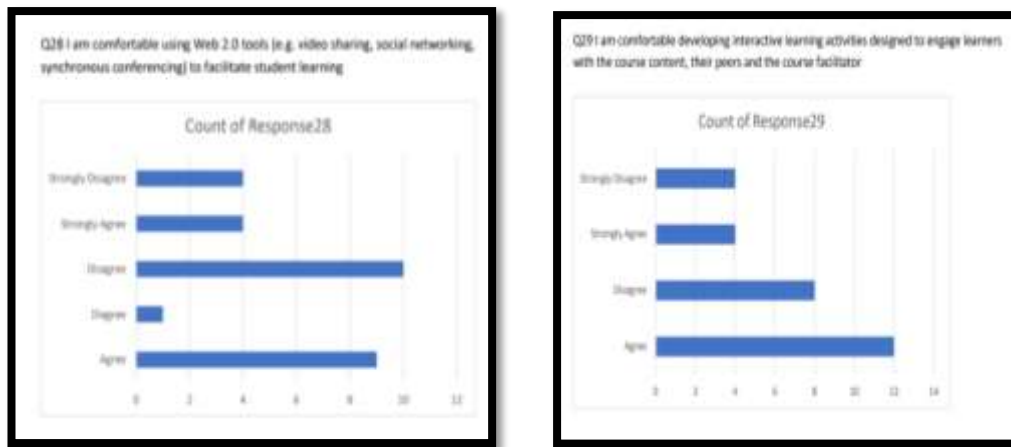
- i. While many of the faculty had general competencies with technology, a majority of them were not comfortable with their Moodle technological skills, nor were they as knowledgeable or comfortable with Moodle tools and/or resources (see responses to Q25 and Q26 of the survey in Figure 3, below).



(Figure 3: Faculty Responses to Items # 25 and 26 on the Lecturer Readiness Survey)

This meant that within the workshop sessions, much time was dedicated to doing practical activities aimed at helping faculty learn the Moodle tools and increasing their comfort-level with them. It also meant that the DTOC space needed only minor tweaks since it was already contextually aligned for the training needs of the CPCE faculty.

- ii. Conversely, faculty’s responses to survey Items # 28 and 29 (see Figure 4 below) about their ability to utilize appropriate strategies for encouraging participation/engagement, active learning, interaction and collaboration within the virtual learning environment were mostly positive. Figure 2 (below) showed that faculty possessed far more competencies than gaps regarding the use of Web 2.0 tools or to develop interactive learning activities that engage learners, peers and course facilitator.



(Figure 4: Faculty Responses to Items # 28 and 29 on the Lecturer Readiness Survey)

Similarly, this data revealed that the DTOC space did not need much modification. It already targeted all levels of technological/online course development competencies for sufficiently addressing the gaps across the continuum of beginners, intermediate, and advanced users/learners of Moodle, as well as general online course design and course management, strategies endorsed by Bates (1985). In fact, some of the positive features of the DTOC space that made it relevant to, and appropriate for CPCE’s technologically diverse faculty to interact with it as a teaching-learning tool to enhance their own readiness to teach online were as follows:

- 1) The opening video – it provided a comprehensive overview of the course aims, objectives, and content coverage, which is an authentic and effective way of introducing – especially first time online – users to the world of teaching and learning in an online course.
- 2) Tasks – they reflected a reasonable balance of constructivist group and individual activities, which served as a model for users to consider in their own selection of teaching-learning tools as they sought to maximize interactivity within their own Moodle courses.
- 3) Instructions to users – these were presented clearly and explicitly, serving the dual purpose of guiding users confidently through the space, and also presenting them with a model of how to craft instructions within their own Moodle-mounted courses.
- 4) Time duration for each unit, along with other visual model features – these provided creative design ideas for workshop faculty to include in their own courses.

- 5) Effectively combined multimedia of still-life and moving graphics, videos covering a variety of topics and offering demonstrations from others' perspectives, and appropriately situated audio to break-up the monotony of texts – these were powerful illustrative materials for serving the dual purposes of teaching design skills to the workshop faculty, as well as empowering them with content about effective online design features/strategies for modelling in their own online course development.
- 6) Links containing important course information – these were all situated at the top/start/beginning of the site for faculty to be sufficiently informed, prior to faculty being lured away once they commenced exploring and engaging with the rest of the DTOC materials.
- 7) The inclusion of Open Educational Resources (OER) – this was a nudge in the right direction for the workshop faculty, giving them inexpensive and various options for locating scholarly and trusted course resources to include within their own courses that they developed.
- 8) It was an activity-rich space – this concept offered positive design ideas to workshop faculty as ways of fostering student engagement for formative and summative assessment within the courses they designed.
- 9) The DTOC space was built on the principle of the spiral curriculum – it was methodically and sequentially organized to gradually nurture faculty' content knowledge and skills acquisition, even while boosting their confidence and autonomy as a teacher learning too.
- 10) The arrangement of the modules was quite strategic and engaging – Opening with the goals and objectives, followed by the book containing substantial content, then branching out into activities for interaction, then including varied media, and using indentations, labels, colours, and a variety of tools, reinforced the DTOC space as one that was designed for teaching and learning – and also showing the faculty HOW best to do so – on many levels.

Overall, the DTOC space served as an apt teaching-learning resource for the CPCE faculty to engage with synchronously while participating in the virtual workshop sessions, as well as asynchronously, to reference it and pull on several of its features in the design and development of their own online courses, as supported by Boling et al (2012) and Salmon (2004).

Research Question 2: Which e-resources and e-activities were utilized in the e-programme to meet the needs and fill the skills gaps of CPCE's faculty during the DTOC workshop sessions?

Information from the baseline *Lecturer Readiness Survey* was instrumental in helping the consultant determine the e-resources and e-tivities to include to address the needs/skills gap of the CPCE faculty and to craft an effective DTOC training e-workshop (as shown in Appendix 1). The e-resources and e-tivities were instrumental as catalysts for stimulating discussions and deepening faculty's understanding of best practices for DTOC (Salmon, 2004). Consequently, upon reflection, the e-workshop experience was rich and rewarding for all. And although the CPCE faculty and consultant were separated by geographical distance, there was never a sense of anyone working in isolation or feeling abandoned. The sessions were engaging, and even aspects of the theoretical that were discussed had opportunities for applicability to the practical

context so that faculty could learn of their value to the teacher education and teacher development context, as supported by Lewis (2009) and Twigg (2003), and explained below.

1. Each session began with a re-cap of what was addressed in the previous session so as to remind faculty of what was previously covered, and how that knowledge built on the areas and/or skills to be explored within the current day's workshop session;
2. Each session had the aims and objects clearly outlined so that faculty knew, from the outset, the areas to be addressed. Each session also ended with specifics about further readings or home-based tasks to complete in preparation for the next session. Sometimes email reminders were sent, and resources – such as PowerPoint presentations and readings – were also shared with the faculty;
3. A majority of the sessions had a theoretical underpinning so as to ground or undergird the practical components of each session. Further, the faculty was presented with models, for the purposes of scaffolding and visual demonstrations of what was expected from them as outputs at critical stages of the e-workshop sessions. This andragogical approach resonated with a majority of the faculty as it aligned with how they taught and also how they appreciated being taught.
4. Throughout, boundless opportunities existed for the faculty to query issues, engage in discussions, reference an illuminating example, and to pull on their lived/classroom experiences to impart knowledge and or to reinforce a concept or teachable moment for the wider group.
5. The faculty got the opportunity to view other Moodle course spaces (both inside and outside of the DTOC space). This was purposefully done so as to introduce and/or expose them to a wider array of possibilities for consideration when designing and developing their own course sites.
6. Each faculty member, whether they were active lecturers or not, (since some had solely administrative responsibilities) also got the chance to work on a course, either individually, or with a peer. They designed and developed their courses with the *Quality Assurance Guidelines and Rubric* (QAGR) in mind. Similarly, when the courses were being critiqued, the same QAGR framework was used to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the course design and development. This served the dual advantage of getting the faculty to become familiar with the elements of the QAGR framework, while giving them the experience of critically applying it across the curriculum to assist their peers in improving their skills and competencies in course design and development.
7. The faculty often got the opportunity to demonstrate to the wider group the work that they had done – to varying degrees – on their respective course spaces. Contextual and formative feedback from peers and the consultant gave the faculty a better understanding of the extent to which they grasped and implemented what they were taught, or perceived that they had learnt during the workshop sessions. Feedback of all kind was encouraged throughout the workshop sessions.

8. The faculty was also encouraged to draw on their own experiences of online teaching and learning to enliven their course spaces for increased student engagement and participation. What was dynamic about all fifteen days of workshopping was the constructivism and collaborative support offered to those who were less technologically savvy by those who had a stronger foothold and knowledge of making online courses more interactive and user-friendly. What occurred here was the natural emergence, or confirmation, in some cases, of those individuals who would make effective coaches/trainers, going forward, to support their colleagues who are less technologically inclined and/or not as adept at converting face-to-face courses for online delivery.
9. At the close-out of the e-workshop, each faculty member had made significant advances with designing and developing their courses for online delivery. Initial feedback was also given by the consultant, as well as their faculty peers, on each of the courses. It was then left to the individual faculty member to continue working towards completing the development of his/her course(s) in time for the final round of assessment by the consultant. The faculty was encouraged to continue engaging with the online DTOC space to get more content information and ideas to shape their courses.

Overall, based on the faculty’s level of engagement with the workshop e-resources and activities, as well as their feedback (shared in the section below) regarding their experiences over the period, a majority of faculty seemed to have found the workshop to be quite practical, informative, engaging, and highly relevant, especially given the exigencies that COVID-19 has placed on all education systems and curricula. Although for some there remained room for improvement, generally, the quality of their work was mostly of a high standard. Therefore, in culminating the COL-CPCE virtual workshop sessions, and as a marker of faculty’s involvement and steady progress to completion, they each received a certificate of participation.

Research Question 3: What were the self-reported experiences of CPCE faculty who participated in the online professional development workshops geared at building their capacity to DTOC?

At the close-out of the workshop sessions in March, 2021, it was clear (to the consultant) that each faculty member had made significant strides with designing and developing their course(s) for online delivery. Feedback provided to the faculty during the practical sessions by the consultant, as well as by peers and Faculty Leads, helped several faculty members to become inspired and even more confident to design and deliver their courses. Consequently, in their reflections shared in the endline surveys, some faculty members’ reports – in terms of skills’ acquisition – were far more positive than negative, as shared below in Figure 5 around the thematic codes:

Thematic Areas	Faculty’s Verbatim Responses shared in Endline Survey
Content & Skills Development to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “can now help other colleagues to design their own courses”

Thematic Areas	Faculty's Verbatim Responses shared in Endline Survey
Design and Deliver Online Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “solid foundation established” • “now able to convert courses from face-to-face to online delivery” • “thorough and interesting content” • “I was ignorant about Moodle... no formal training” • “workshop drastically changed my mode of delivery” • “utilize both synchronous and asynchronous methods of learning”
Impact and/or Delivery of the Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “rewarding” • “clear presentation of content” • “detailed” • “I was totally ignorant of creating and populating Moodle” • “hands-on” • “delivery allowed for easy and effective assimilation” • “proficient facilitator... pleasant experience” • “professional... Executed duties... knowledgeable...encouraging” • “able to create entire course on Moodle” • “had the opportunity to learn from my peers... their presentations inspired me to do better”
Areas Still Needing Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “more one-on-one tutoring in posting test questions and quizzes” • “still need on-going support” • “while designing online courses was mastered, more was needed on how to effectively deliver online classes” • “suggest follow-up sessions to reflect on prior learning and examine more features of Moodle”

Figure 5: Faculty's Endline Reflections on the Workshop Experience

Research Question 4: What were the outcomes of CPCE's courses that transitioned from face-to-face to online delivery?

The twenty-eight courses (listed below in Figure 6) were the focus of the capacity building e-workshop; therefore, the CPCE faculty were expected to apply the knowledge, skills and competencies learnt in the workshops to effectively convert their face-to-face courses for online delivery for the upcoming academic year. Facilitators who were not responsible for any of the twenty-eight courses, but who participated in the e-workshop, also gained knowledge and skills about how to effectively DTOC. However, those faculty members who were directly responsible for the twenty-eight (28) COL-sponsored courses were given multiple opportunities to showcase their work/courses so that they could benefit from ample collegial feedback during the synchronous workshop sessions and at every stage of the course development process.

In fact, post-workshop, the courses were further supported by the Faculty Leads and periodically reviewed by the consultant in July (2021) and again in September (2021). This double review allowed faculty the opportunity to continue refining and improving their respective courses on CPCE’s virtual learning environment so that a higher percentage of CPCE’s courses would become ready for online delivery to fulfil the Minister of Education, the Hon. Manickchand’s expectations:

“CPCE’s initiative to offer a full online programme would allow a faster transformation of the education sector as it would enable more teachers to access training and, consequently more trained teachers to enter the school system” (Khan, 2021).

In terms of evaluating the outputs of the workshop as it pertains to the twenty-eight (plus two additional) courses on CPCE’s Moodle Platform, their states of “readiness” as at late September / early October, 2021 were categorized and described by the consultant (below) in Figure 6:


 COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING <i>Learning for Sustainable Development</i>			
Courses Developed by Assigned Faculty (28 courses to be piloted) AND Feedback Provided on the “Readiness” of Each Course.			
Courses Reviewed by Consultant After End of Workshop			
Categories of Course Readiness	Level 3 – Course is READY for delivery	Level 2 – Course is PARTIALLY ready for delivery	Level 1 – Course is NOT ready for delivery
Qualitative summary of course readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course is ready for delivery. Structurally, it flows; it is aesthetically pleasing; the content is well distributed and accessible; and the activities are appropriate for the course level of proficiency. The facilitator(s) did a commendable job of getting the course ready for online delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course is partially ready for delivery. It could be improved with the inclusion of images/graphics at the start of each unit. The units need to have more content and activities. The facilitator(s) did a fair job, and, with a little more time and effort invested, the course aesthetics and content readiness could be improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course is NOT ready for delivery. It needs major overhaul to improve all or most aspects; or content and/or activities are missing; or the course cannot be located on the site.
Courses Organized According to States of Readiness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Essentials of English Proficiency 1 Introduction to Linguistics Health and Family Life Education Early Childhood Development Middle/Later Childhood Development Home to School Transition Mathematical Modelling and Prediction Introduction to Curriculum: Theory and Planning Textile Studies Pedagogy for Secondary Teachers 1 Pedagogy for Early Childhood Primary Teachers Conversational Spanish Spanish Language 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Education and Play in the EC Curriculum Vectors and Matrices Construction Technology 1 Graphical Communication Applied Science I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Industrial Technology -Home Economics -Agricultural Science Technology for Teaching and Learning 1 Civic Life and Ethics Human and Economic Geography Advanced Business Studies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation of Teaching Reading and Remedial Reading Art Education and Appreciation for EC and P Teachers Foundations of Teaching Social Studies for EC Teachers Physical Pedagogy for Secondary Teachers II
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Sociology Geography of Guyana and the Caribbean Social Studies for Early Childhood and Primary Teachers 1 Math – Geometry Math – Trigonometry Livestock Production and Management II 		

Figure 6: Feedback Provided by Consultant on the “Readiness” of Each Moodle Course Developed by Faculty

Additionally, arrangements were then made by CPCE for the courses to be externally reviewed as part of the institution’s and COL’s quality assurance mechanism. Suffice it to say, at the end of the 5-months of e-workshopping, the faculty self-assessed and self-reported that they had indeed built capacity, to not only design/develop online courses, but to also effectively

deliver them. As part of its sustainability system, CPCE administration devised a support system to ensure resilience. Within each Department, the Head was assigned the Faculty Lead (FL) role. The Heads received additional training as “trainers” for the institution so that they would support their Departmental colleagues and hold them accountable for sustained online course development and roll-out for online delivery, a strategy supported by Pincas (2007) for teating with mature learners. At the end of their extended training, when FLs did their final assessment, it was clear that a majority of them had become even more knowledgeable about the Moodle platform, evident in the skilful and confident navigation of the platform as they led their own training workshops with colleagues who were new to DTOC. Two such FL e-workshops are accessible from the links in Figure 7, below.

Faculty Leads' Training/Coaching Video Links	Rating of Competence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/MsTytUyM-gg 	Excellence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ggIAYU_J9g 	Excellence

Figure 7: Links to View Faculty Leads' Training/Coaching Workshop Videos

Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations

This consultancy occurred during a moment of extraordinary circumstances; COVID-19 was impacting the lives of faculty, the institution’s administrators, as well as the consultant. During this COVID-19 moment, the personal, familial and professional realities of all of the project stakeholders remained quite complex and in flux, especially because of country “lock-downs” occasioned by virus spikes in Guyana (where the faculty resides) and in Jamaica (where the consultant resides). The pandemic meant that all of the COL’s usually face-to-face workshops – whether large, medium or small range – had to transition to online delivery. Being the consultant that facilitated this online workshop with the CPCE faculty in Guyana in the COVID-19 moment, simultaneously as Lead and Participant Observer, there were key lessons learnt, challenges experienced, and take-aways for futures perspective I share (below) for your consideration, and application if relevant to your teaching-learning or training contexts:

1. The faculty at CPCE worked hard and consistently toward seeing this project through, mostly because they are professionals committed to their jobs and the students whom they serve. Although face-to-face is their customary delivery mode, they were not daunted by the 5-month training when it transitioned online. The faculty’s unstinting support and engagement with building their capacity to DTOC never waned, and despite the challenges brought on by distance and the pandemic, the close-knit community of practice developed, and thrived.

2. The case of CPCE pressing on with virtual training for building their capacity to effectively design, develop and deliver online courses in the moment of COVID-19 is one worth sharing with other Commonwealth countries, just as the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI) did when their training was threatened by COVID’s arrival in March 2020. BTVI

and COL simply recalibrated their options, shifted the DTOC training from face-to-face to online, and told their story in this article (<https://vussc.col.org/index.php/2020/06/19/btvi-online-learning/>) on the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth's (VUSSC) website. Pressing on to build capacity to DTOC despite being caught “flat-footed” in the initial moment of the pandemic is admirable for both CPCE (in Guyana) and BTVI (in the Bahamas). Their cases, made possible through the partnership of the Commonwealth of Learning, signal a model of online educational planning – and planning for virtual/online or blended education – that needs to be seriously considered for this century and beyond. This model epitomises resilience, sustainability, and success as it is able to transcend crisis moments to ensure continuity. Training loss in the Region and certainly globally would be greater had it not been for the reality of the “virtual”.

3. Continuing with training projects even in the midst of a pandemic and a crisis moment positions COL as a responsive agency, committed to the continued virtual/online training and support for capacity building of educational partners across the Commonwealth. CPCE (a large-scale project) and BTVI (a medium range project) benefitted from capacity building in a virtual context. Both were successfully done, and, as such, make for a compelling case of resilience and sustainability within the context of “futures perspectives”. Even now, as it should be in all cases, Faculty Leads at CPCE and BTVI are continuing to build the capacity of others at their institutions.

References

- Bates, A. W. (1985). *Technology, open learning and distance education*. London: Routledge.
- Boling, E.C., Hough, M., Krinsky, H., Saleem, H., & Stevens, M. (2012). Cutting the distance in distance education: Perspectives on what promotes positive, online learning experiences. *The Internet and Higher Education, 15*(2), 118-126.
- Boodie, A. (September 14, 2020). *Min. Manickchand pleased as students start first day of virtual sessions*. Georgetown: Department of Public Information.
- Broodie, A. (September 24, 2020). *1,700 teachers start online training, over 5000 registered*. Georgetown: Department of Public Information.
- (January 19, 2022). *CPCE graduates largest batch of trained teachers in the history of the College*. Georgetown: Department of Public Information.
- Engsbo, M. S. (2007). Emerging E-Communication Technologies and Their Usage in Project-Based Organizations. *University of Primorska, Faculty of Management Koper, 2*(4), 285-301.
- Garrison, D. R. (n.d.). Online community of inquiry update: Social, cognitive, and teaching presence issues. University of Calgary: Unpublished. Retrieved from <http://www.communitiesofinquiry.com/documents/Community%20of%20Inquiry%20Issues.pdf>
- Jordan, S. (2008). Participatory Action Research (PAR). In L. Given, *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (p. 601). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Khan, A. (February 5, 2021). *CPCE to have online school soon –Min. Manickchand*. Georgetown: Department of Public Information.
- Lewis, A. (2009). E-learning and mature-aged learners. *Training and Development in Australia, 36*(1), 26-28. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.ryerson.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/208560467?accountid=13631>
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Martinez, M. (2003). High attrition rates in e-Learning: Challenges, predictors and solutions. *The eLearning Developers' Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.elearningguild.com/pdf/2/071403MGT-L.pdf>
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B. (2001). Andragogy and self-directed learning: Pillars of adult learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 89*, 3-13.
- Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Pincas, A. (2007). How do mature learners learn? *Quality in Ageing, 8*(4), 8(2), 28-32. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.ryerson.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/213138618?accountid=13631>

- Rovai, A. P. (2002, April 1). Building sense of community at a distance. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 3. Retrieved from <http://www.irrodl.org/content/v3.1/rovai.html>
- Salmon, G. (2004). *E-tivities: The key to active online learning*. London: Kogan Page.
- Serhan, D. (2020). Transitioning from face-to-face to remote learning: Students' attitudes and perceptions of using Zoom during COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Technology in Education and Science*, 4(4), 335-342.
- Stavredes, T. (2011). *Effective online teaching: Foundations and strategies for student success*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Twigg, C. (2003). Models for online learning. *Educause*, 38, 28-38.
- Tyler-Smith, K. (2006). Early attrition among first time eLearners: A review of factors that contribute to drop-out, withdrawal and non-completion rates of adult learners undertaking eLearning programmes. *Journal of Online learning and Teaching*, 2(2), 73-85.
- Wenger, E. (1999). *Communities of practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- York, C., Yamagata-Lynch, L., & Smaldino, S. (2016). Adult reflection in a graduate-level online distance education course. *Reflective Practice*, 17(1), 40-58.
doi:10.1080/14623943.2015.1123686
- Zembylas, M. (2008). Adult learners' emotions in online learning. *Distance Education*, 29(1), 71-87.

Appendix 1

Programme Schedule for the Virtual Workshop with CPCE Faculty

The table below provides a comprehensive coverage of the workshop topics, objectives, and teaching resources utilized during the virtual workshops with the CPCE faculty. The virtual media used to facilitate the workshop sessions were Zoom and the DTOC course space.

DATES	HOURS UTILIZED	OBJECTIVES OF TOPICS COVERED
Day 1 Nov. 23, 2020	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Converting from F2F to Online Delivery: Buy-In to the Blended/Online Transition • Current State of Online Teaching & Its Implications for CPCE • Fundamental Differences: Teaching Online versus Teaching Face-to-Face • Strategies to Successfully Transition a face-to-face Course to Online Delivery
Day 2 Nov. 30, 2020	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the current state of online teaching and its implications for CPCE • Identify strategies to successfully transition a face-to-face course to online delivery • Create a storyboard of a course transitioning to online delivery • Converting from F2F to Online Delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Storyboard Your Course's Content Sequence - Conceptualizing Delivery & e-Pedagogies - Models of Best Practices in Designing, Developing and Delivering Online Courses
Day 3 Dec. 7, 2020	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Re-)configuring course outlines and spaces to make them user-friendly and appealing to students in an online environment • Utilizing the LMS (Moodle) tools to maximize students' engagement • Linking to Open Educational Resources (OER) for varied resources • Managing students to sustain their interest throughout a course
Days 4 & 5 Jan. 7 and 11, 2021 <i>(Resumed sessions after the Christmas Holidays.)</i>	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what e-Assessment Looks Like? • Discuss options for Evaluating Online Teaching • Revalue Learning in Blended & Online Courses • Explain how to Keep Courses Alive & Energized • Ensure Ways of Facilitating Students' Engagement in online courses • Maintain Facilitator's Presence in the Online Environment • Discuss How Much? Too Much? And Why So Much? In e-Assessment • Manage the e-Feedback Process & Appreciating Its Value in Online Classrooms
Days 6 & 7	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull it All Together! Look at Models to Ascertain Best Practices in Course Design:

DATES	HOURS UTILIZED	OBJECTIVES OF TOPICS COVERED
Jan. 14 & 18, 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptualize Your Course Space (The House “Plan”) • Frame Your Course Space (The “House” Frame) • Populate Your Course Space (The “Furniture” in the House) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integrate OER ○ Incorporate Multimedia ○ Vary e-Tools & e-tivities ○ Sequence Course Content • Build in Interactivity (“Work” and “Live” in the House) • Decide on F&S Assessment (“Value” the House) • Determine Feedback Options (“Talk About” the House) • Fashion a Learning Community (“Enjoy” the House)
Days 8 & 9 Jan. 21 & 25, 2021	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Engagement with Courses: Storyboard Your Course(s) & Frame Your Welcome Unit(s), Populate Content/Teaching Units, and Engage with DTOC Space • Critique Peers & Receive Feedback on EACH Course Developed by Faculty • Amend Course Spaces to Incorporate Whole Group Suggestions
Days 10 & 11 Jan. 28 & Feb. 1, 2021	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Key Courses Targeted by COL: Critique & Provide Feedback on Courses Developed by Faculty • Amend Course Spaces to Incorporate Whole Group Suggestions • Other CPCE Courses: Critique & Provide Feedback on Courses Developed by Faculty • Amend Course Spaces to Incorporate Whole Group Suggestions
Days 12 & 13 Feb. 8 and 11, 2021	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment in Online Courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – choices, form, and structure – relevance, appropriateness & parity • Aligning Faculty’ Developed Courses with the Quality Assurance Guidelines & Rubric (QAGR) that were Developed for CPCE • Use this QAGR as an evaluation instrument for each course, so that faculty will continue to design, develop, modify and deliver courses with the guidelines and rubrics in mind
Consultation Days Feb. 15 and 18, 2021	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback on Faculty course pages
15 Meeting Days = 45 Hours of General Workshopping with Faculty at CPCE		