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Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Work and Occupational Well-being

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education

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Abstract

This qualitative research explores Jamaican secondary school principals' work and occupational well-being. Research on the topic of principals' work and occupational well-being has largely been conducted in developed countries (e.g., Canada, Australia, Ireland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, etc.). The aggregate conclusion in these countries suggests that principals' work has implications for their occupational well-being. Given that Jamaica, a developing nation, has adopted North American leadership standards and policies, it is necessary to examine if Jamaican secondary school principals' work presents occupational well-being issues. Through qualitative semistructured interviews with 12 Jamaican secondary school principals, the study investigated these principals' work. Specifically, principals' work within their socioeconomic, geographical, and community contexts were examined to understand if they experienced any challenges. Explored in the study were the occupational well-being issues principals experience, if any, and the strategies principals employ to cope with such issues. The conceptual framework—work and occupational well-being—was used to examine and understand the emerging findings through the interpretivist paradigm. Several themes and subthemes emerged from the data. The results suggested that Jamaican secondary school principals' work affect their physical, mental, cognitive, and social occupational well-being. In their attempt to cope with these different occupational well-being issues, principals have employed individualized strategies to cope with their occupational well-being issues. Driving this reliance on individualized strategies is the existing social, structural, and cultural stigma around mental health/well-being in the Jamaican society. The shared perspectives among these principals provide a glimpse of their occupational well-being that perhaps need further investigation. The findings in this study have significance for policy and program development, theory and practice in Jamaica and the Caribbean in areas specific to principals' work and occupational well-being.

Keywords: Jamaican secondary school principals; work; work intensification; occupational well-being; leadership

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Lay Summary

Jamaican secondary school principals' work is changing. This change is evidenced in their work demands and workload, and their occupational well-being. I undertook this qualitative research to understand 12 Jamaican secondary school principals' work, specific to the actions, activities, practices, and behaviours they engage in that their occupational well-being. The finding from qualitative semistructured interviews with 12 principals, who identified as male and female, indicate that they are experiencing work challenges. The challenges these principals experience in their geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts have impacted their occupational well-being. Evidence from the findings indicates the principals are experiencing physical, mental/ psychological, cognitive, and social occupational well-being issues. These relational occupational well-being issues include anxiety, powerlessness, frustration, exhaustion, low energy, and overwhelmingness to name a few. Given the lack of support from the ministry, principals in this study engage in multiple individualized strategies to cope with their occupational well-being issues. These individualized strategies include, but not limited to spiritual beliefs in God, mindfulness meditation, and social networks of support. At the centre of these individualized strategies is the rooted mental health stigma in the Jamaican society, with the majority of principals relying on their spiritual beliefs in God. What is needed is structural change at the national level through education about the stigma around mental health to encourage greater access to care. This study captures the importance of having a healthy cadre of principals to ensure the principalship does not lose its appeal.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved and late “Mama,” Hyacinth. Her unfailing love and support will forever be etched in my memory.

Acknowledgments

The journey of completing this thesis has had its bittersweet moments. Yet, its completion would not have been realized without the continuous encouragement and support from several people. I want to first thank God for allowing me this opportunity to follow through with this thesis.

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Special thanks to my committee member Dr. Augusto Riveros. Dr. Riveros' encouragement, in-depth reviews, and insight on various areas of this thesis helped to broaden my thinking about principals' work.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thanks to my family—especially my dearest mother who passed away while I was undertaking this monumental task. Her love, compassion, and resilience have and will continue to motivate me to remain steadfast and committed in accomplishing my future undertakings.

To Shawnee, Donna, Jenna, Eva, and my other close friends and colleagues, thank you for your support, especially during my most vulnerable moments. Finally, thanks to all the principals who extended their time to share their lived experiences in the role of the principalship.

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List of Acronyms

APSE	Alternative Pathways to Secondary Education
CE	Common Entrance
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSAT	Grade Six Achievement Test
DOD	Dean of Discipline
HoD	Head/s of Department
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JIS	Jamaica Information Service
JTA	Jamaica Teacher Association
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoEYI	Ministry of Education Youth and Information
MLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
NCEL	National College of Educational Leadership
NEI	National Education Inspectorate
PEP	Primary Exit Profile
PIoJ	Planning Institute of Jamaica
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
QEC	Quality Education Circle
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UWI	University of the West Indies
VP	Vice-Principal

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

At a time when the principalship is becoming less appealing, policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders are sounding the alarm bell about principals' work and occupational well-being. Part of the shift in interest in the role is the growing concern among principals that demographic changes, educational reforms, and technological advancement, among other issues, have contributed to the complexity in demands and volume of their work (Armstrong, 2014; Cooper & Kelly, 1993; Darmody & Smyth, 2013; Nuhndu, 1999; Pollock, Wang, & Hauseman, 2014, 2015; Riley, 2015, 2017; Wang, 2020a). Other conclusions drawn from these bodies of research conducted in Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe have intimated that some of these changes in principals' work have increased their work-related stress, which can impact their occupational well-being.

These findings informed my interest in Jamaican Secondary School (JSS) principals' work and occupational well-being. My interrogation of this phenomenon also drew my attention to the broader issue of structural and social stigma around mental health that is embedded in the Jamaican society (Jamaica Information Service [JIS], 2012). With stigma having influence on Jamaicans' access to care, I wanted to understand the strategies JSS principals employ to ensure they are well while at work. Given the foci of principals' work and occupational well-being, I examine the research problem to determine its applicability to the Jamaican context.

Research Problem

Jamaican principals' work is largely influenced by and consistent with 21st century competency-based leadership standards and practices in developed countries. Similar to countries like Canada, Jamaican principals' work is driven by ongoing policy regulations, curricula changes, and accountability mandates (Armstrong, 2014; Ball, 1998, 2008; Davis, 2004; P. Miller, 2015, 2018; Phillips & Sen, 2011; Pollock, 2016; Pollock, Wang, & Hauseman, 2015; Riley, 2014). These relentless changes intersect and are incongruent with the lived realities of Jamaican principals' socioeconomic and sociocultural challenges (Davis, 2004; Knight & Rapley, 2007; E. Miller, 2016; P. Miller, 2018; PloJ, 2009). From all indications, ongoing standards and policies without the

requisite resources have made the role more complex and ambiguous (P. Miller, 2015, 2018). Within the context of these qualitative studies, empirical evidence of how JSS principals' work have presented occupational well-being issues over time is lacking.

Research Purpose and Questions

This study explored JSS principals' work and occupational well-being. Given that principals' work is context driven, investigating this phenomenon required deep understanding about what principals do in their local contexts. My ontological and epistemological stance is embedded in the interpretivist paradigm to interrogate how aspects of JSS principals' work present occupational well-being issues. Examination of JSS principals' work within their contexts through an interpretivist paradigm required the use of three interrelated subquestions designed to probe their work and occupational well-being. With qualitative research questions grounded on exploring the *what*, *how*, and *why* of a given study, I focused on the what and how of JSS principals' work and occupational well-being. The three specific research sub-questions include:

1. What are the work experiences of JSS principals?
2. What occupational well-being issues do JSS principals experience in their work?
3. How do JSS principals cope with their occupational well-being issues?

I designed these questions to help me understand Jamaican secondary principals' varied perspectives on their work and occupational well-being. The background of the study provided additional justification for conducting this research.

Background of the Study

Exploration of JSS principals' work and occupational well-being is timely given the few reported incidences of stress-related illness and suicide among Jamaican educators (Jamaica Observer, 2016a; Johnson, 2016; Myers, 2015). Such incidences have highlighted the lack of policies and programs from the MoEYI and MoLSS that address this problem among educators, including principals (McIsaac et al., 2014; PloJ, 2009). This lack of support for JSS principals' work makes them vulnerable to occupational well-being issues. Jamaican principals carry out specific responsibilities and tasks as captured in the Education Act (1980), other policy regulations, and educational reform

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programs. Recorded in these documents are the instructional leadership practices that have been adopted to meet educational standards in developed countries (MoEYI, 2012).

As part of its plan to improve students' output at all levels of the education system, the MoEYI has implemented several reform programs (MoEYI, 2015; NCEL, 2017). The two most recent programs—the Vision 2030 plan and the National College of Educational Leadership (NCEL)—sought to identify the challenges and implement professional learning for school leaders (MoEYI, 2012; PJoJ, 2009). The professional learning programs offered at the NCEL for principals, school leaders, and aspiring school leaders are focused on them “respond[ing] to the existing and emerging exigencies of [all] schools and school systems” (MoEYI, 2017, p. 1). Only one of the multiple professional training programs offered at the NCEL—effective principal training program (EPTP)—includes a module focused on principals' emotional intelligence and other related skills (NCEL, 2015, 2017). Although Jamaican principals and school leaders are held accountable for students' safety, security, and well-being (MoEYI, 2015; PJoJ, 2009), they lack the support for their own occupational well-being. Investigation of JSS principals' work and occupational well-being is an area that has never been explored, and is imperative given the existing structural stigma around mental well-being that pervades Jamaican society (Hickling et al., 2011).

Significance of the Study

Ongoing policy mandates and structural reform in Jamaica's education system have changed the scope of principals' work. Chief among the changes is the prioritization of 21st century leadership standards. Over time, the work of Jamaican school principals has been reconfigured to fit the principles of instructional and transformational leadership used in developed countries (Davis, 2004). Espoused in these leadership approaches is principals' capacity to exercise competencies in areas of management, curricular development, and healthy community relations (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1994). Other requisite and prescribed qualities of the principalship include the evaluation of teachers' pedagogies and recommendations for improvement among others (The Education Act, 1980; MoEYI, 2015). Explicitly aligned with the focus on 21st century competencies is the requirement for principals to address the needs of an increasingly diverse student population encumbered with disciplinary and mental health issues. These

shifts in demographic and health issues—especially when layered with affiliated socioeconomic, political, and cultural challenges at the local and national level—have not made the work of Jamaican principals easier (P. Miller, 2015, 2018).

More broadly, global patterns of neoliberalism, coupled with technological and organizational change, have shaped and escalated the work Jamaican principals do and prioritize. Adjusting to these changes, while working within a two-tiered education system that is entrenched in its British colonial principles, poses great challenges for principals. To address and prepare principals for the ongoing changes and tensions in their work, JSS principals have had to engage in copious amounts of mandatory principal preparation programs (NCEL, 2017). Although these programs support principals' leadership and management skills, there is limited training and preparation for occupational well-being issues. Moreover, the notion that the intensified work of the principalship pose challenges for their occupational well-being is supported in bodies of research, as discussed earlier (e.g., Pollock & Wang, 2020; Riley, 2014, 2016, 2018).

Against this backdrop, this study sought to explore and capture JSS principals' individual and collective perspectives about their work through a qualitative interpretivist lens. Examination of their work facilitated an in-depth understanding of how the challenges across different school contexts and geographical localities intersect with the long established socioeconomic issues (PIoJ, 2009; P. Miller, 2016, 2018). Consideration for the existing tensions around occupational well-being is also necessary, as work challenges have implications for their interdependent components. My emphasis on principals' physical, mental/psychological, cognitive, and social occupational well-being also led me to consider the phenomenon of burnout.

Uncovering these issues has relevance and significance, more broadly, for Jamaican policymakers and stakeholders who are concerned about principals' work and occupational well-being. More specifically, the study will inform future policy that supports Jamaican principals' and targets their work intensification, which has been permeating education systems globally (Pollock et al., 2019). If such policy is not prioritized, then the intensification of Jamaican principals' work will have consequences for their occupational well-being and the principalship.

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The relevance of the study extends to drawing educational stakeholders' attention to the possibility that, although JSS principals may find the role fulfilling, they ultimately may lose interest in the role. This is particularly important given reported evidence of principals leaving the role because of growing complexity and volume of their work (Pollock et al., 2015). How this occurs in the Jamaican context must be explored to ensure aspiring, novice, and experienced principals are aware of and trained in handling work challenges. Equally important are questions around disparities in resources allocation across different school types and the advantages some schools have over others (CaPRI, 2014; Davis, 2004; MoEYI, 2008, 2015; PloJ, 2009).

The study has significance for aspiring principals in that the findings can providing insight into the unpredictable work challenges they can expect in particular school contexts. For the novice and experienced principals in Jamaica who are working in schools situated in rural, urban, and inner-city communities, they can relate to some of the unique circumstances that can impact their personal and professional life. Uncovering the various perspectives of principals within these church-, trust-, and government-owned schools is relevant to principals in similar settings. Specifically, the results of this study can provide direction and guidance in expanding their networks of support while engaging in similar kinds of strategies to support their occupational well-being. Moreover, the participants' reliance on spirituality and mindfulness meditation as their primary coping strategy is relevant for practicing principals who are reflecting on their occupational well-being struggles and perhaps may encourage them to seek early support. The participants' struggles to develop more trusting relationships with colleagues is something they can relate to and may encourage other principals to proactively seek ways to be more open about their occupational well-being challenges. Along these lines, principals themselves can support the edification of youth about mental health and help combat the stigma surrounding this issue.

With mental health stigma an issue ingrained in the social and structural fabric of the Jamaican society, it is evident that more research is necessary. The late Dr. Hickling held such views and argued for more education to improve access to care. Such existing issues—especially when combined with the growing challenges that some principals in rural and remote areas reported in P. Miller's (2018) study, such as finances—deserve

further investigation, as lack of resources have been shown to impact principals' stress levels and subsequent mental/psychological occupational well-being (Riley, 2016, 2018). With these and other issues affecting principals on a global scale, the Jamaican MoEYI and other supporting bodies need to focus on how principals can manage the existing stress resulting from their work before they experience occupational well-being issues.

Positionality

My research interest in JSS principals' work and occupational well-being is based on my socialization as a Jamaican as well as my scholastic and work experiences. These areas form part of my positionality. Positionality reflects qualitative researchers detailing the fluidity of their identity and relationship within their social, cultural, and political contexts (England, 1994; Hall & Burns, 2009; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Throne, 2012). Articulating one's positionality allows the qualitative researcher to recognize their limitations, biases, and influence on participants while collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions and inferences from the data (Blum & Muirhead, 2005; England, 1994; Throne, 2012).

My kindergarten to post-secondary educational experiences in Jamaica highlighted the disparities in secondary schools and some aspects of principals' work. In reflecting on my earlier years as a student in one of the reputed and top-ranked traditional secondary schools in Jamaica, I recalled the principals' emphasis on discipline, devotions, and engagement in extracurricular activities to complement our academic studies. After leaving high school, I decided to complete a diploma in teacher education at the primary level. While completing my teaching practicum in schools that were in stark contrast to those I attended, I developed a greater awareness of principals' work and the disparities in quality of teaching and learning.

My diverse teaching experiences in my own country and Japan also piqued my interest in understanding more about secondary school principals' work. In my formative years as a primary school teacher while volunteering and working alongside the principal on several committees, I was able to witness the challenges of the principal's work. Many of the challenges I identified included procuring resources from parents and the business community to improve programs, expanding the school's infrastructure, and advancing specific areas of the curriculum. It was at that point that I had an epiphany, informed by

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my eye for financial accounting: I should write for a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and Professional Management. The knowledge I gained while completing this degree provided me even greater insight into the principals' work. I also realized that, although the principal is held accountable for the success and failure of their school, they are dependent on teachers to successfully execute many of the core responsibilities associated with their work.

My three years as an expatriate teaching in Japan also illuminated the disparities between Jamaican and Japanese principals' work. From my observations of Japanese school leaders' work, it was evident that culture and context played an integral role. I also realized that the Japanese emphasis on productivity meant a commitment to working long hours as a marker of good work ethics. Despite their dedication and access to resources, it was evident that their work had consequences for their occupational well-being (Adelstein, 2017; McCurry, 2017). Although this consequence interested me at the time, I found myself more attuned to understanding more about JSS principals' work.

It was at this juncture that I decided to pursue a Master of Education degree in Educational Leadership Studies. My research interest focused on four exemplary Jamaican secondary school principals' role in teachers' commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. During the data collection process, my participants revealed sensitive information about feeling overwhelmed because of the arduous tasks of the principalship. Specifically, principals discussed the challenges associated with their workload and work demands. The results from my master's thesis, paired with my knowledge about how Japanese work ethic can influence employees' occupational well-being, shaped the trajectory of my research interest. This journey and my interest in exploring JSS principals' work and their occupational well-being highlights that "research is a process, not just a product" (England, 1994, p. 82).

As a Black Jamaican woman with deep roots in my country, I understand the sociocultural and structural issues of fear and stigma associated with mental health/well-being issues. Given that Jamaican principals are in a position of authority, I recognize that my positionality as a Jamaican and a student in Canada interviewing them about a sensitive topic can ignite fear of the stigma of being labelled as "mad." In reflecting on my lived experiences as a Jamaican, I am cognizant of both the negative and positive

connotations of the words “mad” and “madness” when used to describe others. The derogatory nature of these two words is often used to belittle and “other” individuals whose behaviours, actions, and language depict some form of mental well-being issue (Arthur & Whitley, 2015; Davis, 2018; Hickling et al., 2011). In contrast, these same words are also used to describe actions and behaviours that may appear to be funny when used in a certain context around friends and families. These experiences have enabled me to reflect on myself as a researcher in the educational leadership field, my view of the world, and how I construct knowledge with my participants in a shared space.

Herein lies my positionality as a researcher in this study. As I shared the space with my participants, I became more aware of my positionality as an outsider (*etic*) as a PhD student with an insider (*emic*) view perspective as a Jamaican educator (Fine, 1994; Weis & Fine, 2000). Throughout the data collection process and my interactions with participants, I realized the influence that my emic position had on most principals’ openness in sharing details about their work and occupational well-being. I attributed this level of honesty to my nuanced understanding of the JSS principals’ work and the challenges they encounter in executing their work. This helped to foster trust between me and my participants, which resulted in rich, useful data. Kezar (2002) described this overlap of identities as researchers’ way of “making meaning from various aspects of their identity” (p. 96). It is further evidence of the reflexive process in which qualitative researchers examine the established relationship, if any, between themselves and their participants (Bourke, 2014; Pillow, 2003). The findings in this study therefore arose out my positionality as a Jamaican and Canadian graduate student researcher conducting qualitative research and having a personal interest in principals’ work and their occupational well-being. I, therefore, submit that my experiences as a scholar within the interpretivist paradigm and lived experiences informed my interpretation of the findings. My participants, however, operate within their own social world and interpretation of their lived experiences about their work and occupational well-being. England (1994) coined this relationship as the “betweenness” of participants’ and researchers’ worlds. Given the subjective nature of this study, my analysis and interpretation of principals’ perceptions about their work and their occupational well-being are seated throughout the findings chapter.

JAMAICAN SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' WORK AND OCCUPATIONAL WELL-BEING

Dissertation Outline

There are seven chapters in this thesis. In this chapter, I provided a rationale for investigating this phenomenon—Jamaican secondary school (JSS) principals' work and occupational well-being. I outlined further the background of the study that helped to shape the purpose of conducting this research. I connect the information in this chapter to the Jamaican context in Chapter 2 and provide details about the Jamaican context education system with emphasis on the geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts. In Chapter 3, I present my review of the literature, which covers the concepts I use in my framework—*work* and *occupational well-being*. In Chapter 4, I describe the qualitative methodological approach I used to conduct this study. This chapter provides details about the purpose of the study with a focus on recruitment and use of semistructured interviews with 12 JSS principals supporting urban, rural, and inner-city communities. In Chapters 5, 6, and 7, I present my findings. The findings are in response to my three research questions with emphasis on JSS principals' work, occupational well-being, and strategies employed to cope with their occupational well-being issues. A discussion of what the findings mean in the broader context of the study is presented in Chapter 8. In the final chapter, Chapter 9, I conclude by considering the broader implications of my findings for future research.

Chapter 2: The Jamaican Context

This chapter situates the research context. Given that the study was conducted in Jamaica, the chapter will detail the island's education system. It is important to understand the (a) historical and policy contexts, (b) structural reform programs, and (c) the neoliberal influence on Jamaica's education system. Given that these factors have reengineered how JSS principals carry out their work, it is also imperative to seat the concepts of work and occupational well-being throughout the chapter. Other themes specific to the geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts are discussed to understand the unique challenges JSS principals experience in their work.

Jamaican Education System

Jamaica, the third-largest Caribbean country, has its political and education system rooted in its colonial history. Jamaica's independence in 1962 did not eradicate the British influence on its sociopolitical and economic landscape, which has shaped how schools are governed and managed. Evidence of its lingering influence on the country's education system includes the existing bureaucratic structure, entrenched Euro-western notions of learning, and the pervasive use of streamlining students. These characteristics are tied to the remnants of social class, economic capital, financial inequity, language, and linguistics that have, over time, influenced curricular development, school choice, and school policies. Through ongoing assessment of the nation's education system, the MoEYI has sought to engage in rigorous policy development to improve student outcomes in literacy and numeracy. In the next section, I highlight the historical and policy contexts that have shaped how contemporary schools are managed.

Historical and Policy Contexts

Since Jamaica's independence in 1962, the MoEYI has exhibited a growing sense of urgency to improve the nation's education system. The ministry implemented the *New Deal Policy* in 1962 to create equal access to secondary school education for Black children who were predominantly from working poor families. In its efforts to advance equal opportunity for all students, the MoEYI also implemented policies and programs to revamp and transform the education system—albeit with a bureaucratic system and two-tier structure that embodied the colonial past (McKnight, 2017).

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One of the hallmarks of educational transformation in Jamaica began in 2000. To meet global changes and demands of the 21st century, the government released the *White Paper Policy, Education: The Way Upward – A Path for Jamaica's Education at the Start of the Millennium 2001*. The document underscored the need to create a synergistic approach to school leadership and management, curriculum development and planning, and constituents' involvement in school success.¹ Although the majority of goals were long term, continued short-term goals were expedited to increase enrolment and school attendance, improve the teacher–student ratio to increase annual literacy (English) and numeracy (Mathematics) in CSEC exams and enhance schools' physical infrastructure to accommodate a growing student population (Davis, 2004).

Further adjustments to the White paper policy were made in 2004 to accommodate more structural changes. These changes were aimed at the “modernization of the Ministry of Education to become a policy ministry” (Education for All (EFA), 2015, p. 2) to improve the targets set in 2001. This redefined policy further explained the role of principals through advanced training in leadership and administration. With the government's aim of advancing the country's growth by 2030, the Vision 2030 Jamaica national development plan was developed in 2009 to “promote and use standards to measure the performance of the education system based on results” (EFA, 2015, p. 3). This long-term Vision 2030 Jamaica national development plan resulted from the 2004

¹ School success in Jamaica is largely determined by principals' leadership and management capabilities that directly and indirectly influences student achievement (P. Miller, 2017, Davis, 2004). Students' achievement at the secondary level is based on their performance on their Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) examinations and involvement in extracurricular activities determine the overall school average. The CSEC is an organized body of 16 Caribbean countries (including Jamaica) that was established in 1972. The purpose of the CSEC is to ensure that secondary school students within the region sit for a common exam with similar syllabus and curricula. The overall average of students' performance in their CSEC examinations is used to rank schools as successful, marginal, and failed (Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CaPRI), 2012, 2014; Jamaica Ministry of Education, 2015). Extra-curricular activities are those additional programs outside of the normal curricular that students participate in to enhance their overall learning experience in technical and nontechnical areas. These additional programs include, but are not limited to, participation in linguistics programs, sports (such as track and field), and speech and debate clubs.

Taskforce on Educational Reform (Davis, 2004) and the Child Care and Protection Act (2004) with the goal to make Jamaica a developed country (Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIoJ), 2009).

Part of advancing the goal of becoming a developed nation is creating a value-based education system that meets international standards. Emphasis is therefore placed on developing students' critical thinking while encouraging and supporting them to be productive and successful life-long learners (PIoJ, 2009). The long-term objective is achieving success that will propel students to "effectively contribute to an improved quality of life at the personal, national, and global levels" (PIoJ, 2009, p. 4). Central to achieving this objective is students' academic achievement at the secondary level. Researchers outside the Jamaican context have argued that the work of secondary school principals is in stark contrast to their elementary counterparts (Seashore, et al., 2010). A key distinction made in these researchers' study is the reduced number of principals at the secondary level who engage in instructional leadership practices (Seashore, et al., 2010). These and other scholars such as Fullan (2007) further suggested that with few changes being made at the secondary school level, graduation rates at this level have remained stagnant for some time now. The same can perhaps be said for the Jamaican context, as government heads have for years argued for improvement in student performance in their CSEC exams at the secondary level (for e.g., Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, 2019b; PIoJ, 2009).

I, therefore, focus on the secondary schools instead of early childhood and primary level because CSEC examinations determine students career path. For the Jamaican government, student success at the secondary level not only informs their career paths, but will also help to fill the necessary gaps in human resources to catapult the country's position as a developed nation by 2030 (PIoJ, 2009). Notwithstanding this focus on secondary school education in this research, there exist challenges such as inadequate infrastructure to meet increased student population. To address this and other challenges among the principalship in Jamaica, the ministry has continued to engage in a process of ongoing structural reform.

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Structural Reform in Jamaica

With the majority of structural reform and policy programs aimed at enhancing school leaders' leadership and management capacities, the end goal is to enhance student achievement (Davis, 2004; P. Miller, 2013a, 2013b). The previously noted policies are examples of structural reform in Jamaica aimed at transforming the quality of leadership, management, teaching, and learning in schools. Structural reform in education is primarily focused on engineering change through mandatory standardized professional development training programs aimed at preparing principals for the principalship and improving teachers' pedagogical skills (Davis, 2004). These structured and imperative principal preparation and training programs are directed by the National College of Educational Leadership (NCEL) and Jamaica Teaching Council (JTC), and the National Education Inspectorate (NEI). These three programs are detailed below, beginning with the NCEL.

The National College of Educational Leadership (NCEL)

In keeping with the country's colonial past, the MoEYI adopted Britain's use of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) six years after it was established in Britain in 2002 (NCEL, 2015; Thomson, 2017). Through its collaboration with the department of school services (DSS), the Jamaican NCEL and British NCSL programs maintain a similar purpose—to train and enhance school leaders' leadership capacities (Bristol, 2013; Burns & Luque, 2014; MoEYI, 2015; Thomson, 2017). Specifically, the NCEL program offers theoretical and practical support for bursars, board chairmen, as well as aspiring and experienced school principals' leadership capacities (Burns & Luque, 2014; MoEYI, 2015). The MoEYI (2018) considered the NCEL program an imperative, given that

the competencies now demanded for effective school leadership include the ability to set vision and strategize, lead the change agenda, engage in systems thinking, demonstrate a sense of service and community, work collaboratively in teams, and display ethics and integrity. (para. 2)

Overall, the NCEL program prioritizes courses aimed at improving practitioners on the job and developing leadership skills that are applicable to their work. The program did not consider how new policies and broader neoliberal ideologies would affect the purpose

of education and the principals' work, however (Gunter, 2001; Thomson, 2008). While emphasis is placed on instructional and transformational leadership, the NCEL program has sought to include an emotional intelligence² course to enhance their leadership effectiveness. After a thorough review of the NCEL program, I recognized that details explaining to aspiring and practicing principals how this course prepares them for work challenges that have implications for their occupational well-being are missing from its modules. Furthermore, there is no evidence of articulated resources at the NCEL to support the potential risks for principals' occupational well-being. In addition to the NCEL program, the MoEYI has also implemented the Jamaica Teaching Council (JTC) to support principals and teachers alike.

The Jamaica Teaching Council and Principals' Career Stages

The JTC is the regulatory body for teachers and principals. Part of the JTC's role is providing professional development training for teachers and principals in their early, mid, and late career. In this research, I thought it prudent to know about the career stages of JSS principals' work. The JTC "is responsible for maintaining and enhancing professional standards, regulating, registering and licensing teaching professionals" (MoEYI, 2012, p. 19). Although the JTC did not provide details about the training for each group, studies indicate that training for early career principals often focuses on honing their leadership and management duties while neglecting their role as instructional leader (Oplatka, 2004, 2012). Novak et al. (2014) argued that this is a critical stage for early career principals who are more often focused on managing competing demands while adjusting to their school culture. These researchers further suggested that some principals in their early career experience lack of trust in others and decline in self-confidence—a component of their psychological well-being (Novak et al., 2014). In

² Emotional intelligence refers to principals' awareness of and ability to manage and articulate their emotions. Given that principals' leadership role specifically focuses on how well they manage human and financial resources to achieve school goals, their emotional intelligence helps them to manage interpersonal relationships with teachers and other key stakeholders (Goleman, 1995). Moreover, the unpredictable challenges associated with the principalship require school leaders to understand situations that trigger their emotions and that of others (Goleman, 1995, 1998, 2013).

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contrast, there are others who embrace the obscurity and challenges of their work as they transition in their new role as principal (Novak et al., 2014).

Conversely, there are some principals in their mid to late career who may lose their enthusiasm for their profession and engage in more instructional leadership responsibilities (Oplatka, 2004, 2012; Parylo et al., 2012, 2013). Depending on the context and their work, they also may experience issues with self-confidence, among other occupational well-being issues (Oplatka, 2004, 2012; Parylo et al., 2012). Such views are contested among researchers, however, many of whom consider mid- and late-career principals' years of service as a stage that offers principals a better understanding of their own emotions while handling unpredictable challenges (Oplatka, 2004, 2012; Parylo et al., 2012, 2013). Regardless of the stages of their career, Jamaican principals are mandated to comply with the standards of training offered in these named programs to respond to the National Education Inspectorate (NEI).

The National Education Inspectorate (NEI)

The MoEYI established the NEI to inspect schools across the nation. This independent body was created in response to the 2004 National Task Force on Educational Reform that recommended the assessment of the quality of leadership, management, teaching, and learning in schools. The overarching goal of the NEI is to ensure principals are following articulated policy standards and that the safety, security, and health of students are prioritized. In 2018, the NEI reported improvements in “all eight indicators of school effectiveness...students' performance; students' personal and social development; use of human and material resources; and students' safety, security, health and well-being” (Patterson, 2018, para. 1 & 4). Missing from these regulatory policies are supporting bodies to accommodate principals' occupational well-being needs. Reflected in these educational reform programs in Jamaica is the adaptation of neoliberal ideologies and global educational changes in the nation's education system.

Neoliberal Influence on Jamaica's Education System

Neoliberalism, through the driving forces of globalization, has translated into the marketization of education. The neoliberal influence on education connects to the common understanding of the term as a model that seeks to connect political, economic, and social activities to enhance individuals' entrepreneurialism (Harvey, 2005). Given the

emphasis on free markets, free trade, and transference of ownership in the hands of the individual, neoliberalism has signaled a new wave of competition among westernized countries to improve and maintain their positions as innovative leaders. As a result, the educational landscape and purpose of education in many developing countries, including Jamaica, have been altered to meet global standards.

Schools are no longer the vessel through which knowledge is transmitted and talents are harnessed to prepare students to become democratic citizens. Instead, they are categorized as spaces that promulgate the political and economic agenda to increase Gross Domestic Products (GDP) (Giroux, 2012). For example, regulatory bodies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) have transactional influence on the Jamaican economy. More specifically, the IMF and WB provide policy advice about specific areas in education that the Jamaican government must target to achieve economic growth (World Bank, 2013). In exchange, the Jamaican government must honor specific standards and regulations set by these donating bodies as part of the agreement to obtain funding to offset the country's increasing deficit (Swapp, 2015). As a consequence, the country is in a vulnerable position as the government has engaged in continuous structural reforms to align the MoEYI's programs with global/neoliberal standards (P. Miller, 2015; World Bank, 2013). This has yielded a raft of policies, as discussed earlier, including policy adjustments, increased standards, and expectations that inform principals' work (Ball, 2008; Lingard & Sellars, 2013).

Neoliberalism has also led to governments investing more in Information Communication Technology (ICT). In recent years, there has been an expansion of technological advancements and innovative tools in schools to facilitate greater efficiency in meeting mandated policy regulations to increase student achievement (Allodi, 2013; Carter, 2016; De Lissovoy, 2013; Pollock & Hauseman, 2018). The purpose of education has therefore shifted to "create creative and independent thought and inquiry, challenging perceived beliefs, exploring new horizons and forgetting external constraints" (Chomsky, 2011, para. 14). This meaning has been diminished to one that is oriented toward accommodating the ideologies of corporate giants and infusing them in curricular programs. Part of this agenda is to educate and prepare students to become human capital for the workforce, especially youths with astute and savvy minds (Lingard & Sellars,

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2013). This reinforces the Vision 2030 plan, which sees education as a catapult to transforming Jamaica into a developed nation (PIoJ, 2009). As the nation works toward achieving this goal, the trademark of neoliberal influence is embedded in the standardized tests—a punitive change to evaluation processes and curricular programs. This “process of reward[ing] merit and punish[ing] inefficiency” (Monbiot, 2016, para. 4) forms part of the intensification of the principal’s work. The significance of this for JSS principals is timely as they are held accountable for the success and failure of the traditional and nontraditional schools in which they operate across diverse geographical localities.

Difference Between Traditional and Nontraditional Schools

A total of 161 traditional and nontraditional JSS are located across the nation’s 14 parishes. Of these 161 schools, the churches built 35 traditional high schools in 1835 to accommodate the colonizers’ children. Traditional high schools are otherwise regarded as church and trust schools and are noted for their high standards in areas of leadership, management, teaching, and learning (Wilson-Harris, 2018). In the latter years, only students who obtained high average in the then-Common Entrance (CE) exam and Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT), currently known as the Primary Exit Profile (PEP) exam, attended these schools (MoEYI, 2019a). Such emphasis on high average and school choice requires JSS principals to ensure students maintain and improve a high standard of performance. In addition to a culture of high students’ achievement, the majority of these church and trust schools are highly resourced with human and material resources. These schools are rooted in traditional Christian principles with the added benefits of having a strong social network of support from community stakeholders and alumni that strengthens their economic well-being (Francis, 2014; Wilson-Harris, 2018). Support from these organized groups allow principals in these schools to continuously improve their schools’ infrastructure (including labs) and programs to sustain their school success (CaPRI, 2014).

The remaining 121 nontraditional government schools were built to create equal access and opportunity to education for children from “working poor” families. Distinctions along the lines of race and socioeconomic status helped to create a classist education system that has been perpetuated throughout the wider society. As a result, there is a stark difference in the quality of education and students’ outcome in traditional

and nontraditional schools. Despite improvements in the education system, nontraditional secondary schools (government schools) have continued to lag behind in areas of leadership, management, and teaching, and student achievement (NEI, 2015). As a consequence, the students attending these schools have a lower average in their CSEC exams (CaPRI, 2014; NEI, 2015). The majority of students attending nontraditional schools have a lower success rate in CSEC Mathematics and English when compared to their counterparts in traditional high schools (Bourne, 2019; CaPRI, 2014). Such disparity in performance is aligned with lack of human and financial resources (Bourne, 2019; CaPRI, 2014). Exploration of JSS principals' work and occupational well-being should, therefore, consider how and why their geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts affect their work.

Geographical Context

Jamaican principals operate in schools situated in various geographical contexts. For decades, performance among the principalship and overall school success have been linked to the geographical locality of schools—rural, urban, and inner-city schools (Beatriz et al., 2008). Distinctions among these three geographical contexts are discussed below in the same order with evidence from the literature highlighting how they benefit and impinge on principals' work.

Rural School Context

Rural schools exist across all educational systems. Schools situated in rural contexts have been recognized for their positive relationships with staff and community stakeholders and high expectations for students' overall success (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Bryant, 2012). Notwithstanding these positive features, there are challenges for some principals working in the rural school contexts. Scholars have argued that rural schools, such as those in Jamaica, are often lacking in the requisite human and financial resources and services (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Cornish, 2009; P. Miller, 2015, 2018; Moriarty et al., 2003). P. Miller's (2015, 2016, 2018) work on school leadership in rural Jamaica further highlighted the challenges some secondary school principals have in recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers. His examination of principals' work in rural context also alluded to the voluminous nature of work and related stress JSS principals experience (P. Miller, 2016). Contributing to these two noted issues among principals in

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P. Miller's (2015, 2018) studies is the lack of or limited resources to meet work demands. For these principals, their rural context restricted their ability to expand their networks of support from community organizations, which present feelings of isolation from the "outside" (P. Miller, 2015). While many schools in rural and remote Jamaican areas often lag behind academically, many inner-city schools experience the same problem (Miller et al., 2019).

Inner-City School Context

The characteristics of the inner-city school context starkly contrast those in rural and urban areas. Bodies of research have concluded that most Jamaican inner-city school contexts are plagued with socioeconomic issues, increased violence, poor infrastructure, high population density, and lack of proper amenities and social services (Jamaican Journal, 2005; Mullings et al., 2018; UN Habitat, 2007; World Bank 2010, 2014). Social and economic insecurity in Jamaica's inner-city school contexts have resulted in expansive support from international bodies such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Canada Helps (CH). Support from these bodies includes material and financial resources intended to develop and implement social programs for students and families within these communities.

However, Jamaican principals working in schools supporting inner-city communities encounter innumerable and unique challenges that affect their overall school success (E. Miller, 2016; P. Miller 2016, 2018). The challenges identified include higher rates of student indiscipline, school safety, violence, criminal activities, and poverty that reduce attendance, and community and parental involvement among others (Mullings et al., 2018; PloJ, 2009).

Urban School Context

Urban schools in Jamaica are located in towns and cities. These schools have greater access to the requisite resources and services to support students when compared to rural and inner-city communities (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2018). For decades, Jamaican students attending urban (traditional) schools have consistently outperformed other schools located in rural and inner-city schools ("Urban schools do better," 2014). Aligned with the disparity in student outcomes is the quality of teaching, learning, leadership, and management in these schools ("Urban schools do better," 2014). What

distinguishes most of these urban schools from many rural and inner-city schools are the subjects (e.g., French) and other curricular programs that appeal to families with the economic capital (“Urban schools do better,” 2014). Many of these parents work in industrialized areas with expanded social networks and economic resources that principals are able to capitalize on within their community (P. Miller, 2016, 2018).

Community Context

The people within the three named geographical contexts help to shape the support principals receive within the communities they operate. Moreover, the paradoxes and challenges that Jamaican principals who work in schools supporting rural and remote school communities experience have heightened changes in patterns of their work (P. Miller, 2015, 2016, 2018). Compelling evidence from principals in these rural contexts has further suggested that educational reform has increased principals’ work demands specific to paperwork and budgetary compliance in financial management (P. Miller, 2015, 2016). The findings in these two studies further hinted at Jamaican principals’ work being intensified as it relates to principals working with limited human and financial resources to meet work demands. Compounding these rural principals’ work is the growing increase in the student population, which poses problems in providing space due to insufficient number of schools to accommodate students’ learning needs (P. Miller, 2015, 2016; PLoJ, 2009). Principals also juxtaposed the benefits of having access to resources to meet new work demands with schools situated in urban and urban communities (P. Miller, 2015). The missing part of the discourse is research that specifically focuses on JSS principals’ work in other geographical localities and their experiences with work intensification. Therefore, understanding how the socioeconomic context influences JSS principals’ work is important as existing studies suggest that this intensifies their work (P. Miller, 2015, 2018).

Socioeconomic Context

Jamaica’s socioeconomic context has consequences for principals’ school success. Jamaica’s socioeconomic context is the relationship between social issues and economic capital within the society (OECD, 2011). The overall economic capital and net-worth of any country afford them the opportunity to meet the needs of their citizenry (OECD, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2011). Highlighting Jamaica’s socioeconomic context

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foregrounds its influence on the broader social problems that affect principals' work. Although the MoEYI receives a large portion of the nation's budget, JSS principals still grapple with limited financial resources to support their schools. This is discussed further in the ensuing section with focus on financial resources and entrepreneurial leadership.

Jamaica's Economic Growth

The economic context of Jamaica takes into consideration its overall fluctuating economic growth. The current economic growth reflects 1.8% in 2019 at a 4.2% rate of inflation (Focus Economics, 2020). This growth declined in 2020 to -1.7% because of the COVID-19 pandemic (Trading Economics, 2019). Recurring natural disasters, such as hurricanes, floods, and other environmental issues, are compounding the nation's unstable gross domestic product (GDP) (Jamaica Social Investment Fund, 2012; World Bank, 2019a). Natural disasters not only pose socioeconomic and environmental challenges for the Jamaican government but also affect budgetary allocation to different ministries, such as education (Jamaica Social Investment Fund, 2012). Despite these setbacks, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in Jamaica in, consultation with the MoEYI, has recognized the need to narrow the inequity gap. Increasing funding for public schools is one such measure to increase access to resources to support school effectiveness (Barro, 2002; D. E. E. Miller, 2017; P. Miller, 2015). For instance, the MoFYI has sought to prioritize expenditure on education as a share of gross domestic product (GDP). The government's average spending on education from 1993 to 2015 shows a maximum of 5.01% and minimum 3.21% (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2015; World Bank, 2016). In 2016, the MoF increased the MoEYI budget from \$98.9 billion to \$101.6 billion. This \$2.7 (2.73%) billion increase to the MoEYI's budget served to offset expenditures for the 2017–2019 educational reform policies and programs (Gleaner, 2018). In 2017, the Jamaican government also allocated 18.403% of expenditure on education (World Bank, 2019b). This provided an \$8,000 increase from previous \$11,500 to \$19,500 per child in each school (Jamaica Information Service [JIS], 2018). Providing schools with additional resources is intended to support them “by giv[ing] them more resources to support subvention, teaching and learning, special education, maintenance and capital works” (“Education ministry increases

funding,” 2019, para. 7–9).

Financial Resources

Jamaican principals are encumbered with ongoing constraints in their financial resources to support their school (P. Miller, 2016, 2018; PLoJ, 2009). Although all principals in Jamaica obtain allocated financial resources from the ministry, it is often inadequate for some to meet their work demands (P. Miller, 2016, 2018; PLoJ, 2009). As noted in component three of work intensification, additional tasks, Jamaican principals carry out additional tasks such as financial tasks to balance their coffers (P. Miller, 2018). Sourcing financial resources are multilayered and interwoven in the nation’s gross domestic product (GDP), as well as geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts (P. Miller, 2016, 2018; PLoJ, 2009). The cyclical effect of working with limited resources to meet work demands affects Jamaican principals’ capacity to lead in the rural areas (P. Miller, 2015, 2018). However, the influence this may have on their occupational well-being is one of the gaps in the literature that this study also sought to explore. This thesis provides a unique perspective on principals operating in the broader Jamaican context—rural, urban, and inner-city communities.

Advancing this idea and interest are the research studies indicating that individuals with access to financial resources experience higher levels of well-being (OECD, 2013); the same research indicates that lack of access to financial resources can also influence one’s occupational well-being (OECD, 2013). In this case, principals without the requisite financial capital or reduced economic well-being are prone to work-related stress, which can overtime generate feeling of anxiety, among other occupational well-being issues (Litchfield et al., 2016). These specific occupational well-being issues are congruous with the tenets of mental/psychological occupational well-being among other components (Jin et al., 1995; Litchfield et al., 2016; Platt, 1984; Warr, 1987; World Health Organization [WHO], 2014). Some principals in their individual contexts have engaged in entrepreneurial leadership to support their schools (P. Miller, 2016, 2018).

Entrepreneurial Leadership

Entrepreneurial leadership is practiced in private and public sector organizations. Understandings of entrepreneurial leadership in the 1980s were focused primarily on leaders being innovative practitioners and risk-takers (Aldrich & Zimmer, 1986; Covin &

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Slevin, 1988; Gartner, 1985; Low & MacMillan, 1988). Its emergence in the educational leadership field captured principals' innovative capacity in supporting teachers' professional development and finding resolve for imminent challenges (Hämäläinen et al., 2018; Roomi & Harrison, 2011). Through these researchers' lens, principals who embrace entrepreneurial leadership assume roles as marketing strategist, financial analyst, facilities manager, and policy implementer among others (Devita, 2005; Fernald et al., 2005; Marinopoulos, 2017). Research on JSS principals' entrepreneurial leadership practice highlighted principals' innovativeness in sourcing resources, such as fundraising, to fund their schools (P. Miller, 2018). Although entrepreneurship in education is not a novel idea (Marinopoulos, 2017), its prominence in Jamaica's education system is undeniable considering the nation's fluctuating economic growth (P. Miller, 2016, 2018). P. Miller (2018) posited that entrepreneurial leadership is "the predisposition of and practice of achieving valued ends by creating, taking or pursuing opportunities for change and innovation and finding new resources or utilizing in new ways existing resources (financial material and human)" (p. 237). Missing from P. Miller's (2016, 2018) research are the lived realities of JSS principals' working in urban and inner-city school communities with similar issues. Moreover, the extent to which such issues have influenced Jamaican principals' occupational well-being has not been explored. Nonetheless, JSS principals' ability to access support from constituents enables some to meet the financial obligations of their school (P. Miller, 2016, 2018).

Summary

The context of this study is intended to highlight specific areas of Jamaica's education system. Jamaica's education system, like some developing and developed nations, is entrenched in its historical past. The system has, however, traversed through educational reform programs that are aimed at improving school success in traditional and nontraditional schools supporting rural, urban, and inner-city communities. Despite the noted historical and policy contexts that have shaped how education is structured and managed, the driving force of neoliberal influence exists in the nation's education system. The ensuing chapter provides a detailed account of the literature review and conceptual framework used to support the exploration of JSS principals' work and occupational well-being.

Chapter 3: Literature Review: Principals' Work and Occupational Well-Being

The review of literature in this chapter highlights the empirical underpinnings of principals' work and occupational well-being. Exploration of principals' work and occupational well-being first require a closer look at the multiple perspectives and emerging changes of these two concepts. Since this study is situated within the interpretivist paradigm, emphasis is also placed on probing the historical and social contexts of these two concepts. Such rigour in the review of literature is an imperative to understand this phenomenon of Jamaican principals' work and occupational well-being. The final section in this chapter includes exploration of the strategies used in coping with occupational well-being issues.

Work

The work of school principals has been documented throughout the decades. Interrogation of the historiography of work within the educational leadership field revealed that principals' work includes the specific actions, activities, practices, and behaviours that principals undertake within a specific context to accomplish school goals (Applebaum, 1992; Fineman, 2003, 2012; Gluckmann, 1995; Pierce, 1935; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015). Shifts in the role of school principals have since underscored the complex and multiple responsibilities of the principalship within the 20th and 21st century (Fineman, 2003, 2012; Pierce, 1935). Earlier scholars like Pierce (1935) highlighted specific aspects of principals' work, such as supervising instruction, reinforcing student discipline, and sourcing supplies, among others. Implied further in the literature is the transference of similar kinds of administrative work from other disciplines, such as business, in the educational leadership field (Allison, 1989; Gronn, 2003; Owens & Valesky, 2006). As these scholars discussed, school principals carry out tasks that are congruent with managers, such as budgeting, planning, management, staff deployment, and coordination of programs (Gronn, 2003; Owens & Valesky, 2011). Although the expectations placed on principals grew in the 1960s, 1970s and beyond, there still remained a central focus on principals being instructional leaders (Hallinger, 1992).

Although many of these earlier studies were and are still oriented toward the positivist paradigms, scholarly works on the principalship are still carried out using the

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interpretivist and critical theory paradigms. Exploration of JSS principals' work in this study is conducted through an interpretivist paradigm. In keeping with the tenets of interpretivism, *work* is understood in this study as a social construct because school principals' lived experiences and knowledge are multiple, divergent, and contextual (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This paradigm directs me to examine the work of JSS principals within their community and geographical localities that are buttressed in the socioeconomic, sociocultural, and sociohistorical contexts. Understanding the challenges principals experience within these noted contexts is important given that JSS principals' work is largely situated in the instructional leadership domain and co-opted from developed nations (Davis, 2004; MoE, 2008, NCEL, 2017). Details about JSS principals' work are captured in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Paid Work-Related Duties

Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Work	
Performance Standards	Responsibilities
School Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with school board in making decisions. • Ensuring procedures and processes of leading and managing the organization are followed. • Managing human and material resources. • Having long and short-term vision to improve overall school success. • Attending meetings and liaising with parents, community members, and other constituents about school matters.
Planning and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that structures, procedures, and processes meet the requisite operational standards to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.
Curriculum Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing and facilitating student learning and achievement through content delivery and performance base standards. • Procuring and organizing resources to meet instructional and learning needs.
Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending to and monitoring of instructional leadership and curricular programs to improve the quality of teaching and learning. • Designing and implementing teaching and learning tasks to ensure all groups of students meet their academic goals. • Conducting scheduled and unscheduled class visits to supervise and evaluate instruction.
Positive Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a positive learning community to facilitate enhanced productivity and academic excellence among staff and students. • Establishing a collaborative and an inclusive learning community where parents, students, community stakeholders and others work towards achieving long and short-term goals.
Facilities Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing school facilities to ensure they are in compliance with safety and security standards; this includes appropriating resources for maintenance of school property, critical incident, and disaster preparedness plan.
Promote Professional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiring about and promoting professional learning to enhance self and staff knowledge, skills, and commitment to improving student and school success.
Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing school finance specific to preparing budget for expenditures that are in compliance with financial accounting procedures.
Ethical Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting with fairness and probity while carrying out leadership responsibilities. • Establishing a positive and professional environment that is built on trust.
Safety, Security, and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing standardized disciplinary policy in managing student discipline, safety, and security, and well-being. • Design programs and system that fosters positive relationship between school and community. • Managing human resources issues specific to conflicts among students, teachers, and other constituents • Planning, organizing, and soliciting the requisite resources to offset expenditures for infrastructural development, safety, security, and improvements in school programs.
Technology Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, sourcing, and utilizing technological and electronic tools to support teaching, learning, communication, and ongoing analysis of data.

(Sources: Davis, 2004; MoE, 2008; NCEL, 2015, 2017; The Education Act, 1980)

Work is contextually and culturally related to how specific activities are structured to achieve a distinct purpose (Fryer & Payne, 1984; Tilly & Tilly, 1988, Watson, 2008). With only few studies conducted on Jamaican principals' work, researchers have directed their interest in interrogating principals' role in teachers' commitment and student achievement (Hutton, 2016; P. Miller, 2013b, 2016, 2018; Thompson, 2017; Walker,

2016). Captured in these studies are some of the paradoxes and challenges principals working in rural and remote school communities experience such as lack of resources, increased student population, infrastructural challenges, and increased workload.

Compelling evidence from these and other studies highlight aspects of principals' work that are often prioritized and the limits in which they operate (Davis, 2004; Johnson & Ryan, 2006). While P. Miller's (2016) qualitative research provided depth of meaning and insight into principals' work, the qualitative study I undertook in my master's work (Walker, 2016) hinted at JSS principals having direct and indirect influence on student achievement despite the challenges in their contexts. Evidence from both qualitative case studies also captured Jamaican principals' reliance on Information Communication Technology (ICT) and engagement in innovative practices to meet work demands. The sum of principals' experiences in these studies provided rich descriptions of principals handling of interpersonal relationship conflicts, time and tasks activities, and administrative tasks among others. Both studies are grounded in research focused on work within frameworks of identity, status, and social influence (Fryer & Payne, 1984; Johnson & Ryan, 2006).

The status of the principalship fosters reciprocal relationships among constituents (Fryer & Payne, 1984; Johnson & Ryan, 2006). In other words, the position of the principalship and how principals engage with particular kinds of tasks point to the transactional nature of their work. Ample studies suggest that school principals have engaged in transactional relationships with teachers, colleagues, and other stakeholders that are mutually beneficial for decades (Marks & Printy, 2003; Smith & Bell, 2011). For example, when principals provide teachers with the resources to support their pedagogies, they often gain their commitment in supporting school programs and student learning (Marks & Printy, 2003; Smith & Bell, 2011). The transactional aspect of principals' work, as discussed in the context chapter around principals' as entrepreneurial leaders, points to their issue of working with limited resources to meet work demands.

Work Intensification

Work intensification emerged in the 1980s in the United Kingdom as a social and economic problem that would change the lives of employees and organizations alike. As this phenomenon permeated the labour market of other European countries in the 1990s,

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Francis Green sought to understand more about the origin of this unique issue. According to Green (2004), exploration of work intensification is a continued process because workers adaptation to technological and organizational change is constantly evolving. As Green aptly put:

Work intensification is, unlike economic growth, inherently a limited process.

Just as an extension of the length of workday is bounded ultimately by the number of hours in a day, so human physical and mental capacities do not allow an endless extension of effort. (p. 615)

Green argued that to fully understand work intensification, researchers needed to conduct ongoing investigations to know more about its occurrence in the workplace. Green's assessment of three major surveys, the employment in Britain survey 1992 and the Skills Survey 1997 and 2001, and interviews revealed that public sector workers experienced increased work when compared to their counterparts in the private sector. Green observed further that these same workers in the public sector were working longer hours, at an increased speed, and with great tension. He concluded, as well, that employees' job requirements demanded that they work harder than before. Green, however, noticed that there was a pause in this in 1997 after analysis of the 2001 data. For this reason, Green has called for ongoing tracking of changes in employees' work efforts.

After further analysis of workers' experiences, Green intimated that employees increased work efforts had implications for their well-being at work. Green concluded that workers felt more dissatisfied with their job, were physically and mentally drained, and had difficulties relaxing because of ongoing mental work after long work hours. In these surveys, workers' inability to separate personal and professional life when combined with increased work pressure led to work strain. Overall Green's analysis indicated that work strain was more evidenced among workers who had less autonomy, higher levels of education qualification, and learning new skills to carry out their tasks. Green's research has contributed to scholars' interest in school principals' work intensification and occupational well-being.

School Principals' Work Intensification

Emerging studies have also revealed that principals' work is intensifying. Work intensification is a complex and dynamic issue that involves an increased volume of

existing work, additional tasks, working with limited resources to meet work demands, increased pace of work, and long hours of work (Franke, 2015; Kubicek et al., 2014; Pollock et al., 2019; Wang, 2020a). In other words, contemporary school principals are seeing an influx in their workload and work demands that compromise their ability to take time away from the complexities and rigours of their work (Armstrong, 2015; ATA, 2014; Leithwood, 2014; Pollock et al., 2014, 2015).

Undergirding this glaring evidence of work intensification is the normalization of the neoliberal agenda and globalization that have taken root in education systems (Rizvi, & Lingard, 2010). As evidence indicates, globalization, economic competition, attendant neoliberal trends, structural reform, standardized policies, and accountability mandates have exacerbated the challenges in principals' work (Khan & Afaqi 2019; Litz, 2011; Mulford, 2003; Oplatka, 2004). In many instances, such increased workload and work demands are not context-relevant and often inconsistent with principals' lived realities, resulting in principals prioritizing more managerial duties that reduce their instructional time (Leithwood & Azah, 2014, 2016).

At the core of this problem is the emphasis on their ability to complete their workload in a shortened time frame. Documented evidence of principals completing workload in a shortened time frame illuminated its impact on increasing principals' work efforts, work pressure, pace, and intensity to keep abreast of work demands and unpredictable challenges (Green, 2001, 2004; Koolhaas et al., 2011; Kubicek et al., 2014; Kubicek & Tement, 2016; Paškvan et al., 2016; Tintore et al., 2020). Empirical studies conducted in Canada documented principals having multiple tasks that must be completed to meet tight deadlines, and increased workload that prevents the completion of their regular routine (Armstrong, 2015; Leithwood, 2014; Pollock et al., 2014, 2015). Other empirical scholarship also revealed that principals in the United Kingdom and the United States are experiencing increased complexity, reduced autonomy, work overload, volume, and intensification of their work (Darmody & Smith, 2016). Exploring the notion of work intensification in this study is an imperative given my interest in interrogating JSS principals' work and their occupational well-being. This section begins with the five criteria of work intensification as indicated earlier. An additional term, *no downtime*, consistent with recent research, has been added to these noted five

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components.

Increased Volume of Existing Work. Work intensification among the principalship is evidenced in their increased volume of existing work. Empirical studies described increased volume of existing work as principals carrying out comparable tasks from the past but in greater volume (ATA, 2012; Bottery, 2016; Green, 2004; Pollock et al., 2015; Pollock et al., 2019). Ongoing research on Ontario principals' work revealed that increasing shifts in accountability and policy reforms that are beyond principals' control have contributed to ongoing changes in their work (Pollock et al., 2015; Pollock et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2018). Compounding this change are the effects of advanced ICT usage on principals' increased volume of work specific to email and paperwork (Willis et al., 2015). Empirical evidence from Pollock and Hauseman's (2015) research revealed that 58.5% of Ontario principals are concerned about managing the surge in email correspondence. With no empirical evidence of how the new milieu of ICT impacts Jamaican principals' work, I aimed in this study to determine if this impacts their work. In addition to principals experiencing an increased volume of their present work, conclusions drawn from the aforementioned studies suggested that principals carry out a gamut of new additional tasks as well as their existing work.

Additional Tasks. Contemporary school principals appear to be carrying out additional kinds of work tasks to meet existing work demands (Bamberger et al, 2015; Green, 2001, 2004; Pollock et al., 2019). These additional work tasks were not part of their work in previous decades. Contributing to principals' additional work tasks are ongoing modifications to their work, which increases their workload and work demands (Bamberger et al., 2015; Green, 2001, 2004; Pollock et al., 2015; Pollock et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2018; Wells, 2013). From the literature, these additional tasks seem to fall into two general categories, additional support around student well-being and securing of necessary resources.

In the current climate of school principals' work, there has been an uptick in the privileging of students' well-being. Principals' support for student mental well-being has grown exponentially given the rise of standardized tests that have shown to have negative consequences for their mental well-being (Riehl, 2000). Adding to principals' concern for students' well-being are demographic changes, increased student diversity, as well as

issues around equity and discipline (Pollock et al., 2015; Riehl, 2000; Ryan, 2006). As school principals adjust to the additional tasks associated with these social issues, they also must secure needed resources to meet their work demands (Bauer & Brazer, 2013; P. Miller, 2015, 2018; Nhundu, 1999). P. Miller's (2016, 2018) qualitative research drew attention to some of the additional tasks Jamaican principals carry out, such as financial work, to source resources to meet work demands. P. Miller found that Jamaican principals are engaged in entrepreneurial leadership to offset budgetary expenses and support teachers' work. Principals in P. Miller's study also shared the challenges in working without a full complement of facilities management, administrative, and teaching staff.

Limited Resources to Meet Work Demands. Some school principals work with limited resources (Pollock et al., 2019; Miller, 2015). Levacic (2010) defined *real resources* as human and material capital that are essential for learning and creating a positive and rich school environment. *Monetary resources*, in contrast, are available financial resources that can be converted to supplies needed to support teachers, administrative, and ancillary staff.

In addition to real and material resources, principals also need to participate in ongoing training to attend to the well-being needs of their students and staff. Pollock and Wang (2020) suggested that principals also need professional development training in expanding their networks of support. In their studies on Ontario principals' work and well-being, they found that only 38% believed they are equipped with the resources needed to complete their tasks. Findings in this context support the notion that disconnects often occur between what is expected of principals in their position and the current resources provided. Principals in Jamaica lack financial and human resources to support curricular programs and infrastructural development to meet their work demands (P. Miller, 2015, 2018).

Miles and Frank (2008) suggested that although resources are needed to sustain schools, principals must be good stewards of these resources. Being good stewards of resources, according to Miles and Frank, require principals to be purposeful in their planning to maximize the most of what they have available. However, the socioeconomic and policy contexts at the local and national level in countries like Jamaica affect the

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resources allocated to schools (P. Miller, 2016, 2018). Overall, scholarly research indicates that the lack of resources requires principals to carry out additional tasks that add to the volume, complexity, time pressure, and pace of their work while reducing their instructional time (P. Miller, 2018; Pollock et al., 2015; Riley, 2015, 2017, 2018; Wood et al., 2012).

Increased Pace of Work. Work intensification has also increased the pace of some principals' work. Increased pace of work is the number of tasks principals carry out under time constraints that require greater efficiency and with limited or no downtime (Grissom et al., 2015; Manasse, 1985; Pollock et al., 2019; Sebastian et al., 2018). Accounting for this increased pace of work is the focus on efficiency in the principalship to meet 21st century leadership and curriculum standards (ATA, 2012, 2014). Driving such demand for increased productivity are ongoing policy changes and regulations, as well as hard-line accountability standards that require some principals to work at a faster pace (Leithwood & Azah, 2014; Pollock, 2016, 2017). Compounding these issues are the unpredictable challenges that sometimes require principals to resolve a gamut of issues within a short timeframe (Grissom et al., 2015; Sebastian et al., 2018). Manasse (1985).

These competing time demands, according to Grissom et al. (2015), pose challenges for principals in keeping up with the rapid pace of organizational change. Addressed in other bodies of research about principals' pace of work is the increased use of ICT, such as email, which requires faster turn-around responses from school boards, ministry, and other stakeholders (ATA, 2012; Pollock & Hauseman, 2018). Manasse (1985) confirmed this growing problem given that "the nature and pace of [work] often appear to control principals rather than the other way around" (p. 442). Supporting this perspective are findings in the Ontario, Canadian context indicating that 60.3% of principals find they work at an increasingly fast pace (Pollock et al., 2019). The growing increase in principals' volume of work, work demands, and pace of work, require many to invest long work hours to complete tasks (Pollock et al., 2017; Pollock et al., 2019).

Long Work Hours. Long hours of work are not a new phenomenon. Long hours have long since permeated the working lives of managers, leaders, and educational administrators (Green, 2004; Pollock et al., 2014; Pollock et al., 2019). These researchers suggested that principals work longer hours to reduce existing workload and increase

their pay. Other rationales for long hours of work include employees' commitment to their work and existing long hours culture (Kodz et al., 1998; Wong et al., 2019). Long hours culture is the value given to employees working extended hours within a particular organization that influences their increased average hour work week (Kodz et al., 1998; Wong et al., 2019). Long hours culture is manifested in subtle ways, such as peer pressure from colleagues who may demonstrate that working long hours is expected. In other instances, employees see it as a show of commitment and means of being promoted (Kodz et al., 1998; Wong et al., 2019).

Bodies of research have depicted a growing global trend of school principals working longer hours to complete their tasks. Educational scholars in Australia (Riley, 2016, 2018), Canada (Pollock et al., 2019; Swapp, 2012; Wang et al., 2018), and the United Kingdom (Phillips et al., 2007) have reported that school principals are devoting more than the average 40 hours to their work week.

Accounting for these extended hours of work is principals' adjustment to advanced ICY use that has penetrated the boundaries between their personal and professional life (Illies et al., 2015; Oplatka, 2017; Phillips et al., 2007; Pollock et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2018). Reported in these studies are principals spending more time absorbed in work via email and communication apps such as WhatsApp. As principals engage in more of these kinds of work, they are pressured to work beyond normal school hours (Pollock et al., 2014; Pollock & Wang, 2020). The principals in my master's research (Walker, 2016) study reported working long hours but did not discuss the tasks they complete during this time in depth. This present study is aimed at unpacking if JSS principals' workload is contributing to their longer hours of work. In sum, not only do principals work longer hours with an increased volume of work that includes additional work, but some do so at a faster pace in the face of limited resources (Pollock et al., 2019). Pollock et al. (2019) observed from their compendium of research that principals experience work intensification when all five components are "present and school leaders have no downtime to catch up on work or to recover both physically and emotionally from daily work stress" (Pollock et al., 2019, para. 7).

No Downtime. Downtime, in the context of this study, refers to principals having periods in their day when they are not engaged in physical or mental work. Research has

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suggested that downtime is an inherent aspect of work that enables individuals to restore their energy and recover from their work pressure and stress (Martin et al., 2020).

Scholars have also sought to explore the importance of downtime from family and housework, such as vacation and travel, to facilitate this needed form of self-care (Parasuraman et al., 1996; Shatell, 2018). Supporting these researchers' definition is Dugan and Barnes-Farnel's (2017) understanding of downtime as "a state of physical relaxation and psychological detachment that can occur within any of three major life domains: paid work, home/family work and leisure" (p. 47). These scholars explained further that downtime is an intentional way for workers to recover from stress associated with work demands and time pressure.

Researchers in the educational leadership field have sought to understand if principals' workload and work demands permit downtime (Pollock et al., 2019). According to scholars in the Ontario context, lack of downtime plays a role in the process of work intensification (Pollock et al., 2019). Supporting this argument are findings indicating that principals' engagement in continuous work and inability to have lunch breaks and vacation time does not permit them to physically and emotionally recuperate (Franke, 2015; Nhundu, 1999; Pollock et al., 2016). Wang (2020b) also intimated that work intensification does not allow principals to have downtime for social reflection and self-introspection about their work. Given that context matters and work culture dictates how principals in their social context manage their time, some principals can experience the five tenets of work intensification but have downtime. In this sense, there are principals, including those in my study, who may not be subjected to work intensification. However, when principals experience all five components without breaks, they are vulnerable to ongoing work-related stress that has implications for their occupational well-being (Boyland, 2011; Crozier-Durham, 2007; Green, 2004; P. Miller, 2012; Pollock et al., 2016; Tucker, 2010). Given that this study sought to explore principals' work and occupational well-being, a comprehensive analysis of the literature on occupational well-being is discussed below.

Occupational Well-Being

In this section, I present a review of the literature on occupational well-being. An overview of what *occupation* and *well-being* mean is explored as a combined term. The

meaning of occupational well-being is then discussed in more detail with attention given to the components of occupational well-being.

Differences Between Occupation and Profession

Occupation, the root word of *occupational*, is paid work. Occupation is also understood as a broad term used to talk about work that is often not given its deserved recognition (Surbhi, 2018). Wu and Lu (1999) expanded this definition of occupation to reflect the relationship individuals have with their work and environment. Consistent with the blurred lines in definition of both concepts, profession is understood as an occupation that requires qualification, training, knowledge, and set skills that fit the position (Surbhi, 2018). In contrast to occupation, individuals must follow a specific code of conduct designed for their profession. The principalship as a professional body is guided by a code of conduct to ensure principals use their knowledge and abilities to provide quality services to students, families, and other stakeholders they serve (Surbhi, 2018). Despite the complexity in understanding of these two concepts, I use occupational well-being instead of professional well-being because the central focus of this study is understanding the tasks principals carry out in their work environment that may impact their occupational well-being. While I acknowledge that principals personal and occupational well-being overlap, I am specifically interested in their occupational well-being.

What is Occupational Well-Being?

Occupational well-being is employees' ability to carry out their work while being physically, mentally, cognitively, and socially well (Appleby, 2016; Lane, 2018; Felce & Perry, 1995; Litchfield et al., 2016; Van Horn et al., 2004). Individuals are more inclined to achieve occupational well-being when their work allows them to have a sense of autonomy, productivity, value, and the ability to hone new skills (Christiansen, 1999; Kielhofner, 2008). Earlier scholarship on occupational well-being was primarily focused on protecting the health and safety of employees in the physical work environment from chemical and other forms of hazards (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 1999). Recent empirical investigations have moved beyond understanding what happens in the physical environment to knowing more about workers' lifestyle practices and their intersectionality with organizational and work culture, as well as the community (Doble & Santha, 2008; Mansveld, 2017; Zacher & Schmitt, 2016). The interrogation of

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employees' work realities allowed researchers to understand how work-related stress impacts their overall occupational well-being (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 1999; Sauter et al., 1990). This type of research, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2000), seeks to examine the psychosocial hazards of the workplace.

Occupational well-being, according to the WHO, is employees having the capacity to carry out their work regardless of existing stress. Fingret (2000) and the WHO acknowledged that workers' occupational well-being is optimal when employers identify, remove, and manage the psychosocial hazards in the workplace. In so doing, they are able to establish a positive and healthy work environment. Healthy work environments are noted for their balance in work pressure and employees' knowledge, access to resources to meet work demands, autonomy, and networks of support to manage unforeseen challenges. Notwithstanding the prominence of occupational well-being in the medical, manufacturing, and business fields, (Green, 2001, 2004; Kabat-Zim, 2009; Richardson & Rothstein, 2008; Siegel, 2007), its emergence has become more evident in the educational leadership field.

For the contemporary school principal, being well while undertaking their work is an imperative given the rise in work demands and workload in the principalship (Pollock et al., 2019). In keeping with the WHO's (1986, 2014) definition, principals' occupational well-being is having the knowledge, ability, and resources to cope with and manage the existing work demands and pressure that present challenges in their work (Canadian Association of Principals & ATA, 2014; Galdersi et al., 2015; Klocko & Wells, 2015; Lane, 2018; Pollock et al., 2019; Riley, 2016, 2018; Wells, 2013, 2016). How principals' occupational well-being unfold is culturally contextual, and dependent on their lived realities, working conditions, work environment, and sense of work purpose (World Health Organization, 2014). Given that this study seeks to examine JSS principals' work and occupational well-being, I thought it prudent to explore what resources are in place to support them while at work.

Occupational Well-being in the Jamaican Context

Although many countries seek to protect the occupational health and safety of all workers, preference is often given to some groups with emphasis on the physical

environment. Occupational well-being in the Jamaican context does not include school principals and other professionals' well-being external to factory workers. Instead, the Ministry of Labour and National Security (MLNS), Jamaica (2018) has indicated that occupational well-being "seeks to secure the wellness of mind, body, and spirit of workers" in factories (para. 2). Although Jamaican school principals are inundated with increased work demands, (P. Miller 2015, 2018), the impact on their occupational well-being may differ based on contextual challenges. Contributing to this perceived disparity is principals not having the material resources and capacity to manage the stress in their work environment that can pose risks for their occupational well-being (Wells, 2013). As conveyed in the literature, employees including principals' inability to manage their work-related stress over an extended time contributes to occupational well-being issues (WHO, 2014, Wells, 2013). In this sense, I believe there has to be a discussion about work-related stress before detailing the subsequent components of occupational well-being.

Work-Related Stress

Work-related stress exists in schools regardless of context. Work-related stress is principals' inability to cope with increased workload and changing work demands that adds pressure and strain (Friedman, 2002; Galdersi et al., 2015; World Health Organization [WHO], 2013, 2014, 2019). Chaplain (2001) argued that work-related stress is situational and dependent on available resources to support one's work. Scholarly research predominantly from a positivist paradigm and to a lesser extent from the interpretivist and critical paradigms concluded that excess and prolonged stress have implications for principals' occupational well-being issues (Pollock & Wang, 2020).

Significant findings in Phillips and Sen's (2011) study conveyed that work-related stress among educators is the highest when compared to employees in the health, industrial, and other professions. According to these scholars, school principals experience work-related stress when relationships among and with staff is not optimal and they lack the resources to carry out their work. Other challenges in principals' school context that contribute to their work-related stress are related to the five tenets of work intensification as I discussed above. These issues, together with bullying from parents and students, as well as lack of control and autonomy over aspects of their work, subject

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principals to increased levels of stress (Bauer & Brazer, 2013; Cooper & Kelly, 1993; Darmody & Smyth, 2016; Earley & Bubb, 2013; Riley, 2016, 2018; Pollock & Wang, 2020; Wang, 2018). Other research suggests that employees' long hours of work when enmeshed with the tasks they complete in their work environment can exceed normal stress levels (Adams, 2019). In this sense, school principals' prolonged work-related stress makes them susceptible to physical, mental, cognitive, and occupational well-being issues.

Physical Occupational Well-being

Being physically healthy in the workplace is not limited to ill-health. Physical well-being is generally described as individuals' consciousness of and proactive engagement in healthy lifestyle practices to enhance their overall well-being (Davis, 2019; Felce & Perry, 1995; Wicker et al., 2015). This generalized conception of the term overlaps with understanding of physical occupational well-being. Physical occupational well-being is employees working in an environment free from physical, chemical, and other forms of work hazards (WHO, 2014, 2019). Such an environment provides health and safety opportunities aimed at reducing employees' injuries, illnesses, and stress (WHO, 2019).

As noted earlier in the literature, stress is an inherent part of work in the school environment. However, principals' physical occupational well-being may be compromised when they feel physically unsafe because of negative interactions with others (Pollock & Wang 2020). Pollock and Wang (2020) reported that Ontario principals feel physically unsafe when they experience threats and bullying from stakeholders such as students and parents. Principals in this same study and other research also expressed concerns about staff that create and engage in a toxic subculture of gossiping and discrimination (Eller & Eller, 2013).

Not all relationships are negative. Principals in Ontario and other jurisdictions experience positive relationships with colleagues (Pollock et al., 2020; Riley, 2016, 2018). Consistent with principals lived realities in these studies is the positive relationships with their colleagues that are not emotionally draining, when compared to handling students' disciplinary issues. These challenges at times deplete principals' energy, especially when there is no downtime for physical and emotional restoration

(Pollock et al., 2019). As suggested in other bodies of research, working in a physically unsafe environment and without opportunities for nutritional breaks, physical exercise, and adequate sleep can lead to hypertension and/or diabetes (Davis, 2019; Felce & Perry, 1995; Gupta, 2015; Lagrave, 2017; Nemade et al., 2015; Seligman, 2002; 2011; Wicker et al., 2015).

Mental Occupational Well-being

Mental well-being is more commonly known as mental health. The WHO (2018) described mental health “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make contributions to his or her community” (para. 2). Researchers have expanded its meaning to reflect an individual’s respect for self, freedom, and being in tuned with their environment (Galdersi et al., 2015; OECD, 2018). These scholars also attributed one’s mental well-being with engagement in self-care and reciprocating similar attributes to others (Galdersi et al., 2015; OECD, 2018). Earlier scholarship on mental health, now mental well-being, were aligned with classist structures that perpetuated the idea that only the vulnerable had such issues (Livingston, 2013). Wilcock (2006) argued that vulnerable groups with mental well-being issues were people from predominantly working/lower class who were unemployed, inclined to worry, and physically inactive.

Emerging studies have suggested otherwise that school principals, as part of a professional group, are not immune to mental occupational well-being issues (Klocko & Wells, 2015; Wells, 2013). Mahfouz (2018) and Wells (2013) concluded that principals handle a wide spectrum of unpredictable challenges that influence their mental well-being. Such challenges include working without the requisite resources to support their school program—an issue identified in the Jamaican context (P. Miller, 2015, 2018, Walker, 2016). The review of literature further revealed that the tenets of principals’ mental occupational well-being include canons of the psychological, cognitive, and social occupational well-being literature (Galdersi et al., 2015, 2017; Wells, 2013).

Psychological Occupational Well-Being. Psychological well-being is an interdisciplinary concept that overlaps with the tenets of emotional well-being. Like emotional well-being, psychological well-being is individual’s ability to evaluate their

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state of well-being, happiness, job satisfaction, and capacity to carry out their work (Bojanowska & Zalewska, 2016; Coleman, 2002; Gregoire, 2013; Hernandez et al., 2018; Jayatilake, 2017; Liu et al., 2014; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 2001; Shin & Johnson, 1978). These collective bodies of research intimated that increased and lengthened work-related stress contribute to workers' psychological distress.

In the context of the school environment, principals' psychological occupational well-being is their capacity to foresee and plan for unpredictable challenges in their local and global contexts and still remain satisfied with their work (Leithwood, 2017; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016; Pollock et al., 2018). Being proactive in the midst of unpredictable demands allows school principals to harness a persistent mindset of optimism as they identify areas of influence and take the appropriate risks (Bandura, 1993, 1999, 2000, 2009; Federici & Skaalvik, 2012; Leithwood, 2017; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016; Yamamoto et al., 2014). Amato and Zuo (1992) similarly observed that in addition to taking risks, principals must believe in the process of change while being resilient in the midst of crisis. Both scholars and other researchers concluded, as well, that when principals work with limited resources, they can experience stress that can result in psychological ill-health such as anxiety, depression, and anger/ aggression (Coleman, 2002; Jayatilake, 2017; Ryff & Keyes, 2001; Turner, 1981). Principals' vulnerability to these overarching mental/psychological occupational well-being issues is an area of interest in this study, especially given the existing structural and social stigma that exists around discussing mental well-being issues in Jamaica (Arthur et al., 2010; Hickling et al., 2011).

Mental Health Stigma. Mental health stigma, a sociocultural issue, prevents access to care. Stigma relative to mental health, addresses the stereotypes, discrimination, prejudice, and negative labels associated with any symptoms of this issue (Ahmedani, 2011; Bentall, 2016; Link & Phelan, 2001, 2006; Link et al., 2004). With stigma around the mentally ill still prominent in the Caribbean and particularly the Jamaican context, I thought it prudent to understand if this could be an emerging issue in this study. This assumption is compatible with leading experts on mental health in the Caribbean congruent perspectives that mental ill-health exists across and within structures and institutions (Arthur et al., 2010; Hickling et al., 2011; Jackson & Heatherington, 2009).

Evidence from these bodies of research indicated that mental health issues in Jamaica are linked to matters associated with trauma, the vestiges of slavery and colonial occupation (Arthur et al., 2010; Hickling et al., 2011). I believe JSS principals, through their own education and lived realities in Jamaica and their school context, may have an understanding that mental health is viewed as an abnormality, a weakness, and a spiritual problem (Arthur et al., 2010; Hickling et al., 2011). As a consequence, awareness of mental health issues and access to support have not reduced people's refusal of care because of the effects of stigma on their mental and social occupational well-being.

Stigma is personal, interpersonal, and structural. At the personal level, individuals with mental well-being issues can feel a sense of humiliation, self-doubt, and become withdrawn because they are afraid of being labelled as different (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2017; Sartorius, 2007). Stigma from an interpersonal perspective is a social process in which those most vulnerable are put in a secondary position with individuals in their social networks. The perceptions from social network, including family and friends, subject citizens to fear which also impacts access to medical services and needed support for their mental well-being issues (Ahmedani, 2011; Arthur et al., 2010; King et al., 2020; Kapungwe et al., 2011; Vistorte et al., 2018). At the structural level, Jamaica has maintained the negative stereotypes toward citizens with visible mental health issues, such as anxiety (Hickling et al., 2011; Penn et al., 1997). As a result, Jamaican citizens are in constant fear of being labelled as mentally ill and crazy; this is noted in the dialect as "mad, sick, head nuh good" when they show signs of depression and/or anxiety (Arthur et al., 2010; Jackson & Heatherington, 2006; Williams, 2013).

This negative character trait and behaviour reduces an individual's identity to stereotypes that can influence their quality of performance and access to care (Dudley, 2000; Goffman, 1963; OECD, 2011). The principalship elsewhere and in Jamaica is a position of authority that is largely functionalist in scope and practice without much attention to their occupational well-being (Gunter, 2001; Thomson, 2008, 2017). Notwithstanding the Jamaican government's efforts in implementing medical services in all 14 parishes, access to care remains a challenge given the fear of being stigmatized (Clarke, 2017; Hickling et al., 2011). This fear of being stigmatized because of mental

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occupational well-being issues among JSS principals in my study perhaps have a corrosive effect on their cognitive occupational well-being.

Cognitive Occupational Well-being

Cognitive well-being is described in the literature as the subjective assessment of one's life satisfaction. This component of occupational well-being takes into account individuals', including school principals' experiences, memory, self-awareness, and ability to focus and act in good judgment (Diener, 1984, 2000; Galdersi, et., 2017; Gregoire, 2013; Llewellyn et al., 2008; Luhmann, 2017; Margolis & Lyubomirsky, 2018; Vanhoutte & Nazroo, 2016). The literature on cognitive occupational well-being has also emphasized the importance for individuals, such as principals, to keep track of local and global challenges that can affect their cognitive well-being (Galdersi, et., 2017; Luhmann, 2017).

As principals' respond to and make decisions about unpredictable challenges, they also operate within an increasingly digitalized environment that extends their hours of work. Long hours of work using ICT for school principals demand high levels of concentration, attention to details, and learning new ways of carrying out their practice. Research suggests that working long hours can contribute to mental fatigue while affecting individuals', including principals', cognitive occupational well-being (Kahneman, 2011; Luhmann, 2017; Schimmack et al., 2008; Tversky, 1979). Ample studies further suggest that principals may experience cognitive strain because their workload and work demands may disrupt the flow of their work. If principals, such as those in Jamaica, are engaged in a combination of long hours and other components of work intensification without downtime, their cognitive occupational well-being will be impaired. School principals, therefore, need to be cognitively well to attend to increased work overload and work demands in their local context.

Social Occupational Well-being

Social well-being is the support one gets from others in their social networks. The literature suggests that social networks of support provide a sense of purpose and social inclusion with colleagues and friends external to their families (Davis, 2019; Jahoda, 1980; McKee, 2017; Nieminen et al., 2010; Nieminen et al., 2013; Stewart-Brown, 1998). For school principals, their social occupational well-being is premised on the meaningful

and respectful relationships forged with colleagues in their internal and external school environment (Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2004). Of the total principals surveyed in Ontario, 61.9% of them consider their relationship with others an integral part of their work (Pollock & Wang, 2020). From the perspectives of these principals, the support they receive from teachers and other members of staff enables them to fulfill their work practices. Yet, principals felt exhausted from the interactions with staff because of the time and energy required in understanding and developing relationships. For these principals, their relationship with others is largely positive, with 71% reported feeling respected while at work (Pollock & Wang, 2020). Such supportive relationships have shown to create and enhance their social network despite evidence of isolation in the role (Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2004; Bauer & Brazer, 2010, 2013; Bauer et al., 2017; Drago-Severson, 2012; Pollock & Wang, 2020; Stephenson & Bauer, 2010).

School principals' social occupational well-being also has professional and personal benefits. Research suggests that principals' engagement in civic duties, social activities, and professional development workshops improve their cognitive and psychological well-being (Felcy & Perry, 1995; Hyyppä & Mäki, 2001). Educational scholars also concluded that principals' social networks help to resolve unpredictable challenges and facilitate support for those encumbered with occupational well-being issues (Allison, 1997; Armstrong, 2014; House, 1981; Klocko & Wells, 2015; Rishel & Hartnett, 2015). Such support has shown to enhance principals' happiness, self-esteem, sleep patterns, and reduction in feelings of isolation (Bartholomew et al., 2011; Davis, 2019; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Like physical and mental occupational well-being, principals' social occupational well-being has reciprocated effects on other components of well-being (Mahfouz et al., 2019; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). According to Mahfouz et al. (2019), principals' social occupational well-being enhances their physical, and mental occupational well-being. The totality of these components of principals' occupational well-being is also dependent on the level of motivation.

Motivation

The changing role of the principalship is fueled with unpredictable challenges that often require the incumbent to remain motivated. Purported in bodies of research is the

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idea that motivation is a subjective desire to willingly complete given tasks even when faced with challenge, work pressure, and strain (Dolan, 2017; Eyal & Roth, 2011; Strack et al., 2017). As previously discussed, there are aspects of principals' work that have implications for their occupational well-being. However, studies have revealed that some principals are intrinsically motivated to recognize and prepare for local and global challenges impacting their work (Beatriz et al., 2008). Convergent conclusions drawn from the psychological and educational leadership fields intimated that intrinsically motivated principals are able to assess and manage the stress associated with their work before it turns into occupational well-being issues (Boundless Psychology, n.d.; Dolan, 2017; Riley, 2018; Strack et al., 2017).

In other instances, there are principals who are extrinsically motivated when they are recognized for those achievements. Recognition for such achievements from school boards, superintendents, teachers, and other constituents have been noted in research to increase principals' job satisfaction (Iannone, 1973; Schmidt, 1976). Although intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can also be viewed as strategies principals use to manage different occupational well-being issues, research suggests that their subjective experience requires different strategies as detailed in the ensuing section.

Strategies Principals Use to Cope with their Occupational Well-Being Issues

The strategies presented in this section of the review of literature are consistent with best practices used among professionals in managing occupational well-being issues. Although the genesis of occupational well-being is tied to the notion of mental health/well-being, the literature is not drawn from a positivistic clinical approach. Instead, it is based on the sociological nature of the study to understand how a specific population—JSS principals—cope with their occupational well-being issues. Strategies that individuals, including principals, have used to cope with their occupational well-being issues include medical services that countries including Jamaica offer to their citizenry. Other strategies include engagement in physical exercise, healthy eating habits, sleep hygiene, spiritual belief, mindfulness meditation, and family and networks of support.

Medical Services

Medical services are those medical and health care resources offered to citizens in a given country. Such medical services include dental, hospital visits, therapists, mental health services, and medical checkup specific to consult with a physician to name a few (Campbell, 2013). Although access to health care in Jamaica is offered to the public and private sector, it is of no cost at government hospitals and clinics across the country (Campbell, 2013; Ministry of Health, 2008). Emphasis is, however, placed on medical checkup.

Medical Checkup. Having a medical checkup is a proactive way of taking care of one's overall well-being. Medical checkup is described in the literature as an annual examination that individuals proactively seek from their physicians to ensure they are in good health (Shiel & Balentine, 2020). Although each individual's physical well-being is different, Sheil and Balentine (2020) and Yoffee (2009) asserted that medical checkups are done to manage or identify individuals' risk for diseases such as hypertension and diabetes. The benefits of medical check-ups, in the context of this study, have shown to prevent and minimize long-term risks to employees', including principals' physical occupational well-being while extending their life expectancy (Krogsboll et al., 2012; Shiel & Balentine, 2020; Taylor, 2016). However, as work intensification and burnout continue to thrive in the workplace, employees who are impacted most are compelled to use a combination of medical checkups. These include physical examination, counselling, and occupational therapy to reduce the influence on their physical, mental, cognitive, and social occupational well-being (Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists, 2016; McIntyre, 2018; Tello, 2020). In accordance with principals' occupational well-being, the Education State, Victoria (2018) developed a principal health and well-being strategy program aimed at encouraging principals to take proactive measures in accessing physical and mental health services.

The program includes proactive and responsive measures that encourage principals to voluntarily access physical and mental health services. Principals in this context also have the opportunity to gain expert advice to improve their health with the added option of getting a referral for specialized services (The Education State, 2018). A designated responsive team is primarily focused on helping principals reduce their

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workload. In doing so, principals are able to gain expert guidance and advice on how to manage their work-related stress before it escalates into occupational well-being issues. This proactive and responsive program address the concerns articulated in Riley's (2018) longitudinal survey that Australian principals work-related stress is impacting their occupational well-being. As work intensification and burnout continue to thrive in the workplace, employees including principals are encouraged and compelled to use a combination of physical examination, counselling, and occupational therapy to cope with their physical, mental, cognitive and social occupational well-being issues (Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists, 2015; McIntyre, 2018; Tello, 2017). Considering the interdependence of all components of well-being, engaging in hobbies can be a source of support for school principals.

Physical Exercise

It is documented in the literature that physical exercise enhances people's overall well-being. Studies exploring the mental/psychological effects of exercise on individuals noted its benefits in managing their physical well-being (Lawton et al., 2017). Educational scholars have also concluded that while principals' work is intensifying, their engagement in a combination of exercises can help to support their occupational well-being (Felce & Perry, 1995; Pollock et al., 2019; Wells, 2015). The principals in these studies shared the benefits of participating in one or more types of exercise/s to better cope with their work-related and occupational well-being issues such as stress, diabetes, and hypertension. Other bodies of scholarly research cited exercise, such as walking, as one of the main coping strategies school principals use when they are overworked, fatigued, and exhausted (Hawk & Martin, 2011; Poirel & Yvon, 2014; Shumate, 2000). Earlier and more recent research provided congruent accounts of school principals using exercise to proactively reduce their work-related stress before it snowballs into physical, mental, cognitive, and social occupational well-being (Beisser et al., 2014; Poirel & Yvon, 2014; Richardson, 2020). Although these studies have suggested that exercise improves principals' occupational well-being, the benefits are dynamic as reduced stress has shown to improve dietary behaviours—specifically, healthy eating habits (Block et al., 2009).

Healthy Eating Habits

Healthy eating habits is an intentional lifestyle change that individuals practice to improve their physical well-being. Research on healthy eating habits concluded that it also enhances individuals' cognitive, social, and emotional/psychological well-being (Orava et al., 2017; Tello, 2020). While the importance of healthy eating habits is detailed in these studies, the intensification of principals' work presents impediments to and irregularities in principals' eating schedules (Henry et al., 2015; Pollock et al., 2015). Pollock and Wang's (2020) more recent research indicated that more than half of their participants' workloads and work demands do not permit downtime for healthy eating habits. Medical experts and education scholars have indicated that individuals who regularly have healthy dietary practice are better able to manage weight gain and improve hypertension and diabetes (de Ridder et al., 2017; Felce & Perry, 1995; Henry et al., 2015; Wells, 2015). In addition to healthy eating habits is the need for principals to exercise proper sleep hygiene.

Sleep Hygiene

Sleep hygiene is referred to here as principals' engagement in specific behavioural changes to ensure adequate and uninterrupted sleep. More recent studies have reported the connection with principals' sleep deprivation and their long hours of physical and mental work to keep up with their work demands (Harvard Mental Health Letter, 2019). Consistent with these findings is the reciprocal influence of sleep deprivation on individuals' cognitive, mental, psychological, social occupational well-being (Irish et al., 2015; Mahfouz, 2018). Therefore, practicing sleep hygiene serves to remediate and balance the effects of sleep deprivation on these components of principals' occupational well-being (Mahfouz, 2018). The literature also captured the interconnectedness of exercise in reducing stress and exercising good sleep hygiene as a strategy to reduce feelings of fatigue, low energy, exhaustion, as well improving high blood pressure and diabetes (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), 2007, 2017; Fortier-Brochu et al., 2010; Harvard Mental Health Letter, 2019; Irish et al., 2015). The practice of sleep hygiene also supports individuals' spirituality.

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Spiritual Beliefs

Spiritual belief is the faith and relationship one has in a higher power. According to Faull (2012) and other scholars, spiritual belief is connected to individuals' belief system, background, integrity, principals, morals, values, and understanding of life (Aich, 2013; Dehler & Welsh, 2003; Fukui et al., 2012; Jackson & Monteux, 2003; Mehdinghad & Nouri, 2016; Ross, 1990; Safairad et al., 2010). It is also implied in other research that an individual's spiritual belief is a subset of their spiritual well-being and trusting in something higher than themselves (Allen & Khan, 2014; Byrd et al, 2000; Greenfield & Mark, 2007; Keyes & Reitzes, 2007; Pawar, 2016; Landy, 2014; Wink et al., 2005).

Spiritual belief is contextual and also affiliated with religious beliefs. Researchers have argued that spiritual belief is a subjective and sociocultural phenomenon that exists in all religions, such as Christianity and Judaism (Allen & Khan, 2014; Faull, 2012; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004; Smith, 1950). Expressions of one's spiritual beliefs in these religions include places of worship such as denominational churches and engagement in practices such as yoga and mindfulness meditation (Williams & Penman, 2011). In keeping with the practices of Christianity in schools, I thought it prudent to also highlight the Christian religion in this study. In pursuant with the literature and my experiences as a Jamaican educator, the Christian religion has its long and established sociocultural and historical prominence in Jamaican schools and the curriculum (Allen & Khan, 2014; Brown-Smythe, 2015; Landy, 2014).

In my review of the relevant literature, I did not find any empirical investigation on JSS principals' spiritual beliefs and occupational well-being. Instead, research has focused on Jamaican students' dependence on their spiritual/Christian beliefs when confronted with different problems (Brown-Smythe, 2015; Jackson & Heatherington, 2009). The few existing studies addressing this phenomenon are found elsewhere highlighting the sociohistorical connections to religion in schools and principals' reliance on their spiritual beliefs to guide and support their work efforts (Mehdinghad & Nouri, 2016; Pollock & Wang, 2020; Riley, 2018). Other documented benefits of principals' spiritual beliefs on their work and occupational well-being include enhanced cognitive awareness, and compassion for self and others (Fukui et al., 2012; Mehdinghad & Nouri, 2016). Spiritual beliefs also provide individuals, including principals, with hope during

difficult times (Faull, 2012; Mehdirzad & Nouri, 2016; Schwebel, 2017; Ying, 2009). The literature further outlined that school leaders' spiritual beliefs help to reduce and manage long-term work-related stress, depression, and anxiety, while providing them with hope in difficult times (Faull, 2012; Mehdirzad & Nouri, 2016; Schwebel, 2017; Ying, 2009). Aligned with these spiritual beliefs is the use of mindfulness meditation as a coping strategy to improve one's occupational well-being.

Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness meditation is practiced among secular and nonsecular groups of people. Leading scholars such as Kabat-Zinn (1994) posited that mindfulness meditation is an ancient spiritual and psychological well-being practice that allows individuals to purposefully stay in the present without judgment. This nonjudgmental practice that emerged in Buddhism has been studied and practiced across Western nations to understand its benefits to individuals' overall well-being (Coleman, 2002; Goleman, 1998; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003, 2017; Nelson, 2017; Shapiro & Shapiro, 2017).

Mindfulness meditation has restorative benefits. Scholars in the educational leadership field also postulated that mindfulness meditation has mitigating effects on principals' mental, cognitive, physical, and social occupational well-being (Felce & Perry, 1995; Gupta, 2015; Dallas, 2018; Klocko & Wells, 2018; Mahfouz, 2018; Robinson, 2017; Siegel, 2007; Wells, 2016; Wells et al., 2011). These scholars also concluded that mindfulness meditation helps principals cope with their work-related stress, anxiety, frustration, exhaustion, and other occupational well-being issues. Mindfulness meditation is, therefore, beneficial to the contemporary school principal's awareness of self and others whose work intensification presents the noted occupational well-being issues (Wells, 2015, 2016; Wells et al., 2011). In addition to the cognitive benefits, researchers intimated that mindfulness meditation supports principals' resilience, mental agility, and emotional stability during challenging times (Coggin, 2019). However, its use among JSS principals remains unexplored.

Family and Networks of Support

Family and networks of support is integral to employees, such as principals', occupational well-being. This support system as referred in the literature is the relationships principals establish with their family, constituents, friends, colleagues, and

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others in their social networks (Altinyelken, 2018; Bauer et al., 2017; Felce & Perry, 1995; Morin, 2008). As discussed earlier, the relationships principals establish with colleagues including vice-principals, teachers, and other staff are a critical part of their social occupational well-being (Davis, 2019; Felce & Perry, 1995). De Bloom et al. (2012) provided a balanced perspective that healthy relationships with families and close friends help employees to recover from work-related stress and maintain healthy relationships at work. Specifically, De Bloom and other researchers have advocated for employees' spending quality time, such as vacation, with family and friends to recuperate from the exhaustion and tension accrued from their workload and work demands (Akerstedt 2006; De Bloom et al., 2011, 2013). Given the importance of principals having downtime to recoup physically and mentally, the time they spend with family away from home and work has shown to restoring depleted energy, improve mood, sleep, fatigue, stress, frustration, exhaustion, and burnout from work (Akerstedt et al., 2009; Chen & Petrick, 2013; Coy, 2019; Robinson, 2015; Kiihnel & Sonnentag, 2011).

Collectively, the strategies individuals, including school principals, employ to cope with their occupational well-being issues are more individualized. Throughout the review of literature, there is a lack of evidence of Jamaican principals engaging in these practices to cope with their physical, mental, cognitive, and social, occupational well-being issues. Nonetheless, principals must ensure they proactively seek to balance work stress as they carry out their work before it leads to occupational well-being issues. The ensuing section details the conceptual framework I used to inform and analyze the findings in this research.

Conceptual Framework

This section details the conceptual framework used to explore the phenomenon under investigation—Jamaican secondary school (JSS) principals' work and occupational well-being. My use of these two interdependent concepts—work and occupational well-being—helped to examine, critique, and interpret the 12 interviewed JSS principals in this study understanding of their work and occupational well-being.

Work

My understanding and use of the concept work in this study moves beyond the normative conception of it being paid employment of labour within an organization to

achieve articulated purpose and goals. Instead, work is put forward in this study as a social construct. In this sense, principals' work and knowledge of said work are socially constructed and historically situated through reciprocal influence with stakeholders in a given context. Grint (2005) explained that, as contexts evolve, those who occupy space must adjust to inevitable changes. Principals respond to socioeconomic, sociopolitical, demographic, political, cultural, and technological change in their local and national contexts (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). The work of the principalship is, therefore, not devoid of context and social relationships with stakeholders in their work environment. Along these lines, I considered JSS principals' adaptation to these forenamed contextual issues and the impact they have on their practices.

To study JSS principals' work without interrogating the socioeconomic, sociohistorical, and sociocultural contexts is antithetical to the principles of interpretivism. In my investigation of JSS principals' work through the interpretivist paradigm, I privileged their voices to gain knowledge about how they understand their work. In capturing their experiences, I sought to identify the why, what, and how of their work as it unfolds in their own context. I also considered the preeminent view of work among scholars as those particular activities, actions, and behaviours that principals undertake (Applebaum, 1992; Fineman, 2003, 2012; Gluckmann, 1995; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015).

Work is also described and used in the study as physical and mental. Germane to principals' physical and mental work are the multiplicity of tasks they carry out across divergent school contexts. As articulated in the literature, principals' tasks include gleaning resources, protecting instructional time, and managing finances as well as school safety and security (Grissom et al., 2015; P. Miller, 2018). Exceeding these and other tasks, Hoy and Miskel (2008) postulated that the individual in the work environment has their own "needs, beliefs, and cognitive understanding of their work" (p. 26). I, therefore, sought to uncover and understand JSS principals' perception, beliefs, awareness, knowledge, and assessment of their work. Influencing principals' understanding, actions, behaviours, decisions, awareness, and examination of their work are existing organizational structure, culture, and politics (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). The values

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principals assign and give to such issues amid their interaction with stakeholders in their local context help to unpack the complexities of work as a social construct.

Exploration of the intricacies of principals' work brings to focus existing challenges. Regardless of context, challenges exist within structures and institutions and with stakeholders across different schools. Given that political influence encroaches on principals' work, I analyzed how educational reform affects other aspects of work that JSS principals prioritize. I also focused on the challenges in the divergent geographical and community contexts in which JSS principals operate and how these overlap with their socioeconomic context. As global trends in educational leadership continue to inform Jamaican principals' work, principals are pulled in multiple directions to keep up with changes in their work. Some of these changes are reflected in unprecedented demands to improve school success, and accountability mandates prioritizing managerial tasks and students' well-being (Pollock & Wang, 2020).

Occupational Well-Being

In this study, occupational well-being is principals' ability to cope with the normal stress that exists in their work environment before it develops into health challenges. This conception of Jamaican principals' occupational well-being is interwoven with the sociohistorical, socioeconomic, and sociocultural background of their work.

As discussed earlier, understandings of occupational well-being have more broadly been focused on the psychosocial hazards in the physical work environment (WHO, 2014). This narrow definition of occupational well-being emerged from earlier research identifying manufacturing companies as being overly focused on the health and safety of the physical environment (Lowe, 2004). Revised understandings of occupational well-being have since focused on the psychosocial work environment.

The psychosocial work environment focuses on organization of work, workplace culture, and community relationships (WHO, 2014, 2017). In such an environment, leaders consider the occupational well-being of all employees and make accommodations for those with existing health challenges and disabilities. Securing a healthy and safe environment also includes promoting a healthy workspace that improves and protects workers' physical, mental/psychological, cognitive, and social occupational well-being

(Adams, 2019; World Health Organization [WHO], 2014, 2019; Lowe, 2004). It also involves managers and employees having autonomy over their own health to ensure they remain enthusiastic, positive, and satisfied with their work. Considering that principals have experienced reduced autonomy in their work, I was interested in finding out if this applied to their occupational well-being.

Combined Use of Work and Occupational Well-Being

I used the concepts of work and occupational well-being to develop a multilayered and overlapping conceptual framework. This framework allowed me to explore the lived realities of JSS principals' work and occupational well-being. In my juxtaposition of work and occupational well-being, I focused on principals' individual and collective understanding of their work. More specifically, I examined their actions, behaviours, and activities they carry out as their work across and within different geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts. Exploration of JSS principals' occupational well-being required closer examination of the challenges in all three school types—rural, urban, and inner-city. In my examination of JSS principals' work in these contexts, I analyzed the effects of changing policies, student demographics, parental concerns, and stakeholder on their workload and work demands (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; P. Miller, 2016, 2018; Sebastian et al., 2017). Given that increased workload has shown to heighten principals' stress levels, I probed my participants' experiences with prolonged occupational stress and the consequences for their occupational well-being. This is where I used the concept to understand JSS principals' unconscious assumptions and existing tensions in the definition and interrelated components of their mental/psychological, cognitive, and social occupational well-being. These four interrelated elements of occupational well-being allowed me to tease out the value and priority JSS principals give to their health and the implications for their work.

At the centre of the analysis of principals' work and occupational well-being is JSS principals' ability to cope with their occupational well-being issues. I, therefore, situated occupational well-being in my analysis of shared strategies these principals used in coping with different occupational well-being issues. The concept occupational well-being also assisted with identifying the support they receive from the ministry for their occupational well-being issues. In particular, focus on JSS principals' access to

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mental/psychological care was necessary given the structural and cultural stigma around mental health in Jamaica. The framework used in this study also afforded me the opportunity to expand the literature and build on existing theory around principals' work and occupational well-being. In summation, this conceptual framework and the review of literature were used to develop themes in the findings as outlined in the methodology in Chapter 4.

Summary

This review of literature captured the earlier and recent literature on work, work intensification, occupational well-being, and leadership. These four concepts form part of my research question and subquestions aimed at understanding the nature of principals' work, the challenges their work presents, and their occupational well-being, and the strategies they use to cope with their occupational well-being issues. I created the conceptual framework to explain the purpose of my research. The four concepts—work, work intensification, occupational well-being, and leadership—are paired to highlight their interdependence and how they support the guiding research question and subquestions used to explore the phenomenon. The subsequent methodological chapter details the recruitment process of JSS principals working in different geographical localities. The chapter also expound on the methods used in gathering and analyzing the data to understand JSS principals' work and occupational well-being.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In this chapter, I detail the qualitative research methodology used to understand Jamaican secondary school (JSS) principals' work and occupational well-being. I used my interdependent conceptual framework—work and occupational well-being—and qualitative research to understand how participants' unique context heightened their experience with work intensification. I begin this chapter with a clear rationale for using qualitative research. The subsequent sections include the research design with details about the data collection methods specifically through the interpretivist paradigm. I expound on the trustworthiness features of the research and provide details about the analysis of the data followed by the chapter's conclusion.

Qualitative Research

In this study, I adopted a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research is referred to as participants' account of their personal experiences about a given phenomenon to determine the “how” and “what” of their experiences (Patton, 1990, 2015). Since this research topic has never been explored in the Jamaican context, I wanted to understand JSS principals' “individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions” (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993, pp. 372–373) about the phenomenon under investigation. Tesch (1990) concluded similarly that qualitative research is “a kind of naturalistic inquiry which assumes that realities are multiple, constructed and holistic” (Tesch, 1990, pp. 40, 51). It is, therefore, used to investigate the relationships between people, space, and objects to provide for ‘thick descriptions’ of the data (Patton, 1990, 2002; Stainback & Stainback, 1988). Qualitative research also ascribes to an interpretivist paradigm that purports that social reality is multiple and best understood in natural settings.

The Interpretivist Paradigm

In this study, I engage with the interpretivist paradigm to explore JSS principals' understandings of, experiences with, and beliefs and feelings about their work and occupational well-being. The interpretivist paradigm is primarily focused on the multiple and subjective lived realities of people's understanding of their social world (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As such, qualitative research that is grounded in the interpretivist paradigm seeks to delve into participants' thoughts, behaviours, and meaning about a given

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phenomenon, all of which are couched in their social and historical contexts (Brooksbank, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this interpretivist study, I seek to interrogate JSS principals' work, including understanding the activities they carry out daily. Driving my exploration of JSS principals' work is the ontological assumptions of interpretivist research that people have different views and interpretation of a given phenomenon (Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2008, 2012; Guba & Lincoln, 1990; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 2000; Schwandt, 2000; Tite, 2010; Tesch, 1990).

Conducting an interpretivist research is appropriate for this study because of its benefits in exploring complex and interrelated issues (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 2000; Schwandt, 2000). In this sense, the sociological nature of the study requires depth of new knowledge and insight to understand what aspects of JSS principals' work that present occupational well-being issues. As an interpretivist researcher, I consider the notion that knowledge is socially constructed. This knowledge is enmeshed in JSS principals' perspectives and the meanings they attribute to their experiences with work and occupational well-being situated in their sociohistorical and cultural contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 1990; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 2000; Schwandt, 2000). I also used the interpretivist paradigm to explore and ground my interpretations of the issues within their community, geographical, and socioeconomic contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The guiding research questions used to investigate this research, as detailed below, fit within the principles of interpretivism. More specifically, I used generic qualitative research because of its flexibility in allowing researchers to interpret participants' lived experiences (Merriam, 2002).

Generic Qualitative Research

Generic qualitative research provides a wide range of methods to explore a given phenomenon without using other canons of qualitative research designs such as phenomenology (Creswell, 2013; Kahlke, 2014; Litchman, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Richard & Morse, 2007; Sandelowski, 2000). Caelli et al. (2003) made a similar assertion that generic qualitative research "is not guided by an explicit or established set of philosophic assumptions in the form of one of the known qualitative methodologies" (p. 4). Patton's (2015) perspective supports these researchers' view as he noted the benefits of graduate students asking participants open-ended interview questions without

following the guided ontological and epistemological principles of qualitative research. Merriam (2009) also argued that generic qualitative studies are focused on understanding “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam, 2009, p. 23). This understanding of generic qualitative research applied to this study because I sought to know more about JSS principals’ work experiences in their different contexts.

Specifically, my interest in understanding JSS principals’ perspectives about their work required richness and depth in description and interpretation of the data (Bourke, 2014; Merriam, 2009). The tenets of generic qualitative research provided such opportunities while expanding my understanding of the challenges that principals experience within their geographical and community contexts. This methodological approach also helped me to explore the sociological aspect of JSS principals’ work and occupational well-being. General qualitative research also helped with examining the strategies used to cope with such occupational well-being issues.

My positionality has also shaped the research process because generic qualitative research is socially constructed and not void of interpretation. Therefore, my location in the interpretivist paradigm enabled me to construct shared knowledge through interpretation of the data that JSS principals have already interpreted (Lincoln et al., 2011). In other words, qualitative research is used to “make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1996, p. 3). As an “interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counter disciplinary field” (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 6), qualitative researchers accept that reality is multiple, subjective, descriptive, and complex. These subjective views are privileged and are often laced with biases because they represent an individual’s personal experiences within their social world (Beiber, 2010; Creswell, 2012, 2013; Freimuth, 2009).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a key component of qualitative research. Given my awareness of the tenets of qualitative research, I sought to be more reflective of my role as a Jamaican Black female student studying abroad. I also took into consideration any perceived influence I may have on my participants while gathering the data. Despite the contrast in power between myself (a researcher with knowledge about the topic) and principals (the

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primary leader in their schools who became the subject of the research), I recognized the importance of being ethical, reflexive, and flexible during the research process (Creswell, 2013).

I chose a general qualitative research design because it provided the opportunity for me to interact with participants in their unique setting. Supporting my choice was also my desire to interact with JSS principals “in their... territory...in their language, [and] on their terms” (Kirk & M. L. Miller, 1986, p. 9). I also wanted to understand JSS principals’ “internal reality rather than pure external and independent facts” (Freimuth, 2009, p. 7), given that little is known about the phenomenon under investigation. In my exploration of JSS principals’ work and occupational well-being, I used the following three research subquestions to gather the data, as noted in Chapter 1.

1. What are the work experiences of JSS principals?
2. What occupational well-being issues do JSS principals experience in their work?
3. How do JSS principals cope with their occupational well-being issues?

I then went through the rigorous process of collecting, organizing, and interpreting the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2013). During this data collection process, I explored JSS principals’ work and their occupational well-being. More specifically, I sought to understand how the MoEYI’s structural reform and policy programs intensify JSS principals’ work. Given Jamaica’s unique context, I also explored how the geographical, community and socioeconomic contexts posed challenges for JSS principals. This was important given the emphasis on principals improving and maintaining the quality of leadership, management, teaching, and learning to improve and maintain their school success (NEI, 2017). Participants’ personal views on their relationships with the MoEYI and school board were also taken into consideration, as these two groups govern and direct their responsibilities. The generic qualitative research was useful in gathering these types of data because it is “rooted first and foremost in the character of the phenomena investigated and not in the investigator’s methodological preferences” (Mitchell, 2011, p. 139). Therefore, as I delved into a rigorous process to explore the data and respond to the research questions through an interpretivist lens, I ensured that I used my conceptual framework as a guide to understanding the 12 JSS

principals' work and occupational well-being. To fully capture the process of collecting the data, I described the criteria for identifying principals working at different stages of their careers.

Identifying Secondary School Principals in Early, Mid, and Late Career

Jamaican secondary school principals operating in all 161 different school contexts, across 14 parishes, have varying levels of experiences. Given the total number of schools, I did not anticipate a complicated recruitment process. However, the possibility of identifying and finding principals in their early, mid, and late career posed several challenges. First, the MoEYI has recently allowed principals to take early retirement, as the government embarked on a new phase of pension reform (Linton, 2017). This early retirement option seemed to have played a role in for only a few principals in their late career participating in the study. Second, the details of principals' years of experience were not highlighted in their accessible online school profile. Finally, many principals did not respond to the recruitment letters, which limited my ability to specifically ask about the number of years they have worked in their schools. I, therefore, accommodated principals who expressed an interest to voluntarily participate in the study despite their busy schedule.

Despite my limited ability to recruit for career stages, participants fell within all three stages—early, mid, and late career. Hvidston et al. (2015) suggested that educational researchers must consider the career stages of principals when investigating a particular phenomenon. In the context of this study, JSS principals in their early career have 0 to 5 years of experience. Research suggests that early career principals often seek to understand their role as leaders and managers of their school while adjusting to their school culture (Hvidston et al., 2015; Oplatka, 2004, 2012). Conversely, mid-career principals have 6 to 10 years of experience, and late-career principals have 15 plus years of experience (Hvidston et al., 2015). Most principals in their mid to late career may engage in more instructional leadership responsibilities while also embracing the obscurity and challenges of the work as principals in their early career (Oplatka, 2004, 2012; Parylo et al., 2012). In the context of this study, principals in their late career are defined as principals having worked for more than a decade in the role. I placed much emphasis on recruiting principals in diverse contexts and with varying experiences

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specific to the conditions in which they operated. I also aligned my research questions with the purpose of the study to understand principals' lived work experiences and occupational well-being. Through my own experience as a former teacher, I recognized that my interest in the topic was embedded in the following assumptions about JSS principals' multiple and diverse work experiences and their occupational well-being. In keeping with these four assumptions, I sought to understand:

- principals' work experiences in their respective school contexts,
- the extent of the challenges in their geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts,
- if the MoEYI, Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA), and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) provide occupational well-being support for principals', and
- principals' ability to employ varying strategies to cope with their occupational well-being issues.

I also explored issues related to trust among principals in seeking support from each other in their social networks. Related to the lack of trust and/or established trust among principals are issues of resource allocation and support from constituents. I used the conceptual framework to facilitate a better understanding of principals' work, as they execute their duties in their internal and external work environments.

Principal Recruitment

I took specific steps in recruiting JSS principals to participate in this study. Conducting research in an international setting requires adherence to specific rules before data collection. As part of the protocol in conducting educational research in Jamaica, I had to provide details about the study to the MoEYI along with an official letter seeking their approval to enter the schools. This process was done after receiving permission from the Office of Research Ethics at the Western University of Ontario. The MoEYI then emailed secondary school principals different geographical localities informing them of the study and asking for their voluntary participation. The MoEYI included my contact information for principals to indicate their interest in participating in the study. After principals contacted me, I discussed with them details about the mutually agreed date and time to conduct a face-to-face semistructured interview in the privacy of their school

office or any other place that is mutually convenient. Upon receiving a positive response from principals interested in participating in the study, I emailed the letter of information and informed consent forms to the principals. I sent follow-up emails and calls to the principals when necessary. This form of communication with the 12 Jamaican secondary school principals was necessary to provide further details about the research through the letter of information and informed consent.

The entire recruitment process further highlighted that principals work is unpredictable. Principals had constraints to fully commit to their appointment date for the interview. For example, when I called the schools, the secretaries would indicate their principals' inability to receive calls because they are in meetings with students, parents, vice-principals, or other members of staff. This happened frequently, which altered the date and time for the interviews. In fact, after committing to participate in the interview, two principals did not follow through with the process, which at the time presented setbacks and disappointment in getting participants operating in inner-city communities. This did not deter my goal of recruiting principals in all three geographical locations to voluntarily participate in this study.

I used *purposeful sampling* because I intentionally recruited 12 JSS principals to participate in the semistructured interviews (Patton, 1990, 2015). I was also deliberate in getting female and male principals working in secondary schools supporting rural, urban, and inner-city communities as they “are likely knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon...[I was] investigating” (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993, p. 378). Although several principals responded promptly, I recognized a change of pace in principals' response and commitment to a set time and date. I then decided to use *convenience and snowballing sampling* to recruit other principals (Creswell, 2013; Lictman, 2013) but was successful in conducting only two interviews. I received information about another principal while communicating with one of the three principals I interviewed face-to-face in Jamaica. At the time of the interview, the principal suggested that I interview a principal in his network of schools. The snowballing technique/method “uses participants' social networks and personal contact for gaining access to people” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 158). Two of the interviews were conducted via Skype, while principals were

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at their homes. The remaining eight interviews were done via telephone after school and the completion of their daily work tasks.

Interviewing Jamaican Secondary School Principals

In this study, I used qualitative semistructured interviews to collect the data. Interviews take into account knowledge “that people take for granted” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 6). Interviews are ideally used to facilitate conversations between the researcher/interviewer and participants/interviewee about past and current events that are absent from surveys and observation methods. Successful interviews are marked by the researcher's /interviewer's ability to align their conceptual framework, research purpose, and questions with the methodological approach as they obtain the data.

An interview is, therefore, considered the channel through which multiple viewpoints of participants are obtained (Fontana & Frey, 2000). This method of collecting data is ideally used in qualitative research, as the researcher can steer the type of information received from multiple participants that would not have otherwise been able to get from just observing behaviours. This process contributes to the qualitative research being “richly descriptive” (Merriam, 2009, p. 16). Interviews also help in the recording of impressions and generating detailed personal information (Charmaz, 2008; Creswell, 2012). Interviews also enable researchers to access past and current events, as well as the permissible circumstances that were previously inaccessible (Burgess, 1984). Interviews allow researchers to gather data without resorting to tactics; thus, providing more clarity of participants' experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Merriam, 1998, 2009). I therefore employed semistructured interviews to explore and garner more in-depth knowledge of JSS principals' work.

Semistructured Interview

The semistructured interview allowed for the examination of JSS principals' work. I also explored how the geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts heightened JSS principals' work that affect their occupational well-being. My use of semistructured interviews is in keeping with Bogdan and Biklen (2003) claim that the tenets of hermeneutics allow researchers to elicit participants' views and experiences. These ideas are then “refined hermeneutically, and compared and contrasted dialectically, with [the] aim of generating one or few constructions on which there is a substantial

consensus” (Guba, 1997, p. 27). These scholars’ suggestions point to the researcher as an instrument in collecting data about human-related problems in their social world (Creswell, 2008; Lictman, 2013). The semistructured interview also lends itself to an open-ended process that allows the researcher and participants to collaboratively construct knowledge (Angen, 2000; Lincoln et al., 2011). I found this process beneficial and significant for bringing about some form of awareness of the phenomenon while giving credence to the experiences of different groups (Angen, 2000; Lincoln et al., 2011).

In keeping with the qualitative research method design, I conducted a face-to-face semistructured interview and telephone interview with a sample size of 12 principal participants (Creswell, 2012). The 12 participants self-identify as male (7) and female (5). Participants work in secondary schools supporting rural, inner-city, and urban school communities. Each interview lasted 60 minutes and was audio-recorded then transcribed. This sample size included principals operating in their early, mid, and late career.

I used the 15 interview questions that are subsumed under the four-research sub-questions and headings—background, leadership, challenges, and strategies. These questions were used to explore the nature of JSS principals’ work, specific to their experience with work intensification and its influence on their occupational well-being. I also investigated how the challenges in their geographical, community and socioeconomic contexts further heightened their work. The research questions also focused on the varying strategies that principals employ to cope with their occupational well-being. Based on the specific responses my participants provided, I asked follow-up questions to better understand their perceptions about how their work occupational well-being. The follow-up questions were advantageous during the interview process as principals were motivated to expound on their answers. During the process of conducting face-to-face semistructured interviews with the first three principals, I gathered unique perspectives about their context—rural, urban, and inner-city.

I experienced a few challenges with the telephone interview. I experienced several interruptions during the telephone interview with the other nine principals. These interruptions presented challenges in asking follow-up questions, listening to their responses, and completing the interviews. Nonetheless, the majority of JSS principals

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were cooperative and understanding. The interruptions, however, resulted in one of the principals postponing the completion of the interview because they had to attend to urgent matters. As a result, it took four days before the interview was completed. Despite this interruption, the principal was very understanding and open to responding to the research questions.

After I completed my twelfth and final interview, I discontinued the recruitment process because I realized that I had reached a saturation point. While coding the data, I noticed the tenets of work intensification emerging such as limited resources to meet work demands, working long hours, among others for research question one. Other themes that emerged in the data that are relevant to the other research question two include components of occupational well-being such as physical, and mental, occupational well-being. Spiritual beliefs in God and social networks of support are some of the main themes that emerged in research question three about the strategies they use when coping with different occupational well-being issues. Due to the sensitive nature of the study and the stigma associated with mental well-being issues in Jamaica, I used pseudonyms to maintain the 12 JSS principals' privacy. I, therefore, reassured participants that the pseudonyms will be used to protect their names, and affiliated organizations in the transcripts and any published work. I also informed participants that specific data revealing their identity will not be used. I made the decision to limit details about each participant in their professional profile as seen below in Table 2. Overall, I was able to conduct in-depth interviews that "yield[ed] direct quotations [from JSS principals] about their experiences, opinions, feelings, ...knowledge." (Patton, 2002, p. 4). The interview represented JSS principals' lived experiences about their work and the existing challenges within their contexts that present occupational well-being issues. These questions are in keeping with the principle of generic qualitative research which emphasizes researchers understanding of participants' experiences and the meaning they attribute to them (Merriam, 2009).

Principals' Professional Profile

These 12 JSS principals in this study work in rural, urban, and inner-city school communities. At the time of the interview, JSS principals with varying levels of experience operated in schools serving each context. Although the work principals

perform are invariant, their experiences and trajectory to the principalship are arguably different. Table 2 below details principals’ demographic profile. The table includes participants’ name, gender, and stage of career. I intentionally excluded a brief biography of each participant with details about their school context account for their anonymity. Instead, I provide a general summary for the 12 participants in this study.

Table 2

Demographic Profile of Principals

Participants’ Name	Gender	Stage of Career	Geographical Location
Principal 1	Male	Mid-career	Inner-city
Principal 2	Male	Early career	Urban
Principal 3	Male	Mid-career	Rural
Principal 4	Male	Early career	Inner-city
Principal 5	Male	Early career	Urban
Principal 6	Male	Late career	Urban
Principal 7	Male	Early career	Rural
Principal 8	Female	Late career	Inner-city
Principal 9	Female	Mid-career	Rural
Principal 10	Female	Late career	Urban
Principal 11	Female	Early career	Rural
Principal 12	Female	Late career	Urban

Principals’ ascent to their current role began as teachers working in informal and middle—management capacities before transitioning into the role of vice-principal, then principal. These middle management positions include experiences as head of department (HoD) and year group coordinator before becoming a vice-principal and principal. Others with fewer years of teaching experience have worked in the education system as financial managers, guidance counsellors, and entrepreneurs (owners of educational institutions). Two of the twelve principals never had vice-principal experience but found their middle management and voluntary community experiences helped to prepare them for the role. Two principals are also active leaders in their church.

At the time of the interview, five principals were in their early career, three in the mid-career, while the other four in their late career. Two of these three principals presented unique findings because of their years of experience working in varying capacities. Although the principals’ age was not taken into consideration when collecting the data, the majority of them are at least in their mid to late forties, and early to late

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fifties. The findings indicate that the majority of principals spent most of their younger years teaching before taking on any formal leadership roles. Therefore, almost all the principals have the requisite educational background “implicit in the currency of formal qualifications” (Lingard et al., 2003, p. 71) including a diploma in education, and an undergraduate/bachelor’s degree. The majority of principals have also completed graduate studies in educational administration/ leadership at the master’s level. Although principals’ academic and leadership experiences prepared them for the principalship, they credited their work experiences for their success. Principals further acknowledged the benefits of ongoing professional development training at the National College of Educational Leadership (NCEL) program organized by the MoEYI. These certified theory and practical based courses in educational leadership at the NCEL are organized to enhance Jamaican principals’ craft as practitioners.

Analyzing the Interviews

I approached this study’s analysis through a reflexive and iterative lens. This qualitative approach to data analysis proffers the use of a rigorous and continuous process of juxtaposing my first transcribed data with the research and interview questions. This was done to identify inconsistencies and gaps in the data and make specific adjustments for subsequent interviews. The process of reflexivity also involved my continued reflection on my ability as a researcher to engage with the data while acknowledging the concepts used in the framework. Specifically, I reflected on my conceptual framework—work and occupational well-being to determine if they aligned with the findings. I, therefore, looked at the emerging patterns and trends in the data highlighted in the conceptual framework to determine what they say about JSS principals’ work experience. I also analyzed the challenges in JSS principals’ geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts that further heightened their work. I then analyzed how the totality of their work experiences that present occupational well-being issues. After completing that process, I analyzed the strategies all 12 participants used to cope with their occupational well-being issues. This initial process set the tone for ongoing analysis and interpretation throughout the interview process to determine how participants’ views captured the emerging patterns in the data. Lictman (2013) considers such an ongoing and iterative process of “mov[ing] back and forth” (p. 21) during and after the data

collection, a critical component of qualitative data analysis. Lictman further argued that the researcher's interpretation of the data is important throughout these stages.

I engaged in an iterative process of analyzing the data. After I completed transcribing all interviews into text, I continued to engage in a similar process of using the research questions and the conceptual framework to analyze the data. I used thematic analysis because it is a reliable and independent method of analysis in qualitative research. Thematic analysis is also used in "identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). As I engaged in the process of thematic analysis, I used an iterative approach to familiarize myself with the analyzed data. The ongoing iteration of the data enabled me to generate initial codes, while still sifting through the data. I then used a two-level coding system to create major themes and subthemes to answer my research questions (Creswell, 2012). During this process, I analyzed the data through a process of constant comparison as the themes emerged in the data (Merriam, 1998, Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, 2007). This helped with identifying subsequent subthemes to further determine how they aligned with the conceptual framework. Emphasis on this process helped with identifying commonalities and differences among principals (male and female) working in schools supporting urban, rural, and inner-city communities. This thematic process further contributed to forming and finalizing the main themes, as I worked through obtaining a nuanced understanding of the nature of JSS principals' work and its influence on their occupational well-being. The key findings of this research are included in Chapters, 5, 6, and 7. In completing this thesis, I reverted to the literature informing this study as well as my conceptual framework to formulate an analysis and discussion of the findings in Chapter 9.

Trustworthiness

One of the grounding principles of qualitative research is the veracity of the study's findings. Qualitative researchers consider this the trustworthiness of the study (Cohen et al., 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Merriam (2001) explained, further, that qualitative research is "trustworthy to the extent that there has been some accounting for validity and reliability" (p. 198). In order to achieve validity and reliability, the researcher must engender ethical practices (Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 2009). It is, therefore, incumbent upon the researcher to provide a transparent, detailed, clear, and consistent

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account of participants' experiences about the phenomenon.

In this study, I took ethical steps to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. I sought to ensure that I accounted for the study's credibility, confirmability, dependability, transferability, and reflexivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility in qualitative research is premised on the researcher presenting a truthful and accurate interpretation of the findings (Cohen et al., 2011). In doing so, I endeavoured to engage in ongoing analysis and interpretation of Jamaican secondary school principals' views about their work and occupational well-being. Although I had to remove participants' personal information, such as their qualifications, to safeguard their anonymity, I ensured that their voices were not silenced. I kept to the tenets of the interpretivist paradigm to ensure that I also used the review of the literature and conceptual and theoretical framework to support participants' thick and rich accounts of their experiences. These processes helped with upholding the study's credibility and confirmability of the data.

Confirmability in qualitative research is the researcher prioritizing participants' views without undue personal bias and interest (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). While confirmability is more evident in quantitative research, I sought to achieve this in my study through the use of an audit trail with detailed accounts of the methods used in collecting and analyzing the data. My disclosure of how the themes were coded and analyzed also helped in providing a semblance of neutrality in my presentation of the findings. This use of an audit trail in analyzing the interviews, member checking, and review of existing literature—triangulation—contributed to the depth of the research. Triangulation is researchers employing more than one source of data to understand a particular phenomenon. This process of triangulation also contributed to the study's dependability.

The dependability of qualitative research is the consistency in the findings that can allow for replication (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Similar to working towards confirmability, the method and process I used in gathering and analyzing the data are in keeping with qualitative semistructured research design (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). While engaging in this process, qualitative researchers must also be reflexive about the procedures taken to gather, analyze, and interpret the data

finding (Cohen et al., 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morrow, 2005; Williams & Morrow, 2009).

Reflexivity is the qualitative researcher acknowledging their biases and preconceived notions of the phenomenon under investigation (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Providing a detailed description of the data findings also allow readers to identify researchers' biases and subjectivity. In taking a reflexive stance, I was forthright in my positionality and location within the research, as I explored the phenomenon under investigation. Although I am a student, I am first a Jamaican Black woman whose personal and professional experiences as a teacher in my country informed some of my biases and knowledge about the education system. Moreover, my knowledge about educational leadership and occupational well-being among the principalship informed my rationale for engaging in continuous interpretation of principals' perceptions about their work and occupational well-being. I acknowledge further the existing tensions in my ontological view of the world through an interpretive lens and how principals themselves may interpret their own lived realities. During the process of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and providing meaning to the data, I ensured the data reflected the research questions and interview questions. By coconstructing the findings with my participants, I gave them a summary of the research with their verbatim responses to the interview questions. They were asked to identify areas that needed amendment and include any relevant information. Moreover, in obtaining trustworthiness, the researcher and participant values often influence the outcome of the research (Plack, 2005). Greater emphasis, is, therefore, placed on participants' voices, political beliefs, and personal responsibilities.

While qualitative research does not attend to the generalizability of the data, it attends to the notion of transferability. Transferability is the researcher providing a thick and rich description of the data that other researchers can use as a guide to conduct similar research in another context. In this study, I provided details about the Jamaican context, the unit of analysis, sample size, demography, and interview and data analysis process among other details that allow for transferability of the research in other contexts. In doing so, I had to take deliberate steps in removing specific demographic details about their qualifications and school. This decision was taken as part of my ethical obligation

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and recognition that the population size of secondary school principals in Jamaica is small. These principles of trustworthiness are congruent with the interpretivist paradigm.

Summary

The chapter described the process of recruiting participants, conducting the research, and analyzing the data. Detailed results from the qualitative semistructured interviews with 12 JSS principals are presented in the ensuing findings chapter. Emphasis is placed on privileging JSS principals' voices and their experiences dealing with well-being issues. All the themes are based on the three research subquestions guiding the research. The first theme addressed the nature of JSS principals' work. The second theme is focused on challenges within their context—geographical, community, and socioeconomic—that heightened their experience with work intensification. The third theme highlighted the principals' occupational well-being issues while the last theme presented the strategies that the 12 JSS principals employed to cope with their occupational well-being issues.

Chapter 5: The Work of Jamaican Secondary School Principals

This study explored 12 Jamaican secondary school (JSS) principals' work and their occupational well-being. More specifically, during the interview I asked principals about their work experiences. The shared perspectives among my participants revealed that their existing work is increasing in volume while they operate with limited resources to meet work demands. From the majority of the accounts, they carry out additional tasks, work at a fast pace, and work with longer hours without any downtime. The findings of the study highlighted further that, like all practicing principals, JSS principals experience challenges while at work regardless of school type. Moreover, challenges in the geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts exacerbate their work. To reduce repetition, I will only articulate principals' school type and geographical localities in their initial mention.

Increased Volume of Work

All the principals in this study highlighted increased volume of work as a normal part of their workday. Increased volume of existing work is principals carrying out similar kinds of work but in larger volume without any reduction in the current work they perform (ATA, 2012; Green, 2004; Pollock et al., 2015; Pollock et al., 2019). All 12 principals interviewed in this study reported increased volume of work in two main areas—increased volume of email and paperwork.

Increased Volume of Email

At the time of the interview, the principals described having an increased volume of email. With increased Information Communication Technology (ICT) in schools, principals, including the majority of the participants in this study, respond to higher volumes of emails (Pollock et al., 2015). The findings of the study indicated that principals across all school types and geographical localities had to meet the Ministry of Education Youth and Information's (MoEYI) timely deadlines. For example, Principal 4, who works in a government-owned school situated in an inner-city community, shared, "I receive at least 30 emails sometimes." Principal 4 detailed that he cannot ignore the emails because there are correspondences from key stakeholders and the MoEYI that require attention and timely responses. Principal 6 also shared that "on a daily basis I can get a minimum of 300 emails." I am not able to go through all the emails to read and

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follow up.” Like Principal 4, this principal has to ensure emails requiring urgent attention are prioritized. Principal 6, who operates in a church and trust school nestled in the urban parts of Jamaica, shared a common concern as Principal 4 that the email is such that the volume is never reduced. This principal also explained that managing email according to their urgency and importance required him to follow up with nonurgent emails. Principal 10 provided such an example, “I usually have things from the previous day to review like emails...I check emails early when I get to school...minutes to 7.” Checking emails early before school starts is important for this principal, whose church/trust school in the urban area of Jamaica, to ensure that they do not miss anything that requires their immediate attention.

In particular, the majority of the principals in this study attend to increased volume of email during the Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) exams period. They are encumbered with the challenge of managing the volume of email from the MoEYI about changes in different examinations from the CSEC body and reporting the required modifications to the curricular to teachers and students. In addition to communicating ongoing curricular changes to teachers, the majority of principals in this study are engaged in ongoing problem solving with MoEYI and school board. Principal 7, who carries out his work tasks in an rural government school setting, disclosed:

the CSEC period is the most challenging for us at the school. It is a busy time; [I] am in dialogue with the ministry and school board [via email] and organizing meetings with teachers to update them on changes in the curriculum.

Principal 7 explained that during this time, the demands from the ministry and school board increased their work demands. The support principals extend to teachers during this period has significance for interviewed JSS principals in this study who are held accountable for their students' average and schools' ranking in the CSEC examinations (MoE, 2008; PloJ, 2009; Silveria, 2018). Participants' ongoing email correspondences with pertinent stakeholders not only increases their volume of existing work and challenges, but also the paperwork they do. Paperwork for the majority of these principals in the study often results from the ministry requesting through email the need for more data and administrative work. As a result, the majority of principals in this study

operating in schools supporting urban, rural, and inner-city experience an increase in the volume of paperwork.

Increased Paperwork

The majority of principals in this study indicated that they are always preoccupied with completing paperwork because of its sheer volume. As discussed previously in the literature, principals' experience with increased paperwork is evidenced when they are carrying out more of the same kinds of duties they did in the past. The interviewed principals in this study reported completing paperwork such as writing reports, letters, recommendations, signing forms and cheques, as well as other administrative duties. For example, Principal 5, who operates in church school positioned in an urban area, explained, "I have recommendations to write, things to sign and correspondences to respond to from the business organizations." From Principal 5's perspective, finding time to complete all the paperwork is often impossible, especially given the volume. At the time of the interview, Principal 1, whose government school supports an inner-city community, shared a similar concern while pointing to stack of papers on his desk, "You see that high stack of papers there, I have them to complete; I am not sure if I can get all that done." This principal as well as other participants in the study also reported that adding to their existing paperwork is MoEYI's frequent requests for specific documents that are sometimes unplanned. The MoEYI's request for paperwork includes collating the student population data among others. For example, Principal 11, who operates in a rural community stated, "The MoE[YI] is sending for the same documents a number of times." This principal and a number of other participants in this study also mentioned that repeated requests for similar documents increase their volume of existing work. In addition to these two aspects of the interviewed principals' increased volume of existing work, they also contend with limited resources to meet work demands.

Limited Resources to Meet Work Demands

Most principals in this study operate with limited resources to meet their work demands. According to participants from all school types and contexts, their ability to carry out work tasks is restricted because they lack the requisite human and financial resources. In some instances, principals carry out operational tasks from external bodies such as the MoEYI and business organizations that are often premised on meeting

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deadlines that conflate with other aspects of their work (Bottery, 2016; Galton & MacBeath, 2002; P. Miller, 2015; Nieche, 2011, Pollock et al., 2015). For participants, lack of additional resources is always an issue because financial capital from the ministry is often inadequate to meet their work demands (P. Miller, 2016, 2018; PloJ, 2009). The interviewed principals' multiple experiences with limited resources as detailed below include limited financial and human resources.

Limited Financial Resources

The majority of interviewed principals in this study expressed concern about working without the necessary financial resources to meet their work demands. Access to adequate financial resources for Jamaican principals is integral to the implementation and sustainability of their school programs and infrastructural development (P. Miller, 2018; Miller et al., 2019; PloJ, 2009). For many of the interviewed principals in this study, working without the necessary financial resources impinges on their capacity to meet their school needs. Principal 1, who operates in an inner-city school community, provided such an example as he shared the need for “additional resources because the grant from the government is inadequate to meet the demands...and [needs] of the school.” These needs of the school included curricular programs and infrastructural development. He explained that he inherited this problem and still contends with it throughout his tenure as principal at this school.

Other principals in this study, such as Principal 3, whose school is situated in an urban community, voiced a similar concern that “sometimes funding is unavailable because it is already spent...in terms of budget and expenditure to help with the canteen...additional resources and infrastructural development.” This principal further explained that sourcing the additional financial resources is essential for infrastructural development and student welfare programs. This problem has been accepted as part of the socioeconomic, sociohistorical, and sociocultural challenges Jamaican principals have grown to accept. The support for student on welfare programs is integral to meet the nutritional needs of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Limited financial resources in many of these school setting does not allow some principals to purchase educational supplies for curricular programs.

Supplies to Support Curricular Programs. For some principals in this study, limited financial resources affect their ability to order needed educational supplies for each department within the school. Supplies in this context include the necessary resources such as computers for the Information Communication Technology (ICT) department. For instance, Principal 8 explained, “there are times we don’t have the financial resources to order supplies for each department.” This principal’s experience represents other participants’ views about having the financial capital to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. Principal 7 also disclosed that “we have a number of challenges at the school...we do not have the supplies sometimes for teachers to use.” The lack of resources for teachers to improve students’ learning and achievement is at the crux of many of the participants’ concerns. Moreover, as the instructional leader in their school, these interviewed principals, including Principal 8 and others in the study, understand that curricular programs without the appropriate resources will influence overall student and school success. As Principal 8 indicated, “At times we don’t have the financial resources to help students going on trips to represent the school.” This principal, like many of participants in the study, understands that student participation in other curricular programs requires resources to support them. In expanding her explanation, Principal 8 considers this issue an ongoing and prevailing challenge without any permanent solution in sight. Part of these principals’ concern is the growing student population that requires resources to expand their schools’ infrastructure.

Infrastructural Development. Expanding the infrastructural development of schools is important for some principals in this study to accommodate student learning. Participants expressed concern about needing resources to renovate existing infrastructure to accommodate students’ learning. The need for infrastructural development at Principal 9’s school illustrated such an example. As this principal described, “We presently need another Science lab for teachers...we have a building that we are trying to convert into a Science lab, but we do not have the resources.” Principal 9’s concern about the lack of resources to renovate and convert existing buildings into a Science lab is based on school type—church school. This principal further explained that “the MoEYI does not willingly assist us with infrastructural development because we are not government owned...they do not willingly assist us.” Principal 9’s explanation speaks to the distinction between the

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two-tiers in the education system that was established in the colonial period. She explained further that because her school is an established traditional church school in a rural community, the ministry is more reluctant to assist them even though they are struggling.

Principal 1 also shared the need for resources to expand the school's infrastructural development to attract, retain, and improve student achievement. As this principal shared, "[We] have plans to transform the infrastructure...[for example,] some of the physical structure...and play field, [but] we need resources." Principal 1 explained that the transforming of the physical plant and having an academic plan of excellence require the need for adequate resources. Some interviewed principals in this study highlighted further that disparities in resources across different school contexts are also an impediment to teaching and learning (PIoJ, 2009). In addition to needing financial resources to support their school's infrastructural development and programs, some principals in this study carry out their work without the full complement of human resources.

Human Resources

The majority of principals in this study believe that working without a full complement of staff can affect the overall success of their schools. For participants with such experiences, they often continue to carry out these duties. According to Principal 7, "We are short of a physics teacher, so I teach the class from time to time." In addition to his other work, this principal noted that there are times when he is in charge of instruction. Despite Principal 7's role as a temporary teaching principal, this participant is also engaged in his normal administrative and other instructional leadership duties (Cornish & Jenkins, 2015). Another principal, Principal 5, noted as well that "there are days when we don't have enough teachers and I have to sit in a class and teach." Although this principal shared that having to sit in a class and teach provides a glimpse into what teachers and students need, he described the challenges in keeping up with the role of the principalship and being an instructor.

For another interviewed principal, there are instances in which they also carry out facilities management duties because of employee shortage. Principal 8 shared such an experience: "This school is without a plant manager and I therefore have to ensure that

everything is functioning properly.” From Principal 8’s perspective, the necessary work to be done most times requires her to ask for voluntary external assistance. During the interview, this principal seemed to have been more focused on finding a solution to this existing challenge. Her attention, like that of other principals in this study, was also directed to the students’ well-being issues.

Students’ Well-Being

The majority of principals in this study voiced concerns about limited human resources to meet the increase in students’ mental well-being issues. Students’ mental well-being in schools is focused on their psychological ill-health that subjects them to stress, anxiety, and depression (Chiu, 2019). The majority of principals in this study indicated that they have seen an increase in students’ mental health issues—a problem principal in other jurisdictions also deal with (People for Education, 2018; Pollock et al., 2018; Riley, 2018). Although all participants reported having a guidance counsellor in their school, they found that additional support is needed given the growing number of students with mental health issues. For example, Principal 1 explained that “a lot of the students are depressed because they do not have fathers; their fathers were killed, and it is affecting them mentally. I have students who wanted to jump from the building.” Suicide among some students is concerning for this principal and a number of other participants who are not trained professionals in handling such issues. Principal 1 expounded on students’ internalization of socioeconomic issues and affiliated gang violence in their community and the consequences for their mental well-being. This principal, whose views represent a number of participants in this study, discussed parents’ lack of support and preparation in their support for their children’s mental well-being. Principal 4 also voiced his concerns that while many students are not developed fully to understand and manage their problems, they also have physical well-being needs. According to this principal:

I am concerned about students’ well-being. Some of our students are not developed mentally...[and] some come to school without breakfast. It affects their ability to function which adds to a level of frustration for them. We are trying to make things work. For example, we need to ensure resources are there for the breakfast program...[to be] success[ful].

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Principal 4's concern for students' mental development and physical well-being require ongoing resources to foster and maintain change among students. Nonetheless, these principals' experiences are in contrast to Principal 10, who described dealing with students with suicidal ideations and other issues despite having the resources to support students' well-being. According to this principal, "We have had to use... funds to hire [additional] counsellors to manage students and staff concerns." This principal's concern for students' well-being also extends to staff, as she believes that the hiring of guidance counsellors will provide the space for students and teachers to feel comfortable in talking about their problems. Notwithstanding the resources this principal acquired through the school's trust, they are not immune to these challenges in their urban school context. For this principal and others in the study, support for students and teachers is necessary because an unwell cadre of teachers will influence students' academic outputs. Other interviewed participants without the resources also carry additional tasks to meet their work demands.

Additional Tasks

The majority of participants in this study carry out additional tasks alongside previous work done in the past to meet their existing work demands. Participants who engage in this practice described doing so to enhance their schools' infrastructure, curricular programs, and students' well-being. The additional tasks the majority of principals in this study carry out falls under the umbrella of financial work and managing human relations issues.

Financial Work

The majority of principals in this study carry out financial work to obtain additional resources to meet work demands. At the source of these interviewed principals' additional work is the MoEYI's mandate requiring principals to network and source resources from key stakeholders (Davis, 2004; P. Miller, 2015; MoEYI, 2008, 2014). Influencing such directives from the MoEYI is the country's fluctuating growth per GDP that has restricted spending and equitable allocation of resources across schools (Jamaica Social Investment Fund, 2012; P. Miller, 2015, 2018; PJoJ, 2009; World Bank, 2013). According to many participants, their social network of support includes parents,

alumni, and entrepreneurs, and is critical to their access to economic capital (Davis, 2004; MoEYI, 2008, 2014).

Most participants in this study have experienced stark disparities in financial resources, and as such they have continued the historical practice of entrepreneurialism (P. Miller, 2016, 2018). Such practice is in contrast to the articulated roles and responsibilities outlined in the 1980 Education Act, which required principals to give “directions about the expenditure of the funds made available to the institution” that are in compliance with directives from the school board (The Education Act, 1980, p. 57). To better prepare principals for the challenges in procuring resources, the ministry, through the NCEL program, has offered elective courses such as procurement of economic capital to enhance their financial work (NCEL. 2017). The activities that principals engage to conduct financial work include organizing fundraising events, meeting with the business community, and soliciting alumni support.

Organizing Fundraising Events. The majority of participants in this study organize fundraising events to get additional financial capital for their school. As intimated in the literature review, fundraising is an innovative entrepreneurial leadership approach that Jamaican principals use to source needed financial resources to supplement financial resources from the MoEYI (P. Miller, 2015, 2018). The majority of the participants in some rural and inner-city communities solicit financial resources from parents and community stakeholders to balance their budget and sustain school programs. Such was the experience of Principal 11, who explained that “every month we have deficits...in our school budget...Because support is limited within the school community, ...we help ourselves through organized fundraising and other gifts...but we would prefer greater support from the parents and community.” The challenge of not getting adequate and consistent support from parents and other stakeholders in the rural community where she works does not permit this principal the opportunity to meet vulnerable students’ scholastic and well-being needs. This principal, whose views represent participants in the study with similar experiences, explained that allocated resources are used to compensate for the decline in parental support, which has incurred deficits in their coffers.

Dwindling financial resources from parents is contextual, especially since the vast majority of business are situated in the hub of manufacturing and development (urban

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areas) and in some rural towns and cities where tourism thrives. Other participants in the study, such as Principal 11, explained their inability to accrue the projected amounts from fundraising events because some businesses operate on a small scale and support other schools. As Principal 11 described, “We do not get much support from the school community...they will give a small contribution when we organize fundraisers...but the [business] community is small.” This principal also discussed the repercussions of demographic shifts in their geographical locality that have affected parental support. Principal 11 reported that “there has been a significant shift with [a] growing population of students from other parishes and cities...We [have] also noticed that the disparity in socioeconomic background reduces the financial support received from parents.” This reduced support is due to a decline in financial compliance from parents, especially those from low-income households, to accommodate the schools’ increased student population. Other participants in the study also highlighted the importance of organizing fundraising events to support curricular programs at the department level.

The few principals in this study who work in church and trust schools, such as Principal 10, shared the strategy they use to retain parental support without having to resort to fundraising. This principal highlighted the importance of being transparent with parents about their school budget and delineating how their (parents) money is being spent to achieve overall school success. As this principal detailed:

We spend a large amount of time with our parents having meetings with every single year group sharing with them our budget and our financial status—sharing with them where we are and where we would like to be for the rest of the year.

We have that conversation about our proposals and in terms of compliance, we have 91% of our parents complying by the end of the year. We demand, but we believe that if we give value for money people support so we show them the value that we are giving them value for money.

Value for money for this principal includes proposing specific programs aimed at developing students holistically. These shared futuristic proposal programs include a marketing strategy for their overall school success and effectiveness to maintain their national standards and rank in the education system.

Principal 5 dissented from the perspective that effective schools are grounded on the financial support from parents. He explained, “I do not believe in fundraising. I am not saying I won’t do it, but I minimize it. I think it takes away from what I need to do as an instructional leader.” From Principal 5’s perspective, the additional task of organizing fundraising events is essential despite his disagreement with its core purpose of acquiring needed economic capital. Despite the contrasting views about fundraising, the majority of participants discussed the importance of soliciting support from the business community.

Meetings with the Business Community. A number of principals in this study organize meetings with members of the business community. Despite Jamaican principals voicing their concerns about limited resources to meet work demands, the majority in nontraditional schools continue to carry out the additional task of sourcing resources from the business community (P. Miller, 2015, 2018; PLoJ, 2009). Such was the case for some interviewed principals in the study, such as Principal 7, who shared that there are days in which he has impromptu meetings with the business community. This principal expressed the view that “some days when the school is quiet, I will walk into the town to meet and interact with the businesspeople.” Such interaction helps to maintain good social networks, while marketing the school programs and engineering plans for obtaining ongoing financial support. Principal 7 further explained that meetings with these business owners are in most cases successful, which helps the school to balance its budget and support school programs.

Principal 1 at the time of the interview reported having meetings and establishing relationships with bank managers to offset students’ fees for the CSEC exams. Although the government in 2017 announced its plan to provide financial subsidies for some students on the Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) program, payments are the responsibility of parents (MoEYI, 2018). Given that students’ families must meet particular requirements to get the PATH benefits, Principal 1 noted that parents sometimes cannot make full or partial payments. As a result, he has to take on this additional task to ensure students are provided the same opportunity. He noted, “I have students who can’t pay the CSEC exam fees, I had to ensure the money was there. I had meetings with the bank, and we were able to pay [a large sum] for students’ exams.” To amass this amount for students’ exams is important for this principal, who further

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explained its benefits in reducing students' stress. Seeking contributions from financial institutions make explicit the lived realities of some students' socioeconomic backgrounds and principals' ongoing struggle in improving their school success. Such socioeconomic issues prevent students from sitting for their mandatory CSEC national exams that determine their future in the workplace (PIoJ, 2009). An extension of the business community are the alumni from whom participants seek the necessary support to supplement their work demands.

Soliciting Alumni Support. Soliciting alumni support is central to mitigating the problem of inadequate resources for a number of principals in this study. This additional task is soliciting financial contributions from past students to balance the budget and obtain needed resources. Disparities in access to this network of support exist among most principals who must carry out additional duties such as visiting alumni at their workplaces to request the needed financial support. The findings in this study highlight further the issues in the community, geographical, and socioeconomic contexts that affect principals' capacity to source needed resources. For instance, Principal 4 who operates in a traditional school situated in an urban area, communicates frequently with alumni about school programs and policies. As Principal 4 explained, "I sometimes leave the school and visit the bank to talk to our past students about the programs and how they can help us financially." Having to leave school to source needed financial help from alumni for this principal is another way of ensuring the school's financial obligations are met. This additional task is carried out among some principals in church and government schools who are in need of resources to support programs and infrastructural development. For instance, Principal 7 illustrated, "We depend on alumni support...to balance the budget." The importance of balancing the school budget for this principal is emphasized among the other principals in this study. However, the support received from their alumni association is vastly different because of school type—church, trust, and government owned. In addition to carrying out these fundraising duties, the majority of principals in this study engage in administrative work as described in the following section.

Managing Human Relations Issues

Managing human relations issues is considered an additional task and one of the most demanding aspects of some of the interviewed principals' work (Mahfouz, 2018; Nhundu, 1999). At the time of the interview, the majority of principals in the study shared the perspective that they have seen an increase in human relations issues arising from what they consider increased stress among teachers. Attributing to these human relations issues among teachers is the unstable economy among other socioeconomic issues at the national level. The two themes addressing these issues include supporting staff in personal matters, and the safety, security, and health of schools.

Supporting Staff in Personal Matters

Some principals in this study engage in additional work because of time spent extending support to staff about personal matters. Like schools in North America and the United Kingdom, Jamaican schools are not staffed with a human resources department to support teachers and other staff members with personal well-being issues. Providing such support to teachers is not articulated in the Education Act (1980) but is included as part of the MoEYI's (2015) educational reform that requires principals to appropriately respond to the needs of those in their care. For the interviewed principals, their work is not restricted to providing professional guidance to teachers and other members of staff, but includes being aware of their well-being issues and personal misfortunes, and empathizing and offering moral support where necessary. A common thread of concern among participants was having to support teachers when they are most vulnerable.

Principal 5, shared:

A big [piece of] data in my school is signing sick leave. Since I have been here, people have been dying from cancer. As a principal when [I am] signing cheques, I recognize that teachers are stressed because of finance. I also recognize that there are teachers with severe health issues and sometimes I have to intervene on their behalf. There is also the teacher with a close family member who has died. For this principal, intervening on teachers' behalf is an awareness of the human side, which forms part of his role (MoEYI, 2008, 2015). Extending support for this principal means traveling to the ministry to speak directly to personnel about extending sick leave for the teacher with extenuating health issues. Such demonstration of care is necessary to

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reassure teachers of their support. This care is also evidenced in their prioritization of the safety and security of their schools.

Safety and Security of Schools

Part of the interviewed principals' additional work is the safety and security of their schools (MoEYI, 2010). Prior to 2009, principals were responsible for protecting schools from fires through ongoing inspection of and access to fire fighting and safety equipment as well as ensuring students and staff actively participate in organized fire drills (The Education Act, 1980). A recent policy modification has expanded this role to include "earthquakes and school invasion" (MoEYI, 2015, p. 37). As part of their duty to protect the school from invasion, principals are also responsible for controlling access to who enters the school compound, which includes establishing, maintaining, and controlling entry and exit points, among others (MoE, 2008; MoEYI, 2015).

These additional responsibilities are consistent with the majority of interviewed principals enforcing the security at their school entrance. Principal 1 also shared the importance of monitoring entrance and exit points at the inner-city school he works. He noted, "I monitor everything at the gate from my office...I keep an eye on the gate to ensure the security guard is in place to prevent unwanted visitors from entering the compound." Monitoring and restricting visitors assist with preventing and protecting students and staff against violent upsurge in the community and other endemic gang-related issues (Grant, 2017). Principal 1's description of the chronic problem with frequent interruptions that disrupts their normal work schedule highlighted the challenges in managing teachers' instructional time, and overall school safety and security. As Principal 1 intimated:

Handling the unexpected and...frequent gunshots is challenging [because] given the opportunity, [students] would want to run to see who is being shot or who is getting shot. This poses further disruptions of their learning because we try to resume class time after everything is settled.

The resumption of class is important for this principal, given that they are held accountable for the success or failure of their school (MoEYI, 2008). Given that student achievement determines school success, this principal views this form of unplanned interruption as one of the deterrents to students learning. A leading Jamaican scholar at

the University of the West Indies, Dr. Errol Miller, asserted that violence poses impediments to student achievement (Poyser, 2016).

This principal and others in the study with similar unplanned interruptions detailed how such occurrences also encroach on their ability to complete scheduled tasks. Principal 4, whose views represent the majority of participants with this problem, shared, “A regular schedule is not possible because of interruptions and attending to [different] matters concerning disputes among students to ensure the climate of the school is one of learning.” This principal’s account of unscheduled and frequent interruptions in the church school he operates also reflects the inability of other participants who find frequent interruptions prevents reduction in workload. Contributing to these interruptions are the incidences of extortion from youth in the community the school serves. Principal 4 shared that “we have a chronic problem with extortion, and this is coming from the community itself. There are boys from the community who stand at the gate [and] extort our students.” This principal further revealed that while improvements have been made with respect to construction of gates and employing external security, there is always concern for not only students but teachers’ safety because there have been incidences of teachers being attacked. Overall, it appears that some principals in this study engaged in these noted additional tasks while also experiencing an increased pace of work.

Increased Pace of Work

All participants reported having an increased pace of work. Increased pace of work relates to the insufficient time principals have in their workday to attend to the higher volume and demands of their work, as well as ICT and email usage (Grissom, et al., 2015; Manasse, 1985; Sebastian et al., 2019). It is the time pressure in response to requests from stakeholders such as the MoEYI and unpredictable issues that have added to participants’ increased pace of work. To avoid repetition of previous themes, I merge principals’ shared experiences with increased pace of work under the theme *changes in principals’ work*.

Changes in Principals’ Work

The majority of principals in this study indicated changes in their practice have increased the pace of their work. Contributing to this increased pace of work is heightened accessibility and a shorter expected response time to inquiries and challenges.

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Principal 10 explained, "I am more accessible because of technology...I find I am...constantly checking my emails...because there is always something urgent to attend to from the ministry because that is [their main source of] communicat[ion]." According to Principal 10, being more accessible to the ministry and other stakeholders not only increases and adds to other existing responsibilities that are often incomplete, but also changes the pace at which they are expected to communicate. For example, ICT usage has required principals to complete the ministry's requests and respond within a faster turnaround time, which accelerates their pace of work (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2012; Gurr, 2000). In addition to receiving responses from the ministry, there are a number of principals who receive messages from their stakeholders that require immediate attention.

At the time of the interview, Principal 6 provided a similar view that staff, parents, and other stakeholders direct contact and demands have accelerated their pace of work. The speed at which this principal operates also occurs while working on weekends. As this principal stated, "I work most weekends. I receive messages via WhatsApp and email from...staff...and parents... about different issues...that at times require my immediate attention. I am going to go to the school shortly as the IT teacher would like to speak to me." Having to access messages through different forms of communication and meet the expectations of parents and teachers within a given time increase this principal's work pace. Moreover, the trust school in which this principal operates accommodates students, which adds layers in demands from parents and other stakeholders.

Adjusting to these expectations from competing constituents are compounded with meeting ministry deadlines. From the perspective of most principals in this study, such experiences with overlapping demands and volume of work often add pressure to meet the turnover rate in response time. Principal 10 stated:

sometimes it would seem that [I] don't have enough time... I have scheduled and unplanned meetings...sometimes, I have a subcommittee meeting and disciplinary matters arise that teachers can't manage...[and] they pass it on to me...I have to attend to other things at the same time.

This principal explained that it is the deadline in getting things done while addressing these multiple issues that contribute the fast-paced nature of their work. She also

explained that being more accessible is not to her benefits as she is “drawn into many directions all at once.” The majority of interviewed participants in this study acknowledged that being more readily accessible has changed the pace of their work.

Long Hours

The participants in this study reported working long hours for each workday. School principals as salaried professionals work long hours to complete outstanding tasks (Duarte, 2014). For the interviewed principals in this study, long hours of work are evidenced in their rounds, time spent on email correspondences, and meeting with parents, as discussed below.

Hours of Work

The principals in the study work more than 40 hours weekly. At the time of the interviews, principals were asked how many hours they work per day on average per week. All principals reported working in excess of the normal 8 hours per day/40 hours work week. For instance, Principal 3 explained, “I work on average 55 hours. I cannot recall working for 8 hours. I am usually at school before or at 7 a.m. in the mornings and I usually leave 6 or 7 p.m.” Working late and leaving school in the evenings at 6–7 p.m. for this principal has become part of his routine because his work is continuous. He also explained that this continuity in work tasks is a result of him not being able to complete everything that needs to be done in a given workday. The volume of Principal 5’s work is such that, at the time of the interview, he noted: “Some of the things on my desk have been here since morning.” This principal’s inability to complete aspects of his work is based on the urgent and unpredictable challenges he contends with and manages at different times during the day. Principal 7, who described working long hours, explained, “I work 55–60 hours. I start work early from 7 a.m. and I leave late...it depends on the day and the different things planned. I might leave 5 or 6 p.m. sometimes.” As this principal works toward reducing his high volume of work, he explained the challenge in having a set time to complete his workday. Contributing to this extended workday is the inability to accomplish particular work tasks because of interruptions in their scheduled rounds/ walkthroughs.

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Interrupted Rounds/Walkthroughs. The majority of principals in this study conduct daily rounds as part of work that are often disrupted because of different issues related to students' discipline. *Rounds*—otherwise known as *walkthroughs*—is an instructional leadership practice that Jamaican principals use to ensure students are present in class during contact hours (MoEYI, 2008; The Education Act, 1980). The principals in this study refer to rounds/walkthroughs as part of their organizational cultural practice to manage “the teaching function” (Davis, 2004, p. 79). Since this “teaching function” also directly relates to principals' management duties (Davis, 2004; MoE, 2008), the majority of principals in this study conduct rounds/walkthroughs at different time intervals during their workday for approximately 60–90 minutes. Impacting these rounds are the interruptions that require principals to spend additional time on different unpredictable matters. Accounting for the unforeseen challenges are contextual issues around student population and the school's geographical locality. According to Principal 5, “Most times my early morning appointments have to be pushed back to a later time because rounds take longer than planned; this disrupts [my] scheduled work plan.” For Principal 5 and other participants, disruptions in scheduled work plan often led to long hours of their workday. This principal explained that having to extend support to students with well-being issues and tend to disciplinary matters during rounds delayed their scheduled tasks.

Principal 7's example also supported this overarching analysis of principals' long hours of work: “I do not sit at my desk all day. I do rounds before class begins...again at lunch time and when school dismisses...This is a big school and sometimes I spend an hour or more on rounds...depending on what students are doing.” Carrying out several rounds each day for long hours help Principal 7 and other participants to connect with their students and teachers. School size and community issues for these principals contribute to some of the disciplinary issues Principal 7 contends with during rounds; rounds have historically afforded her the opportunity to understand students' deviant behaviours and provide the necessary support for teachers to enhance students' interest in learning (Protheroe, 2009). While this process of conducting rounds is beneficial to the teaching learning process, the majority of participants shared that rounds after school dismissal overlaps with the time they schedule for email correspondences.

Email Correspondences. The amount of time the participants spent on email correspondences also add to their long hours of work. Email correspondences form a large part of contemporary school principals' work (Gurr, 2004; Pollock & Hauseman, 2018). Although email promotes efficiency in communication, the complexity and volume of JSS principals' work do not provide space for timely responses to emails. To adjust for time in email responses, most participants in this study attend to email correspondences after regular school hours and while at home. Principal 4 shared, "I deal with my email correspondences after school 2:30 p.m. I [also] check emails at home while [I am] in bed and watching TV because it is too much to complete during the day." The high volume of email can prevent principals from replying in a timely manner, especially for principals working in volatile communities where disruptions are frequent and unpredictable. Participants feel that extended hours of work contribute to an erosion of the boundaries between their personal and professional space to accommodate changing expectations in response time among stakeholders (Pollock & Hauseman, 2018). Stakeholders such as parents also communicate with participants through email about organizing meetings to discuss matters related to their child/children.

Meeting with Parents. Some participants indicated that they often work long hours because of scheduled and unscheduled meetings with parents that sometimes end after school is dismissed. The principals in the study reported meeting with parents about student discipline, well-being, and academic performance, among others, and that these meetings extend the hours of their work. Principal 8 stated, "I meet with parents everyday about different concerns about their child. Some of these meeting can take a long time than others...[such as] problems with a student and teacher... [and] students who refuse to come to class." At the centre of these meetings with parents is students' attitudes toward class attendance and overall academic performance. Principal 8 explained that concerns for students and school success is heightened when parents are not equipped with the tools to support their child/children's learning. At the core of these principals' concerns is inadequate preparation for students' national CSEC examinations. Principal 11 stated, "One of my main concerns is getting students to focus on learning, I have organized meetings with parents to support them especially when [I] know a child has so much potential but is distracted." Finding out the primary cause of students' lack of

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interest in school forms part of participants' instructional leadership role. Undergirding these principals' concerns is the effect that student averages in the CSEC exams have on their school's ranking and positioning at the national level. Principals understand the sociocultural and sociohistorical urgency in not only motivating parents but also teachers who contend with a myriad of behavioural issues.

In addition to these issues, some interviewed principals described the impact unscheduled meetings with parents has on their long hours of work. Principal 3 stated, "My days are sometimes longer because [I] have parents who may turn up to talk to [me]. Unfortunately for me, my style of leadership will work against me, because I tend to give...my stakeholders attention." This principal's recognition of and attention to parents' concerns about their students' performance and well-being occurs at different points during the day. It is the culmination of these noted experiences of long hours coupled with the local school community contexts in which the participating principals operate that extend their hours of work. Principals' long work hours have also resulted in no downtime.

No Downtime

Participants reported not having downtime. *No downtime* is principals' inability to have personal time because of the fast-paced nature of their work (Pollock et al., 2019). School systems including those in Jamaica have structured downtime for students and educators, such as principals. However, the lived realities of principals' work, do not permit consistency in—or the possibility of—breaks during their workday and calendar year to unwind for lunch and vacation time. Principals who reported no downtime also work on weekends and attend to unpredictable issues and do so without vacation during holidays.

No Time for Lunch Breaks

During the school day, the majority of interviewed participants work without taking lunch breaks. Jamaican government employees, including school principals, are entitled to 45–60 minutes lunch break during their workday (Smith, 2017). At the time of the interview, the majority of participants reported that there are days in which they are unable to have lunch because of meetings, administrative work, and handling different challenges. Principal 12 explained, "Many times I forget to take a break to have lunch

because of multiple meetings...speaking to parents, signing documents...and trying to handle different problems as they arise.” Not being able to take a break because of different problems prevented many participants from having a few minutes of downtime. As Principal 9, who operates in church school supporting an rural school, shared, “I bring fruits for lunch, but I do not get to eat sometimes.” This principal’s inability to eat lunch is a common thread of concern for the majority of principals, whose busy schedule often spills over into their downtime. Similar to Principal 9, Principal 1 described not being able to find time for lunch breaks because of his work. She explained that “I do not eat properly as I should...sometimes [I attend] to urgent matters and [I] don’t have the time for lunch because [I] have to be where it is happening.” Having to attend to urgent and unpredictable matters often prevents this principal and others in the study from having personal time to restore their energy. Overall, the majority of participants demonstrated a greater sense of obligation to their work as evidenced in the prioritization of their work over their nutrition. Not only did many of the participants work through lunchtime, but most also continued work while at home and on the weekends.

Working on Weekends and Attending to Unpredictable Issues

There are a number of principals in this study who also experience no downtime because they work on the weekends. While some interviewed principals in this study work on weekends to keep up with the pace of their work, there are others who monitor students living on campus. These principals are engaged in continuous work because they are on call 24 hours each day and respond to issues related to student safety, security, and health. Principal 6 explained:

We have a dorm, which means that I am on duty 24 hours even on the weekends.

The duties that I have are continuous and the good thing is that there is a structure, but I believe that I must be aware of critical decisions and things that are happening. For example, if there is an issue in the dorm that results in a [student] being sick and having to go to the hospital I need to know.

Principal 6 shared that supervisory staff are required to notify him about different emergencies, such as students visiting the hospital, via WhatsApp group message. The need to be apprised of decisions is critical given that the principal is the point of contact for parents and their children who are in the care of the school. He further explained that

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while the staff is trained in responding to unpredictable emergencies and making critical decisions, he has to know why certain decisions were made. In addition to this aspect of his work, Principal 5 and other participants also work on the weekends to complete different aspects of their work that are sometimes interrupted. For some other principals in this study, they also contend with long hours of work on the weekend that are unpredictable. The weekend no longer provides the space for these principals to complete unfinished work because of incessant phone calls from parents about their child. Principal 3 shared an example:

I often try to complete things over the weekend that I didn't get done...and plan a schedule of meetings for the next week. [However,] sometimes parents are calling on a Sunday to report that they cannot find their child, because he or she did not return home from school on Friday...I have to stop what I am doing...and coordinate with the parents about the missing child.

Principal 3 further described the urgency in helping parents report the missing child to the police while also doing follow-up emails and communicating on WhatsApp with the teacher and guidance counsellor to apprise them of the issue. This principal's support is evidence of an established partnership and open access between the school and the community. For this reason, some principals acknowledged that their sense of obligation in supporting parents beyond the boundaries of the internal school environment predisposes them to long hours of work. These issues, in addition to not being able to accomplish their tasks, requires the participants in this study to continue working without vacation during holidays.

Working Without Vacation During Holidays

A number of principals in this study also experienced no downtime because they work during public holidays without taking a vacation. Working without vacation during holidays is principals' personal decision to use their time to complete tasks. The principals explained that they often spend the holidays engaged in planning and organizing meetings with different staff members for the new semester or school year.

According to Principal 7:

I do not take vacation...like some of my colleagues...[I] usually spend my summer holidays planning for the new school year...There is so much to be done.

I plan meetings and workshops for my staff and teachers to ensure they are prepared...[I]also have to meet with the school board to discuss the plans. This principal explained that meeting with the school board to discuss the school improvement plan during the summer holidays helps them prepare for the new school year. Principal 1 provided an interesting perspective regarding having more opportunities to go on vacation leave as a teacher when compared to the principalship. Principal 1 noted:

I would take much more vacation days when I was just a teacher just to go to the beach...[I am] not able to do so now...[because] I am always busy...I came to this school with one thing in mind—to transform the institution to make it a school of choice.

For this principal, the transforming of the institution to make it a school of choice requires time and ongoing collaboration with stakeholders to put programs place to ensure the academic plan and other programs can improve student achievement. Moreover, these responsibilities and other aspects of their work starkly contrast the experience they had as a teacher because of the amount of time taken in planning and implementing these goals. As a result, there is limited vacation time, which seems to influence some participants' work–life balance. These circumstances are evident in the geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts as discussed in the next chapter.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented my findings on 12 JSS principals' work. The complexity of these principals' work is such that it is continuous, intensive, voluminous, consuming, and, at times, arduous. As a result, these 12 interviewed JSS principals carry out tasks that are consistent with increased volume of work, limited resources to meet work demands, additional tasks, increased pace, and long hours of work. In addition to these five major themes, the findings indicated that the majority of JSS principals do not having any downtime. In the next findings chapter, I discuss JSS principals' occupational well-being.

Chapter 6: Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Well-Being

During the interview process, I asked principals about the occupational well-being issues they experience when carrying out their work. The 12 Jamaican secondary school (JSS) principals' responses to this question revealed an overarching issue with protracted work-related stress that has consequences for their occupational well-being. I begin this chapter by describing principals' understanding of and experiences with work-related stress. I draw on the findings in the previous chapter to discuss their mental, physical, cognitive, and social occupational well-being.

Work-Related Stress

All of the principals in this study described experiencing some level of work-related stress. The way the participants in this study understand work-related stress is rooted in their ability to cope with the normal stresses of their work despite the psychosocial hazards in their school environment (Lawson, 2005; Nagel & Brown, 2010; Shearman, 2017; World Health Organization [WHO], 2019). In privileging their lived realities with work-related stress, I examined if principals have the human and material resources to meet deadlines (Health & Safety Authority, 2011, 2018; Russell et al., 2018). As mentioned in Chapter 2, Jamaica's socioeconomic challenges have directly impacted the allocation of resources across the nation's schools. This historical problem is reflected in principals' need for financial resources to balance their budget and purchase resources for school programs, which contributes to their work-related stress. Principal 1, who works in an inner-city school community, reported that the lack of financial resources to meet his work demands is the main cause of work-related stress. In sharing his experience, this principal explained that "inherent in the job as a principal in Jamaica is the stress, because I struggle with a lack of resources." Working without the needed resources adds to Principal 1's work pressure and strain, as he is constantly engaged in processing how to obtain needed resources. The major concern that adds to this principal's work-related stress is the inability to ensure teachers and students have the resources to improve students learning.

Such was the experience of Principal 7 who confirmed that "yes, the work is stressful...resources help to pay the bills...without the [financial] support we cannot manage the school." This principal, who operates in an urban school community, finds

their experience with work-related stress is aligned with several issues, including working without the necessary financial support to manage their school. As with some other principals in this study, this principal is unable to accomplish goals aimed at enhancing the school's development programs. According to this principal, and consistent with stark disparities in school type, resources are needed to ensure organized programs materialize.

Other principals who experienced work-related stress reported that a layer of other issues bring on this feeling. Principal 5 stated:

There is always stress because the work is intense and voluminous. There are parents with issues that I have to get involved in sometimes, staff not open to change in culture, and...trying to change the culture of indiscipline among students.

This principal considers stress a normal part of the role. From this principal's understanding of relationships and stress, there will continue to be tensions among different groups because of the existing subculture among staff and behavioural management issues that exist among the student body. Principal 5 also explained that the sociocultural issues in the urban school community in which he serves contribute to some of the challenges in the internal school environment.

Physical Occupational Well-Being

The majority of interviewed principals in this study experience some form of physical well-being issues. Commensurate with the literature is JSS principals' understanding of physical occupational well-being as working in a safe, secured, and positive school environment that is free from gossiping and violence against staff and students (Pollock & Wang, 2020). Physical occupational well-being also includes getting adequate rest (Wicker et al., 2015). A number of principals reported, however, that their work has consequences for their quality of sleep, hypertension, and diabetes.

Sleep Deprivation

A number of principals in this study are sleep deprived. Sleep deprivation is the inability to get adequate hours of rest; for my participants, this was largely because of the long hours of work they engage in to address their workload. Regardless of career stage, school type, and geographical locality, some principals are not getting sufficient sleep. Only one of 12 principals in this study, Principal 10, used the term *insomnia* when

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recounting her inability to stay asleep at night: "I try to go to bed by 10. I have insomnia and I wake in the night...it takes a while before I get back to sleep." Principal 10 considers this an ongoing problem that sometimes affect her work. Although she works in an urban traditional—trust—school, Principal 10 described feeling tired after waking because the challenges at work sometimes weigh on her mind (see *mental work* below).

Principal 11's work consumes so much of her time that her doctor recommended she takes time off to rest. She explained, "I do not get enough sleep...when I visit the doctor that is usually the same issue that I need to rest." She recognized that rest is an important part of her physical occupational well-being but explained that the demands of her work are in conflict with the doctor's recommendation.

I also garnered additional knowledge about male principals' experiences with sleep deprivation. While many of these male principals discussed change in sleep hygiene as a strategy to improve their health, a few of them had parallel experiences with sleep deprivation. Principal 1's work challenges, such as the unpredictable violence, prevent him from having a full 8-hour sleep: "I...lack sleep...I am up late at nights unable to sleep because there are so many challenges...resources...school safety...and several problems to solve." A significant issue for Principal 1 is finding solutions to different problems at the school, especially in sourcing resources for safety and security of the environment.

For the majority of interviewed participants, their physical occupational well-being is secondary to reducing their workload and work demands. Some participants who are sleep deprived also experience feelings of fatigue.

Fatigue

The majority of principals in this study indicated that they experience physical fatigue because of relentless work stress. The interviewed principals also consider fatigue as a physical occupational well-being issue that brings on lethargic feelings and cognitive decline (Ilies et al., 2000; Lane, 2018; Leonard, 2018). For these principals, they experience fatigue because of a combination of work tasks and challenges such as procuring financial resources and attending to staff and students' well-being issues.

Physical Fatigue and Procurement of Financial Resources. Some principals in this study experienced physical fatigue because of existing challenges in procuring additional financial resources to support their school. Principals in most government and a few church schools situated in mainly rural and inner-city school communities shared such experiences. Principal 3 explained that “as I am speaking to you, I am recovering from a period of fatigue...I have been out of it for the past four months...headaches and tiredness... because of the financial resources needed for the school...I work late and I am up during the night.” This principal further explained that “being out of it” meant he was still going through a period of feeling down because of the ongoing challenges with a deficit in the school’s finances. It is the overlapping geographical, community, and socioeconomic challenges that have impacted this principal’s ability to garner the necessary support from alumni and other stakeholders. The pace and long hours of work also contribute to feelings of physical fatigue.

While these principals shared their experience with fatigue, a few other participants provided anomalous perspectives about this occupational well-being issue. They also explained that they consider the role of the principalship as a position of power that requires a show of strength. In this sense, this principal puts on a façade that belies weakness. Principal 4 explained that “I do experience fatigue sometimes but by the time I get to work, I feel different. I believe I push myself even when I am tired.” This principal and a few others in the study used a strong façade to counter to their exhaustion (Leonard, 2018; Wells, 2015). Principals who conveyed their experiences with insomnia and fatigue also described having other physical occupational well-being issues—specifically, hypertension and type 2 diabetes.

High Blood Pressure and Type 2 Diabetes

When asked about their physical occupational well-being, the majority of principals in this study described having hypertension and/or type 2 diabetes. In this section, I acknowledge that individuals, including JSS principals in this study, can develop hypertension and type 2 diabetes regardless of their occupation. Corresponding with my previous definition of physical occupational well-being, hypertension and type 2 diabetes are chronic lifestyle diseases that are associated with stress (Kabat-Zinn, 2005; Kalra & Sahay, 2018; Klocko & Wells, 2015; Wells, 2015).

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For the majority of principals in this study, their work has contributed to and or exacerbated their hypertension and type 2 diabetes. Prior to being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and/or high blood pressure, a number of principals in this study revealed they experienced symptoms such as tension headaches and dizziness (Taylor et al., 2014). Principal 1 shared, "I had headaches before I discovered I have high blood pressure...and [type 2] diabetes...I am taking two blood pressure pills per day, but it does not go down." Principal 1 discussed in detail that different aspects of his work that are unpredictable and challenging that prevent downtime contributed to his uncontrollable blood pressure and type 2 diabetes. This principal described the socioeconomic challenges in the inner-city community, long hours, and volume of work as few of the key issues that might have led to his type 2 diabetes and hypertension. Principal 1 and other participants also noted that their high blood pressure is a result of poor diet, inability to eat on time, inadequate rest, and other lifestyle practices. As a result, they have become vulnerable to type 2 diabetes.

While some principals had symptoms prior to diagnosis of these physical well-being issues, there are others who were asymptomatic. For example, Principal 3 through this social network coincidentally discovered he has high blood pressure:

I have a doctor friend and she saw me and said that she doesn't like how I looked. She said that I looked tired. She took my blood pressure and told me that it was a little high. She also said it could perhaps be a result of my work and anxiety.

The doctor's diagnosis of this principal's high blood pressure is discussed along the same lines of the stress and anxiety from their work impacting their physical occupational well-being. While many principals had symptoms before being diagnosed with hypertension, Principal 3 explained that he did not have any symptoms. He just took his blood pressure, and the reading was extremely high.

For some other principals in this study, their engagement in ongoing mental work and sleep deprivation contribute to their high blood pressure and/or type 2 diabetes. Of the twelve interviewed principals, only one—Principal 8—believed she developed high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes while working as a vice-principal. In her disclosure about her health issues, Principal 8 acknowledged, "I have high blood pressure and [type 2] diabetes. I was diagnosed with both after I started working as a vice-principal." This principal explained that during her tenure as a vice-principal she would sometimes work

longer hours without eating, which she has also done in her new role as principal. What emerged through the majority of participants' voices is the need to prioritize work over their occupational well-being. This has led to some of participants intimating that they have developed mental occupational well-being issues because of they sometimes find it difficult to manage their stress.

Mental Occupational Well-being

The majority of participants shared their experiences with mental occupational well-being issues. Mental occupational well-being is JSS principals' capacity to productively carry out their work despite the existing stress from their work (Galdersi et al., 2015, 2017; WHO, 2018). In this section I detail participants' preoccupation with mental work, anxiety, and managing different crises. In addition to these mental occupational well-being issues, there is an overlap in the findings with principals' psychological occupational well-being issues.

Preoccupation with Mental Work

The majority of interviewed JSS principals in their early- to mid-career detailed their preoccupation with mental work. Principals' mental work addresses all the mental processes and cognitive demands they perform while carrying out their work (Fisher et al., 2014). However, ongoing mental work about particular challenges in their socioeconomic, community, and geographical contexts without any downtime, put some principals at risk for insomnia as discussed in the previous theme.

For the majority of JSS principals in this study, their increased workload and work demands have led to sustained mental work. In particular, the findings of the study indicate that the majority of principals ruminate about finding innovative ways to source needed resources to meet work demands. Principal 1 disclosed, "I am always thinking about who I need to connect with to assist the school financially...so it is not strange that I am up at 12, 1, 2 or 3 a.m. in the morning." This principal described his engagement in mental work about ways to solicit resources from constituents as a continuous process. Principal 1 is often up thinking of ways to enhance the school's infrastructure. Infrastructural development, for this principal, is one way of carrying out the MoEYI mandate of protecting the safety and security of the school. Ongoing mental work about this central issue and other challenges described among other JSS principals have resulted

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in some developing sustained stress and subsequent anxiety (Goldring et al, 2015; Scott, 2020).

Anxiety

As detailed in the literature review and previous chapter, extended periods of stress brought on by work overload and work demands predispose some participants to anxiety. Since this study is sociological in nature, the definition of anxiety is focused on and aligned with principals' work-related stress. Therefore, anxiety is a mental/psychological occupational that can present problems for principals' overall occupational well-being (Klocko & Wells, 2015; Turner, 1981; Wells, 2016). The literature highlighted that principals often experience anxiety when they are not equipped with the resources to fulfill the demands of their work (Wells & Klocko, 2018; Wells et al., 2011). As some JSS principals in this study previously illustrated, constant worrying about financial resources to meet their work demands subjects them to feelings of anxiety. For others, their anxiety is manifested when they attend to crises in their internal and external school environment.

Ongoing Thinking About Needed Resources. The principals in this study who experience anxiety pointed to heightened stress levels because of ongoing thinking about limited financial resources to meet work demands. Ongoing thinking is principals' engagement in ongoing mental work about aspects of their work that increase their stress levels (Fisher et al., 2014). Such was the experience of Principal 3 who communicated that ongoing thinking about meeting work demands while working with limited financial resources exacerbated his stress levels, which led to anxiety. This principal shared:

This job is stressful...I...struggle with anxiety [because of]...limited resources... I was driving home yesterday and when I started thinking about the budget and not having the money needed to pay our suppliers, [I] started to feel anxious. It's a recurring thing for me to feel down, but it's not every day.

Principal 3 connected his work-related stress with the anxiety and recurring feelings of being down from working with limited resources to meet his budgetary expenses to support his school. Moreover, the lack of financial resources to offset expenses owed to suppliers is a major trigger for anxiety for this principal because it affects his ability to source materials to improve the quality of teaching and learning. He described further

that it is “my desire to do more that has put me into problems with my own mental health. I always say, it makes no sense I come to work and do not put 100% into the job.” Resources for this principal is essential to fulfilling stated goals in their school development plan. Without the economic capital, Principal 3 believes he is unable to give 100% quality work. It is this existing tension in not being able to perform at full capacity and the need to do more that this principal conceives as the basis of his anxiety. Principal 12 voiced a similar experience: “Not having all the resources is very stressful, that adds more to my stress and anxiety...sometimes I feel anxious because we are so focused on getting in touch with the right people...we are always organizing fundraising [events]...and not being sure if we will balance the budget.” It is the combination of carrying out additional tasks to fill the gap in financial resources to balance the school’s budget that have heightened this principal’s sense of anxiety. Identifying and accepting anxiety as a challenge for these principals revealed further participants’ unique work experience within their geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts. For a few other principals in this study, the challenges related to managing different crises further exacerbate their anxiety.

Principal 1 who works in an inner-city school community, detailed his initial experience with anxiety because of frequent upsurges in gun violence and other crimes: “At first when I came here, I was worried about how [the violence in the community] would affect me emotionally and mentally. I would get more...nervous and anxious when the shooting started.” He explained that while violence has become a routine for him, he still feels anxious but not as extremely as when he just started. While this principal’s experience is unique in this study, his feeling of anxiety could be described as heightened by the stress of always being on high alert to protect students and staff during these violent episodes. For this principal and others in the study, such as Principal 10, they understand they are obligated to fulfill the role of creating a safe and secured work environment (MoEYI, 2015; PLoJ, 2009; The Education Act, 1980).

Principal 10’s shared experiences provided such an example, “I feel...anxious many times because I have to consider the needs of everyone...talking to “parents about...students...with suicidal thoughts and...problems at home are sometimes ... urgent...but this is part of my job.” Principal 10 emphasized the formal expectation of her

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role in protecting her students and staff (MoE, 2008; MoEYI, 2015). Yet, the frequency of feeling anxious for this principal is twofold. Attending to the urgent and unknown needs of students and staff while providing individual support to each person has triggered this principal's anxiety. Principal 10 explained that dealing with growing mental health problems among students such as suicide and assisting staff and parents with a myriad of relationship issues can be daunting. These issues matter for this principal and others in the study who work in trust schools where alumni and parents require quality service and stewardship. These additional tasks that affect principals' mental occupational well-being interconnect with their psychological occupational well-being.

Psychological Occupational Well-Being

The majority of principals' in this study are experiencing emotional/psychological occupational well-being issues regardless of their geographical localities. Principals' emotional/psychological occupational well-being is their ability to assess aspects of their work that are fueling different emotions while coping with such issues (Coleman, 2002; Hernandez et al., 2018; Leithwood, 2017; Pollock et al., 2018; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Part of principals' self-evaluation is understanding what aspects of their work contribute to psychological well-being issues such as powerlessness, reduced self-confidence, and motivation.

Powerlessness. A number of principals in this study expressed feeling a sense of powerlessness. Powerlessness is principals' psychological response to aspects of their work (Suleman et al., 2018). This psychological response is evidenced in principals' feeling a lack of control over the increased volume of their existing work and work demands that induce work-related stress (Maforah & Schulz, 2012; The Wallace Foundation, 2004; Suleman et al., 2018). At the time of the interview, several interviewed principals reported feeling a great sense of powerlessness because of their inability to control their increased volume of email and increased paperwork.

Inability to Control Increased Volume of Email and Paperwork. At the time of the interview, the majority of interviewed principals expressed their inability to control the increased volume of email and paperwork. For some of the interviewed principals, their inability to control the increased volume of email and paperwork present a sense of

powerlessness. This sense of powerlessness among some participants, as previously noted, stems from frequent request from the MoEYI that require immediate response that conflicts with their work schedule. For example, Principal 4 who operates in an inner-city community, reported having an exponential increase in volume of “at least 30 emails” that must be attended to a timely manner to key stakeholders, such as the MoEYI. This contributes to a sense of powerlessness for this principal who shared that “sometimes I feel powerless because the MoE[YI] is sending for the same documents a number of times...that I must respond to within a short time that robs me of my time.” Principal 4’s view that the ministry’s work demands are an impediment to completing other aspects of their work, which further creates a cyclical effect of powerlessness (Maforah & Schulz, 2012; Suleman et al., 2018).

This sense of powerlessness extends to the inability to control increased paperwork. Principal 8 detailed a similar experience to Principal 4, as he shared having a sense of powerlessness because the MoEYI demands require additional paperwork. This principal attested that:

I feel powerless because most of the time I do not have any control over my work schedule...given the demands from the ministry...It usually takes some time to gather the data they require...which includes additional paperwork...and I still have other work that is not done.

Not being able to complete existing work while trying to complete and meet the demands from the MoEYI for this principal is ongoing and an issue that has to be addressed since email is the primary mode of communication. Moreover, data gathering is time consuming and requires careful assessment before submitting the required information to the MoEYI. This principal and others in the study explained further that unexpected work demands conflict with their schedule of work, which adds to that layer of powerlessness. Principal 12 expressed having similar experiences of powerlessness because of their inability to keep to a set schedule. As this principal explained, “Powerless, yes...[because] there are instances when I am not able to stick to a schedule because of the paperwork and too many things to get done.” Like some other principals in this study, Principal 12, who works in a school supporting an urban school community, experiences feelings of

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powerlessness that are connected to their volume of paperwork and work schedule, which prevents the accomplishment of most tasks in a given day.

A few principals in this study, however, shared divergent perspectives about feeling a sense of powerlessness. According to these principals, powerlessness is dependent on the individual's inability to adjust their behaviours according to their unpredictable work situations (Lewandowski, 2003). As Principal 5, who works in an urban school community, noted, "I am not powerless. I could if I want to...It is a matter of being realistic and adjusting myself to the unexpected changes." This principal believes it is important to recognize that while changes from the MoEYI are inevitable, they need to make adjustments in carrying out their work. Such understanding of their work situation and adjustment to change imply that they are resilient—a characteristic of their psychological occupational well-being (Suleman et al., 2018). In addition to having a sense of powerlessness, there are a few principals in this study who experience reduced self-confidence.

Reduced Self-Confidence

A number of principals in this study expressed feeling reduced self-confidence. Reduced self-confidence is principals' experience with self-doubt in their ability to accomplish tasks and engage in decision-making processes when they experience psychological/mental occupational well-being issues such as anxiety (Oplatka, 2004, 2012). Such psychological occupational well-being issues affect principals' ability to identify their own limitations and use their strengths when faced with unpredictable challenges (Mehdinzhad & Nouri, 2016). At the time of the interview, a number of principals in this study shared their multiple experiences with reduced self-confidence. Principal 3 connected his lack of concentration with low self-confidence. He explained, "Of course, I have confidence issues at times, especially when I am not in a good place mentally." As discussed in the previous chapter, Principal 3's ongoing thinking about deficits in their coffers to meet work demands have contributed to feelings of reduced self-confidence. While this principal works in a traditional school situated in an urban area, he found demographic changes and reduced financial support from alumni have shifted his priorities to resolving financial issues.

Reduced self-confidence is also evidenced among some of interviewed principals in this study who reported challenges in carrying out additional tasks to source resources. Despite some principals' in this study experiencing reduced self-confidence, there are a few principals who expressed divergent perspectives. For example, Principal 8 shared that her confidence level has grown, as she stated, "I do not have confidence issues. When I make a decision, I stick to it. I have a supportive board and so I am able and prepared for push backs." The support this principal receives from the school board helps her to validate her actions while at the same time boost her confidence and autonomy in making decisions. This principal described her years of experience, specific to career stage, as having an impact on her confidence levels. For a number of principals in this study, attending to staff and students' well-being issues present fatigue that affects their psychological occupational well-being. Principal 8 and a few others in this study also shared the exhaustion they experienced because of different aspects of their work.

Exhaustion

The majority of JSS principals in this study shared the exhaustion they experience because of their work. Exhaustion forms part of principals' mental/psychological occupational ill-health that can result in negative attitudes toward their work (Cafasso, 2019; Leonard, 2018). Exhaustion is also a type of fatigue professionals experience because they are overworked and tired (Maslach, 1981). This psychological occupational well-being issue is evidenced in the challenges JSS principals' experience in completing their work tasks despite the long hours of work.

Challenge to Complete Tasks. The challenge in attending to, managing, and completing multiple tasks in addition to having to work long hours has resulted in the majority of principals feeling exhausted. Principal 9 explained, "I am always tired and exhausted...[because I] work extended hours to complete paperwork...and respond to emails...[However,] there are times when I just cannot finish everything." This principal cited reports, recommendations, financial paperwork among other duties that cumulatively prevents them from completing many tasks.

The majority of interviewed principals' inability to complete work during the work week often extend into the weekend, which they found to have contributed to their exhaustion. For other principals the weekend is divided into completing paperwork,

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responding to emails, and attending the funeral service of staff members' family. These work-related duties add to the principals existing long hours. For example, Principal 11 explained:

My exhaustion has developed overtime. Even on the weekend I find I am busy. [For example,] the staff is over 100 and I have to attend funerals and things impacting them so as not to be labelled as cold or uncaring.

Accommodating the needs of teachers and other members of staff for this principal and others is a way of extending care beyond the internal environment of the school.

However, tensions exist between managing the needs of their staff and finding time for themselves, as some participants discussed extending care to show staff their appreciation. The findings of the study also indicated that principals who reported exhaustion also disclosed what the literature described as emotional fatigue.

Emotional Fatigue from Attending to Staff and Students' Well-Being

The majority of principals also described feeling fatigue when they attend to staff and students' well-being issues. Attending to staff's and students' well-being is an additional task that principals in this study handle as part of the safety, security, and health of their schools. The fatigue these principals described is similar to emotional fatigue. For example, Principal 5 posited that assisting teachers with cancer, lobbying for their interest with the ministry, and other personal matters "add to [my] feelings of fatigue...because of the hours spent trying to resolve teachers' personal issues." This principal further explained that the time invested in thinking about and resolving teachers' personal issues while carrying out other duties add to his fatigue. Principal 5 suggested further that other participants' support for and of teachers' well-being can be emotionally draining, especially when this is compounded with students' safety, security, and health (Berkovich & Eyal, 2015; Maxwell & Riley, 2017).

In other instances, there are principals in this study who experience fatigue from listening to and managing students' well-being concerns. While all schools have one or two guidance counsellors, JSS principals are held accountable for students' mental well-being issues (MoEYI, 2008, 2015). For a number of principals, such as Principal 7, they extend support to students' mental well-being at different intervals during their workday. Principal 7 explained that

At times...when I walk around... I can tell the student who is going through something and when [I] stop to ask, [I] see the tears...In some instances, I have to get students the right support...At the end of the day, I feel tired...[and] fatigued. The fatigue this principal experience from supporting students with mental well-being issues is more emotional. Principal 7 also explained the feelings of wanting to support students with different well-being issues, especially the ones with inadequate parental support. This principal also expressed having other mixed emotional feelings during these moments of students being vulnerable. Providing the requisite support for students going through personal issues often divert this and other principals focus from their planned work schedule.

Although this principal works in a rural community, other principals regardless of school type and geographical locality have similar experiences. For instance, Principal 10, who works in a traditional church/trust school located in an urban school community, shared similar feeling of fatigue. As Principal 10 described, extending the necessary help to students with suicidal ideations brings on feelings of fatigue. This principal expressed that sometimes “talking to parents about and...[to] students. ...with suicidal thoughts ...affect my energy...[I] feel fatigued at times.” Having discussions with parents and talking to students with this mental well-being issue for this principal heightens their sense of fatigue. This participant and few other principals regularly attend to these mental well-being issues such as suicidal thoughts, which principals find lead to ongoing mental work. Sustained rumination about work, inadequate rest, exhaustion, and other occupational well-being issues have led to some principals feeling frustrated.

Frustration

Frustration is an emotional response to work challenges that has led to occupational stress and exhaustion. The literature consider frustration a mental/psychological occupational well-being issue that is evidenced in reduced self-confidence, anger, and cynicism (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Although principals in this study expressed that they are often happy with their work, the feeling of frustration for some is a result of ongoing challenges in keeping up with work demands. Principal 9 who expressed feeling exhausted from not being able to complete tasks and keep up with the pace of work also mentioned that “this is very frustrating when there is additional work to

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be done.” Principal 9 and others in the study also described having a heightened sense of frustration when they were unable to complete all the necessary paperwork such as reports and recommendations, to name a few. Similar to other aspects of their work, a number of principals in this study connected being frustrated with lack of occupational well-being support the ministry provides for teachers.

Lack of Support from the MoEYI for Teachers' Well-Being. All JSS principals in this study are aware of the limited support teachers get from the ministry. Since teachers and principals belong to the same union body—the Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA)—principals have first-hand knowledge of what areas of occupational well-being support is necessary for their teachers. For some participants, like Principal 5, there is a sense of frustration with the MoEYI's limited support for teachers struggling with a range of occupational well-being issues. This participant explained, “I am frustrated sometimes when I think about...the staff personal issues...[and] the kind of help the ministry provides...for teachers with terminal illness.” Principal 5 further explained that his frustration with the ministry's inadequate support is based on their response time and inaction in addressing teachers with cancer and mental health. In many instances, this principal has had to travel to the ministry's office to speak on teachers' behalf about these urgent health care issues. These issues add to this principal's working longer hours to complete work tasks. Principal 3 provided a similar example of teachers not being well. As this principal explained, “Many teachers are not okay. They also have personal challenges to deal with and it spills over in the classroom and on their own colleagues...It can be frustrating at times.” The frustration this principal experiences is twofold. He noted that teachers who are unwell are unable to adequately support students, especially those that are smart but socially inept. Compounded these issues are the existing tensions among teachers struggling with interpersonal communication challenges. Principals in church/trust and government owned schools across different locations experience these work challenges that affect their occupational well-being. Adding to this principal's and other interviewed participants in this study frustration is the planning and preparation for students' Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) examination.

Prioritizing Caribbean Secondary Examination Council Exams. As indicated in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3, students' average in CSEC examination is a determinant of school success. With the ranking of schools based on student academic achievement in these CSEC exams they are labelled as failed or successful (CaPRI, 2014; Educate Jamaica, 2017; Silveria, 2018). With the genesis of students' achievement grounded in traditional schools continuously doing better than nontraditional schools, principals prioritize CSEC preparation time. The unpredictable issues during the planning process, however, present feelings of frustration. In particular, drastic changes in directives from the MoEYI and CSEC require the interviewed principals to be in constant dialogue with the ministry and school board to ensure that teachers are aware of curricular changes. This is necessary to reduce teachers' level of frustration when faced with sudden changes in CSEC courses. Principal 5 delineated his frustration during exam periods with the following example:

The CSEC exam period is quite stressful. I find it frustrating when I receive communication late about exam changes... Teachers do not respond well when they discover changes to the exam courses. They complain when they must adjust their exam preparation programs to adequately prepare students... for areas that will reflect in the exams... I also need to take students' welfare into consideration ...the child who is already stressed and how this might affect their welfare.

This principal's concern for teachers' resilience during exam pressure and students' well-being represents the overarching view of all participants in this study. He also discussed the affiliated cultural challenges in communicating exam modification to particular groups of teachers who were already resistant to change. Principal 5 maintained that these concerns, although frustrating and adding to their workload, are not a deterrent to the support he provides for teachers and students. Beyond frustration, some JSS principals are overwhelmed.

Overwhelmingness

A number of principals in this study reported having a sense of overwhelmingness. Overwhelmingness is described as principals' mental/psychological response to work challenges that have led to persistent stress (Klocko & Wells, 2018; Lawson, 2005; Nagel & Brown, 2010; Shearman, 2017; Wells & Klocko, 2018).

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Similarly, JSS principals who feel overwhelmed paired their understanding of this psychological occupational well-being issue with their ongoing concerns about limited resources to support student achievement. While other areas of their work presented this sense of overwhelmingness, the overall majority of principals in this study captured this as an area of major concern.

Concerns about Resources to Support Student Achievement. The findings indicated that some interviewed principals who had incessant concerns about resources to support student achievement developed feelings of overwhelmingness. The principals in this study connected their continuous stress from working with limited resources to meet work demands with this mental/psychological occupational well-being issue. Principal 7 explained, “We are always in need of resources to support students’ learning. There are times when we don’t have the resources for teachers...this can be very stressful and sometimes...overwhelming, especially with students doing (CSEC) exams.” One of the underlying sources of this principal’s sense of overwhelmingness is not being able to provide teachers with the needed resources to prepare students for their CSEC exams. With the results from the CSEC exams used to rank schools as successful or failed (CaPRI, 2014), Principal 7 described the stress and sporadic overwhelmingness that occur when resources do not materialized. Like other JSS principals in this study who work in public and some church (nontraditional) schools, he explained the historical and socioeconomic challenges associated with limited resources. When these challenges and mandated tasks overlap with the solicitation of resources, this principal and others in this study experience overwhelmingness.

Such was the experience of Principal 1 working in an inner-city school community who explained that

I am up in the night working...thinking about getting sponsor[ship]s because I have students who can’t pay the CSEC exam fees and would tell me, “Sir I don’t have the money, my mother can’t pay for my exams” and they will cry and so on...this can be a bit overwhelming...I have to put plans in place to ensure that money is there.

This principal described carrying out financial work to ensure the money is available to assist with offsetting students’ CSEC exams expenditures. Adding to this ongoing stress

that leads to overwhelmingness is this principal's rumination about students' economic well-being and the limited support from parents and other stakeholders. In detailing the additional tasks taken to fill the gap in resources, Principal 1 outlined the process involved in contacting stakeholders from the business community to successfully garner their support. It is evident that these JSS principals' experiences, concerns for, and pressure to acquire needed resources is an established weakness in the education system, nationally (PIoJ, 2009).

Principal 5 felt that the bureaucratic school structure posed challenges in managing the school's finance. For this principal, issues related to inconsistencies in decision-making about the school budget are at times overwhelming. As Principal 5 shared, "The management structure and how decisions are made is stressful, especially when it comes to allocating resources...At times, I feel...overwhelmed and frustrated to the point where I...want to leave." Principal 5 recalled an incident regarding decisions about the budget that invoked feelings of overwhelmingness, which prompted frustration. He explained further that this mental/psychological occupational response triggered a sense of indifference toward the principalship. Contributing to this mental/psychological occupational well-being issue is this principal's concerns about the high expectations from the ministry coupled with his inability to access resources. Notwithstanding the impact of JSS principals' rumination and concerns about student achievement on their occupational well-being, the majority in this study have remained committed, passionate, and motivated about their work.

Motivation

The majority of interviewed principals reported feeling a greater sense of motivation to carry out their work despite their experiences with different occupational well-being issues. Principals having a sense of increased motivation is their innate desire to successfully carry out their work-related duties when confronted with different occupational well-being issues (Dolan, 2017; Eyal & Roth, 2010; Strack et al., 2017). For most interviewed principals in the study, remaining motivated is an internal psychological process of wanting to be an effective leader to maintain a positive school climate. They, therefore, believe it is important to create a façade upon entering their school to portray an image of strength despite their experiences with extreme work stress

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and mental occupational well-being issues. For example, Principal 3 admitted compartmentalizing his feelings to ensure he remains focused on his work upon reaching school when coping with anxiety. This principal expressed the view that:

Once I get to the gate, then a voice says, "You are at work." Maybe after I leave work I slump again. Some of it, I act during the day. I am an actor during the day; as the leader, I have to be upbeat. I cannot appear to be vulnerable because that does not help the staff.

Principal 3's resolve to demonstrate strength upon entering his school instead of vulnerability is meant to reassure teachers and self that the school has to continue with the core goal of meeting students' needs. This principal explained that suppressing signs of such as anxiety often takes a toll on his mental occupational well-being because of the ongoing economic challenges in meeting their financial obligations. Principal 3 also connected his motivation with the happiness he sometimes experiences and his passion for the job. From this principal's perspective, "Part of my happiness is measured with what I do on the job. It is not just a job, but it is a passion." Aligning his happiness with and passion for his work at times create internal tensions for this principal given the socioeconomic challenges he frequently handles. Principal 3's might also be exhibiting implied resilience and perseverance given that conceptions of the principalship as a position of authority sets the tone for a positive learning environment (Blackmore, 2013; Klocko & Wells, 2015).

Of the total principals in this study, only Principal 7 mentioned the importance of using emotional intelligence to manage his emotions to remain motivated. This participant explained that "there is something called emotional intelligence that I try to use. It is important that [I] understand my emotions and how it may affect [myself] and others. So, during these moments, I use my work to keep me motivated." Principal 7's mention of emotional intelligence is a unique finding, since his ability to identify his stress allows him to separate his issues and remain motivated. In doing so, this principal finds productive ways to manage his emotions (Goldman, 1998, 2013), such as driving to the ministry's head office to discuss specific problems affecting the school. It further underscores Principal 7's embrace of and desire to put into practice the existing NCEL program designed to strengthen his capacity to carry out his work. Despite some

interviewed principals having a sense of motivation, some JSS principals in this study also reported having cognitive occupational well-being issues.

Cognitive Occupational Well-Being

The majority of the interviewed principals reported having cognitive occupational well-being issues. The cognitive occupational well-being issues some principals in this study contend with align with their inability to concentrate on work specific to paperwork and financial work.

Inability to Concentrate on Administrative Work

The ability to concentrate on administrative work forms part of the interviewed principals' in this study cognitive occupational well-being. Regardless of context, the majority of JSS principals' ability to concentrate determines how much administrative work they are able to complete. Ongoing work-related stress about reducing the volume of work has impacted almost all principals in this study capacity to concentrate on certain tasks such as paperwork. Principal 4 described such an experience, "Naturally, the stress from my work affects my concentration level, [especially] ...completing paperwork for the ministry and getting other school business done." The stress for this principal stemmed from his increased volume of paperwork, as was addressed in the previous chapter. Principal 4 acknowledged that his inability to concentrate on paperwork and other school business is cyclical. This principal explained further that when he focuses too much on reducing his increased volume of paperwork from the ministry, his ability to concentrate on such work declines. The very knowledge of meeting the ministry deadlines for this principal adds to his work pressure and a heightened awareness about other demanding aspects of their work (Margolis & Lyubomirsky, 2018; Wells, 2015).

Another particular focus and concern among some of the principals interviewed in this study is their inability to concentrate on financial work. The principals in this study with such experience reported that preoccupation with ongoing challenges in not being able to balance their school's budget have impacted their ability to concentrate on financial paperwork. Principal 3, for instance, noted that "I had to stay home for a few days...[because] my brain was not engaged. I couldn't think about work...[even to] write cheques...when all I could think about is the money owed." For this principal, ongoing mental work about monies owed to creditors and suppliers affected his concentration

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level to the point where he had to take a leave of absence. Principal 3 went on to explain that the more he thought about the existing socioeconomic challenges without finding a resolution to balance the school's budget, he felt more encumbered with stress. While this principal's cognitive occupational well-being issue is affiliated with his passion for and prioritization of the work, he recognizes that challenges within his community context also play a role. In sharing this connection, Principal 3 described how the decline in financial support from parents and alumni has limited his ability to successfully source resources to offset expenses. And considering that the MoEYI requires a certain quality of work from principals without providing the requisite resources (Davis, 2004; MoE, 2008; PloJ, 2009), Principal 3 and other participants in this study are vulnerable to such cognitive occupational well-being issues.

My analysis of the findings revealed that there are principals in this study who also find their overlapping occupational well-being issues impinge on their ability to stay focused. For example, Principal 12's experience with exhaustion and anxiety from financial and relationship work challenges sheds light on how such issues affect aspects of her work. As this principal shared, "When I am exhausted...and anxious...I shut down. I cannot think, I just sit there, and I am unable to work. The mind has to be relaxed to perform." This principal explained that in such instances as the one described, she is more concerned about resolving the issues affecting her mental occupational well-being. She also explained that her inability to compartmentalize how she feels to achieve targeted goals is cyclical because she has to invest more hours to complete tasks. Like Principal 3, this principal's lack of focus on administrative work is based on the work socioeconomic and community work challenges in sourcing resources. Principals with such experience captured the limitation to their productivity and cognitive occupational well-being (Gregoire, 2013; Margolis & Lyubomirsky, 2018).

Only two participants in this study felt they are able to function and concentrate on their work when coping with other occupational well-being issues. As Principal 5 described, "I do not have concentration issues, because I have a lot of work to do." Even though this principal and another participant in this study experience different occupational well-being issues, they have been able to muddle through with their increased volume of existing work. For these two principals in the study, they endeavour

to capitalize on their resilience and perhaps the emotional intelligence course taught at the NCEL to support their mental occupational well-being (The NCEL, 2017). Principal 5 also acknowledged that school type—trust—affords him the resources to focus on completing his work without it affecting their cognitive occupational well-being (Galdersi et al., 2015). Despite their cognitive, mental/psychological, and physical occupational well-being issues, the principals expressed an underlying fear of mental health stigma.

Fear of Being Stigmatized

The majority of principals in this study expressed reluctance and concern about sharing their intimate struggles with anxiety with staff and other principals, partly because of the fear of being stigmatized. This fear of being stigmatized is not restricted to school type, community, or location. However, the challenges they encounter in carrying out their work has contributed to their mental/psychological occupational well-being issues. Stigma is negative perceptions toward others who display or are perceived to have mental well-being issues (Stangl et al., 2019). In relating her hesitancy and refusal to share how the stress from her work has developed into anxiety Principal 11 acknowledged that “I cannot afford to...share with a teacher...or another principal about my anxiety because it[might] backfire on me...[and] immediately you will be stigmatized...So, [I] bear it silently or, I get support from my husband at home.” Principal 11’s awareness of the stigma associated with mental well-being and conviction to manage her struggles silently is a shared sentiment among some of the other interviewed principals. Part of this reluctance in sharing anxiety and other occupational well-being issues with teachers and other principals is the existing cultural, structural, and social stigma associated with mental health issues in the Jamaican context (Arthur et al., 2010; Hickling et al., 2011).

The support she and others receive from family is based on the established trust and comfort they hold in this close social network of support. She further explained that while she gets support from her husband, there are times when he is also going through his own personal issues. However, Principal 4 expressed mixed views as he noted that “I don’t really care about what people think...and want to say...about me...I have a handful of persons who I deem as trustworthy...that will give me meaningful feedback about

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things of a personal nature.” Things of a personal nature for this principal includes his experience with work-related stress that brings on feelings of anxiety. The element of trust for this principal is very crucial as he explained the importance of having someone within his circle who understands his issues. Some principals’ internal struggle coupled with increased volume and pace of work, longer hours, and work demands have resulted in social occupational well-being issues.

Social Occupational Well-Being

At the centre of principals’ work is the relationship and interaction they have with stakeholders. The principals interviewed in this study understand social occupational well-being as the cordial, respectful, and social relationships they engage in with stakeholders. The social component of JSS principals’ work includes interaction with and support from teachers, colleagues, parents, and other key stakeholders (Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2004).

Relationship with Teachers

Central to the role of the principalship is the positive relationships the incumbent establishes with teachers. This relationship is critical given principals’ direct and indirect influence on student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2017). A number of interviewed principals in this study have divergent perceptions of their social occupational well-being, specific to their relationships with teachers. Some principals in this study perceive their work demands, long hours, and pace of their work as a barrier to downtime to harness closer relationships with staff. Principal 11 provided an example:

The demands of the work affect my relationship with the teachers because they all want individual attention. They need [me] to sit and talk with them but there isn’t enough time...with all these deadlines from the ministry. And I have to set deadline for myself and the teachers.

She also explained that her passion for her work restricts the time she would get to share with each individual staff member. Principal 11 described the need to be strategic in getting work done because attending to interpersonal challenges often derails her capacity to meet timely deadlines. Completing other tasks specific the socioeconomic challenges in the rural community this principal work requires this principal to reduce the amount of

time spent with teachers. Yet, she considers the relationships with her staff cordial and respectful.

According to Principal 6, “My relationship with others is very important to me as a leader.” He sees relationships with stakeholders including staff, parents, community stakeholders in the urban trust school he operates as an integral part of his work. In pointing out his preference for communicating with students instead of completing administrative duties, Principal 6 highlighted the consequences of too much paperwork. He expressed concern that the volume of paperwork restricts his ability to spend time on other duties while crediting his teachers and staff for their support. This principal noted that “while I am bogged down in the office with paperwork, the teachers and vice-principals are out there ensuring student are learning.” Although other members of staff help this principal to reduce the volume and demands of his paperwork work, he maintained that the population size and competing demands do not allow for downtime. There are principals in this study who recognize the importance of social relationships in boosting staff morale and positive school climate. They are, however, aware that existing subcultures among staff can thwart such efforts. Principal 10 who works in a traditional church/trust school, found the trajectory to the principalship strained their relationship with teachers. As a former student, teacher, senior teacher, and vice-principal, this principal felt pressured to demonstrate greater adeptness at her work during the early stage of her career. In recounting her initial experiences, Principal 10 explained, “I was faced with the challenge of learning new ways of communicating with my colleagues. I realized the relationships with the staff were changing.” The changed relationships between this principal and teachers resulted from her trying to prove to herself and colleagues that she had the capacity to maintain and improve the school standards. This principal also wrestled internally with trying to do better than the previous principal. Since this principal’s decisions sometimes run counter to some of her colleagues’ ideas, she recognized that she gradually lost a few of the friendships she built over the years. Being an “insider” in the role of the principalship also highlighted some of the challenges that this principal and other encountered daily, especially having to deal with the relationships among teachers.

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Summary

In this second findings chapter, I placed emphasis on JSS principals' occupational well-being. The sum of JSS principals' experiences with emotional, psychological, mental, physical, cognitive, and occupational social well-being is associated with the participants' work-related stress. Embedded in these themes are aspects of their work that have impacted different components of their occupational well-being. The third and final findings chapter details the strategies the majority of JSS principals use when coping with different occupational well-being issues.

Chapter 7: Principals' Coping Strategies for Their Occupational Well-being Issues

At the time of the interview, I asked the 12 JSS principals in this study how they cope with their occupational well-being issues. Consistent with understandings of occupational well-being, the majority of principals in this study sought to reduce their stress levels to cope with their occupational well-being issues. All participants provided detailed accounts of the individualized strategies they engage in when they experience different physical, mental, cognitive, and social occupational well-being issues. The majority of principals in this study, regardless of school type and context, reported eight individualized strategies that have supported their occupational well-being. These strategies as described in the order below include spiritual/Christian beliefs in God, mindfulness meditation, motivational thinking, family and network support, confiding in colleagues, combined physical activities, healthy eating habits, sleep hygiene, and medical services.

Spiritual/Christian Beliefs in God

The majority of principals in this study rely on their spiritual and Christian beliefs as their main source of coping with different occupational well-being issues. Spiritual/Christian beliefs is the relationship one has with a higher being that influences how they view the world, health, and death (Watkins et al., 2013). For most of the interviewed principals, their spirituality/Christian beliefs in God form part of their broader sociocultural contexts and help to guide their decision-making and ability to cope with their occupational well-being issues (Landy, 2014). For example, Principal 11 asserted that although she handles different challenges at work that increase her stress levels, her belief in God helps her to cope: "I am confronted with several challenges daily, [but] once I identify the origin of my stress or anxiety, I speak to the situation and remind myself that through the word of God that the Lord will take me through." The primary source of this principal's strength is her faith in God. For this principal and the majority of other principals in this study, prayer has helped them to manage their occupational well-being issues. This principal, as well as other interviewed participants in this study, also shared that they are able to cope with different work challenges because of their relationship with God. For them, this relationship adds to their faith and belief that they were predestined to be principals (Brown-Smythe, 2015). For example,

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Principal 1 shared, “Many things keep me up at nights... but I try to pray and trust God... [I] wouldn't be here if not for him... Sometimes I am tense, and I don't even realize...but when I pray, I feel better.” Prayer and trust in God for this principal makes him feel better, especially after handling challenging issues relating to students' safety, security, and health among others in a predominantly volatile community. Principal 2 also described his ability to manage his work-related stress and mental and cognitive occupational well-being specific to exhaustion, anxiety, and inability to concentrate on work through his faith in God:

I know this is not what you wanted to hear but I pray...I am a faith person. I am deeply religious. When I am dealing with stress...anxiety...exhaustion...and [inability] to concentrate on work...I will test the situation. I believe that I was placed in [it] by the higher being...I always ask God to take control.

Principal 2's faith that despite his challenges things will work out even though he is dealing with mental occupational well-being issues—*anxiety*—provides a glimpse of his Christian belief. This participant's Christian belief also reinforces the faith participants have in a supreme being in coping with stress associated with working without the necessary resources to meet work demands. Regardless of context, the majority of participants' in this study overall dependence on their spiritual/Christian beliefs also forms part of their self-awareness and optimism about their occupational well-being issues. Such attributes are also connected to their mental and cognitive well-being (Allen & Khan, 2014). The majority of principals in this study also connected their spiritual/Christian belief with their use of mindfulness meditation to cope with different occupational issues.

Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness meditation forms part of principals' spiritual well-being and spiritual beliefs. It is considered a form of physical relaxation, behavioural technique, or spiritual practice that is beneficial to principals' cognitive and mental occupational well-being (Jayatilake, 2017; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; 2005; Wells, 2013 2016; Wells et al., 2011). A number of interviewed principals shared that mindfulness meditation has enhanced their self-awareness, and ability to manage their emotions when trying to cope with work-related stress, feelings of overwhelmingness, and anxiety. For example, Principal 5

disclosed, “I go in meditation mode during extreme stress time...It helps me to regain my focus [because]...when I am...anxious, [and]...overwhelmed, I tend to lose focus on my work. I am more concerned about the headaches and anxious feelings.” Principal 5’s use of mindfulness meditation to relax during extreme stressful situations serves to reduce these symptoms of mental (anxiety), physical (headaches) while improving their cognitive occupational well-being (focus) (Christensen, 2018). This principal further explained that being able to concentrate is critical to their work because they are constantly making decisions to support the overall success of their school—an essential part of their cognitive occupational well-being (Coleman, 2002; Wells, 2015).

The majority of interviewed principals also use mindfulness meditation to relax and improve their physical well-being issues such as hypertension. For example, Principal 8 explained that mindfulness meditation practice has helped to manage and improve her hypertension readings. This principal noted, “I developed hypertension while working...I am on medication and so I do mediation which reduces the [number] of pills I take to control my blood pressure.” This principal’s acknowledgment that meditation has helped to manage her high blood pressure points to their inability to have little or no downtime to relax. This reactive approach to coping with their hypertension is a result of the increased volume of this principal’s while not prioritizing their occupational well-being. For this principal, meditation helps her to cope with the challenges at work that are sometimes stressful. Principal 3 explained that “I also meditate...my quiet moments with meditation help me to stay present...[because] when [I] am overworked or thinking too much I feel anxious.” Meditation for this principal helps to manage his thoughts and provide and sense of relaxation when encumbered with ongoing mental work that brings on anxious feelings.

Principal 7 aligned his meditation practice with its denominational origin—the Buddhist religion. According to this principal, “I do not go to church like other people, but I am a spiritual person, I have read about the Buddhist beliefs and I find it useful, ...especially [when] I am...feeling...overworked... frustrated...and anx[ious].” Spiritual beliefs for this principal are not restricted to the Christian religion but is affiliated with being more of a spiritual being and engaging in the practice to relief their feelings of

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being overworked, frustrated, and at times anxious about challenges at work that have exacerbated their work-related stress.

For most of the participants, they align meditation with prayer. It is also evident that while some participants acknowledged the benefits of mindfulness meditation, they understand that the principalship is not devoid of stress given their workload and work demands. To cope with this stress, some integrate other strategies such as motivational thinking.

Motivational Thinking

A few of the principals in this study emphasized the importance of motivational thinking in managing their occupational well-being. Motivational thinking is the cognitive ability to self-regulate and monitor feelings when confronted with different occupational well-being issues (Turner, 1981). The principals in this study who engage in motivational thinking explained that they are constantly grappling with self-reflection and masking their mental occupational well-being issues without appearing weak while at work. Principal 9 articulated:

I try to motivate myself...when I feel anxious...down, and not feeling like myself. I ask myself, "Why am I anxious? Is it something that I need to do? Is it something that I did not do, and will this affect my work?" I try to analyze why I am behaving the way I am and then I try to talk myself out of the feelings.

This principal's cognitive ability to explore their feelings and behavioural response to the ongoing stress affiliated with their work stress has helped to make more informed measures in coping with mental occupational well-being issues such as anxiety. Such an example points to principals' cognitive and mental occupational well-being as they are able to manage their emotions while self-examining and exploring aspects of their work that influence their occupational well-being (Liu et al., 2014; Ryff, 2014; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Vanhoutte & Nazroo, 2016). It should, however, be noted that this level of personal assessment is more evident among a few participants in their mid to late career in diverse geographical localities. Principal 8, who is in their late career, explained that years of experience have helped them to cope with the different challenges that present feelings of unmanaged stress. As this principal mentioned:

I know the stress and the challenges associated with the work. I am now able to take things in strides...than earlier in my [professional] life as principal...I try to focus on the positives to motivate myself...I enjoy being a principal...which prevent me from getting knocked out so easily.

This principal has developed the ability to engage in self-introspection, positive thoughts, and motivation instead of worrying about issues overtime. Part of this principal's motivation to not engage in ongoing rumination about issues related to work is to manage their physical occupational well-being. The principals in this study who employed this strategy are also reliant on their family and networks of support.

Family and Networks of Support

The majority of principals in this study also rely on their family and networks of support when faced with occupational well-being issues. Family and networks of support refer to the positive and trusting relationships principals have with their partner, colleagues, and close friends that enhance their social occupational well-being (Altinyelken, 2018; Bauer et al., 2017; Felce & Perry, 1995; Morin, 2008). These relationships are a source of support for principals during challenging periods when they are experiencing different occupational well-being issues (Wells, 2013). The majority of interviewed principals in this study have embraced the support from their families when encumbered with different mental occupational well-being issues because of their established trust. Principal 3, who experienced ongoing work-related stress, has found family and friends a great source of support when faced with the challenges of working with limited resources to meet work demands affect their mental occupational well-being. This principal explained:

My family calms me down when I am stressed...and down. I come home and play with my kids and my wife. Apart from my wife. I have friends that I share my emotional problems with. These are people I have known for over 30 years.

Principal 3 has established consistent and meaningful relationships with their family and social networks for several years. Principal 1 also described the support he has received from his partner as he noted, "The support received from [my] partner is good. She encourages me to rest...and take better care of myself." Having a partner to encourage and support him during stressful times is important for this principal who finds that on

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many occasions he experiences fatigue and exhaustion from the sheer volume of work. Moreover, the support received from this principal's partner helps to peel away some of the layers of work-related stress related to his physical and mental occupational well-being issues. Participants in this study also revealed that while there are not many opportunities for downtime, support from colleagues is integral to managing some of their workload. Despite the support principals receive from their teachers and vice-principals, trust is integral in confiding personal information to those in their social networks of support such as colleagues (Bozaykut & Gurbuz, 2015; Noonan & Walker, 2008).

Confiding in Colleagues

Only two of the interviewed principals in this study felt comfortable confiding their occupational well-being issues with others in their professional social networks. Of the 12 participants in this study, only Principal 10 found solace in being vulnerable to her colleague while sharing personal experience with the challenges from work that sometimes trigger feelings of being overwhelmed with anxiety (Tschannen, 2014). This principal acknowledged:

Although my family supports me, I also get in contact with a principal who provides support...because he goes through similar experiences with anxiety. Sometimes when I am on a high, he is on a low, so we are always there to help each other. I am not afraid to be vulnerable to this principal because we have been through different things together.

Principal 10's expressed vulnerability with a colleague has helped this principal to recognize their existing limitations as a leader. According to this principal, there is value in having social networks of support as their shared experiences have helped to enhance their social and mental occupational well-being (Klocko & Wells, 2015; Rishel & Hartnett, 2015). Principal 12 also expressed a congruent view as she reported, "A very good friend of mine, a former principal, provided help sometimes. I am now feeling great." At the time of the interview, this principal explained that their current state of feeling great was attributed to a combination of taking medication at one point and being open to their colleague's support and other strategies to mitigate the work-related stress.

Principal 6 shared a dissenting view from these other principals in the study who have sought support from their social networks when encumbered with different occupational well-being issues. According to this principal, his confidant is a parson. Instead of seeking professional help through available medical services for any related stress that may pose challenges for his mental occupational well-being, this principal described having more confidence in his close friend—a parson. As Principal 6 described:

I have not been to doctor with such issue...I have a good friend who is a parson. Sometimes when I have problems, I call him, and we sit for an hour in my office just talking. I guess this is my therapy. He is a qualified person and can assist with any issues. I have been lucky to have that kind of friendship.

Principal 6's preference is to confide in his parson who he considers a close friend instead of seeking medical support for his occupational well-being issues. This principal also offered a window into their spiritual beliefs in God. This further highlighted the lack of trust in confiding in colleagues and members of staff among the majority of interviewed principals in this study. Nonetheless, there are a number of principals who believe that quality time spent with family on vacation is important to relax and rebalance for their work. While the lack of downtime prevents the majority of principals from achieving this goal, there are principals in this study who try to engage in combined physical activities.

Combined Physical Activities

A few participants used a combination of physical activities to cope with their occupational well-being issues. Combined physical activities are those exercises principals engage in to improve their physical occupational well-being (Mahfouz, 2018). For the majority of principals in this study, they have engaged in physical activities after their ongoing work-related stress passed its normal threshold. For instance, Principal 6 used a combination of these strategies to achieve a sense of balance. As this principal indicated, "I am involved in football and exercise...but I don't get to do it all the time because of the work. I deliberately get involved in different activities to [create] some balance." For this principal and a few others, taking care of their physical occupational well-being not only creates a semblance of balance but contributes to their productivity and occupational well-being. This is not unique to gender or school type as Principal 12 who was taking medication to manage her anxiety found exercise useful in controlling

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this mental occupational well-being issue. At the time of the interview, she outlined her exercise routine, "I exercise daily now. For the past 3 years, I wake at 4:30 a.m. I work out, come home, eat breakfast, and get ready. The exercise gives me the feel-good feeling." The feel-good feeling for this principal is based on her reduced work-related stress and anxiety and subsequent improvements in their mental occupational well-being (Galdersi et al., 2015, 2017; Turner, 1981). Principal 12 explained further that she enjoys exercising, especially after experiencing the impact of prolonged work-related stress that gave rise to the anxiety that affected their overall occupational well-being. Despite her reactive approach in using physical exercise to manage work-related stress and anxiety, she has recognized its cyclical benefits in balancing her cognitive and mental occupational well-being (Felce & Perry, 1995; Wells, 2015).

Principal 6 also shared that he maintains an active lifestyle, which has helped to manage his type 2 diabetes, a physical occupational well-being issue that he developed from his work. In his description of his routine, he stated, "I am diabetic...I get up and walk 30 minutes every morning...I do not leave sports out...[and] I try to find time to relax." This principal also took a reactive approach in managing his type 2 diabetes. Although this principal works on weekends and engages in continuous work, he mentioned the importance of being intentional in finding a little time to relax with family when possible. This time with family, from this principal's perspective, is important but not always guaranteed because the pace of work does not permit ample time to spend with family. In addition to physical activities, some participants in this study have recognized the imperative of making more healthier choices in their diet to improve their physical well-being.

Healthy Eating Habits

Some of the principals in this study have recognized the benefits of practicing healthy eating habits. Healthy eating habits are individuals' consumption of a balanced diet that provides the necessary nutrients to support the body's biological functions, maintain optimal weight and disease prevention (Henry et al., 2015). With the majority of the interviewed principals not being able to have downtime during the days for lunch breaks, some mentioned the importance of making healthier choices to successfully carry out their work. For example, Principal 4 shared, "I pay attention to what I eat. I take my

health into perspective and ensure that I implement the necessary measures to ensure I have a balanced meal because I need the energy to do my work.” Being physically well for this principal is important as it helps with reducing low energy while improving their cognitive and mental occupational well-being (Felce & Perry, 1995; Gupta, 2015; Wells, 2015). For some principals, a shift toward a healthier eating habit is more reactive given their diagnosis with physical occupational well-being issues specific to hypertension and or type 2 diabetes. Principal 3’s shared experience highlights this as he indicated, “I have also changed how I eat as well...after [my] diagnos[is] with hypertension.” This principal noted that the desire for a change in diet is important especially given the uncontrollable readings even with medication. The majority of principals in this study, however, viewed this as a pending goal because the volume of their work does afford them such opportunity. In other instances, this principal and others reported the efforts in trying to practice sleep hygiene.

Sleep Hygiene

Establishing better sleep hygiene serves to improve some of the interviewed principals in this study occupational well-being. Sleep hygiene is “a set of behavioural and environmental recommendations intended to promote healthy sleep” (Irish et al., 2015, p. 1). This individualized strategy is beneficial to one’s cognitive, physical, and mental occupational well-being (Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), 2017; Irish et al., 2015). For some of the principals in this study, changes in sleep schedule and engagement in different forms of physical exercises help them to relax and improve their hours of sleep (Oregon State University, 2019). For example, Principal 4 shared, “I find that I am sleeping a little better than before since I have started going to bed early. [In addition to] ...exerc[ising], I try to relax and not go to bed without any problems on my head.” Like other principals in this study, Principal 4 found himself engaged in ongoing mental work, especially given his long hours of work that extends to the weekend. It is the combination of exhaustion and fatigue that signaled to this principal and Principal 7 the need to recognize he needed rest.

Principal 7 described the importance of sleep in relieving his feelings of exhaustion (Fortier-Brochu et al., 2010). According to this principal, “I have reached the point where I am now listening to my body. When I am feeling tired and exhausted, I take

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a break and sleep. I cannot go on without it impacting my body.” This principal’s ability to assess the effects the lack of adequate rest is having on their body is evidenced among other principals in the present study. Principal 8 provided a similar example that the doctor recommended to reduce stress and improve sleep. This principal explained, “Healthwise I try to be obedient to the doctor’s instruction. I do a little exercise and I try to get a little sleep.” The notion of trying to get a little sleep for this principal is evidenced of the volume of work in addition to ongoing rumination about resolving issues related to their work and not having downtime to recuperate mentally and physically. Moreover, at the time of the interview, a few other principals in this study explained that adjusting their sleep patterns provided some relief from the fatigue and stress arising from their increased workload and work demands (Fortier-Brochu et al., 2010). Principal 2 described the importance of sleeping early. According to this principal, “I go to bed relatively early in the evenings...[and] I am up early in the morning from 5 a.m....it [keeps] my mind mentally alert.” Principal 2’s organized schedule helps with his cognitive well-being in keeping his mind mentally alert to better manage the ongoing and unpredictable challenges at work (Wells & Klocko, 2018). In addition to sleep hygiene, some principals in this study have sought to access support from medical service providers to cope with their occupational well-being issues arising from their ongoing work-related stress.

Medical Services

Only a few participants in this study accessed medical services to support their occupational well-being. Medical services are those medical and health care resources offered to citizens in a given country. Such medical services include dental, hospital, therapist, physician, and mental health, among others (Ministry of Health (MoH), 2017). While access to health care in Jamaica is offered in the public and private sector, it is of no cost at government hospitals and clinics across the country (MoH, 2017). The majority of interviewed principals access medical services from their physicians specific to medical check-up, while a minority seek support for issues related to their mental, emotional/psychological well-being issues, as detailed below.

Medical Check-up

The majority of principals in this study get a medical check-up from their doctor to manage their physical well-being issues. Most medical check-ups are done annually to identify any risk factors for diseases such as hypertension and type 2 diabetes (Yoffee, 2009). For the majority of participants who reported having one or two chronic diseases, they were more reactive in getting a medical check-up for their physical well-being issues. Contributing to this reluctance is the idea that visiting the doctor for a medical check-up would be an inconvenience given their work demands from the MoEYI and other external responsibilities. For example, Principal 3 explained:

I do not have the time to visit the doctor for a [medical] check-up often [because]...I must ensure paperwork for the ministry is completed in addition to the evening program that I manage in my community. However, the doctor discovered I have high blood sugar readings the last time I saw him.

Principal 1's inability to find time to receive a medical check-up is due to his engagement in long hours to complete his increased volume of paperwork and his additional work in his own community. This participant and other interviewed principals in this study further suggested that their challenges with increased workload and work demands prevent them from prioritizing their occupational well-being issues. Principal 1's diagnosis with type 2 diabetes, a chronic disease that has implications for other areas of his well-being, made him realize that his well-being is equally important as his work.

A few other principals in the study have also prioritized getting a medical check-up to monitor and control their physical well-being issues. These participants such as Principal 7 recognized the significance of maintaining good physical health through ongoing medical check-up. According to Principal 7, "I seek medical help at least every three months. I try to find time for this because I am aware that my work is stressful, and my health is equally important." The recognition that while his work is stressful, his health is equally important is evident among principals operating in contexts where volatility is low, and support is adequate. While the majority of interviewed principals have prioritized managing their physical well-being, only a few have sought mental and occupational well-being support.

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Medical Support for Mental and Emotional/Psychological Well-Being

Only a quarter of the interviewed principals have accessed medical services to support their mental and emotional/psychological well-being issues. Of this small group of participants, two have received prescribed medications from their family doctor to handle their stress and anxiety in the short term. While struggling with anxiety, Principal 12 felt she was at the brink of collapsing and had to take medication for a year to relax as needed. She explained, "God is good. I had to be on Xanax every now and then to calm me down. For a year I took 10 to 20 [pills] in little pieces." Taking prescribed medication to stabilize their anxiety, a mental and emotional/psychological well-being issue, provided short-term relief as the anxious feelings would sometimes reoccur when this principal had to deal with human relationship issues related to students' well-being. The desired outcome for the two principals was to control their anxieties so that they could sleep better and successfully carry out their work-related duties. These principals' acknowledgment of their susceptibility to mental and emotional/psychological well-being issues illuminated their vulnerability during the earlier phase of their career. Principal 10 also shared, "I have only been to the doctor once where...I told the doctor, 'I feel like I am going to go over the edge, so give me something so that I can sleep.' I sleep for two days and it worked." For this principal, the experience of taking on the challenges associated with human relations issues was such that it influenced their physical well-being specific to insomnia. However, at the time of the interview, both participants did not disclose accessing mental well-being services such as seeing a psychologist or occupational well-being therapist. Instead, they disclosed having stopped taking their prescribed medications from their family doctor because they have learned to delegate more to their staff. Overall, the participants did not reveal or implied that they self-medicate to manage their occupational well-being issues.

Summary

The findings presented in this final findings chapter detailed 12 JSS principals' lived experiences and shared understandings of the individualized strategies they use to cope with their occupational well-being issues. Their spiritual/Christian beliefs in God are their primary source of support in managing how they respond to stress that present occupational well-being issues. The other strategies the majority of JSS principals found

beneficial include mindfulness meditation, motivational thinking, family and network support, confiding in colleagues, combined physical activities, healthy eating habits, sleep hygiene, and medical services. In the next chapter, Chapter 8, I discuss JSS principals' experience with work intensification and occupational well-being.

Chapter 8: Principals' Work Intensification and Occupational Well-Being

Leading scholars have drawn our attention to the implications of principals' work on their occupational well-being. One of the most flagrant connections made in these studies is the intensification of principals' work (Ettner & Grzywacz, 2001; Nhundu, 1999; Pollock et al., 2014, 2015; Pollock & Wang, 2020) that has had a deleterious impact on incumbents' physical, cognitive, social, and mental/psychological occupational wellbeing. The findings presented in Chapter 5 provided similar evidence that the majority of JSS principals in this study experience, if not all, a combination of the five components of work intensification. Specifically, my findings demonstrated that JSS principals are engaged in long hours of work, increased volume and pace of work, and additional work tasks while working with limited resources, and little to no downtime. In this chapter, I discuss these emerging themes in the findings under the theme Jamaican secondary school (JSS) principals' experience with work intensification. I also interrogate principals' reliance on spiritual well-being and social networks of support, and problematize stigma in the context of mental health/well-being in the Jamaican context.

Jamaican Secondary School (JSS) Principals' Experience with Work Intensification

The permeation of work intensification across education systems has consequences for contemporary school principals. Green's (2001) seminal piece on work intensification described this complex issue as a continuous process that is driven by technological and organizational change. Such changes, according to Green and education scholars, such as Pollock et al. (2019) and Wang (2020), manifest themselves in increased workload and work demands. Work overload is principals' perception that they have more work than can be completed within a given time frame (Geurts et al., 2003; Jex, 1998; Parasuraman et al., 1996). Since context is the driver of how individuals' experience and understand workload, principals' belief about this phenomenon is based on the number of tasks they are required to complete and their feelings about the tasks at hand (Oplatka, 2017). Captured in other bodies of research is also the idea that principals' workload is premised on them working long hours, at a fast pace, and under time pressure (Franke, 2015; Illies et al., 2015; Kubicek et al., 2014; Oplatka, 2017; Pollock et al., 2019; Wang, 2020a, 2020b).

The literature also affirmed that increased workload poses challenges for principals. Empirical studies revealed that principals in international jurisdictions who reported having increased workload found the work more complex, demanding, and voluminous (Armstrong, 2015; Darmody & Smith, 2016; Leithwood, 2014; Pollock et al., 2014, 2015; Riley, 2018; Swapp, 2012). Principals in these same studies also found workload and the need to meet tight deadlines hindered their capacity to complete their normal work tasks. The findings of this study demonstrated that while JSS principals face similar challenges affiliated with workload, other issues arising in their geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts intensify their work. There, however, appears to be a misrecognition and or unawareness of their work intensifying. According to my participants, this qualitative research has opened their eyes about their work and occupational well-being.

Increased Volume of Work

The findings of this study conveyed that the majority of the principals in this study are experiencing an increased volume of work. This corroborates evidence in the broader literature of increased volume of work as the growing number of similar tasks that they carried out before (Bottery, 2016; Green, 2004; Pollock et al., 2015; Pollock et al., 2019). At the core of this increased volume of email and paperwork is advanced technological change. What is clear is that JSS principals, like those in other jurisdictions, are spending much time communicating through email and other forms of communication such as WhatsApp (e.g., Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Pollock & Wang, 2020).

Although increased volume of work is an indicator of work intensification, it is also signaling a shift toward JSS principals becoming technology leaders (Anderson & Dexter, 2005; Dexter, 2011; Gurr, 2000, 2004). Aligned with these researchers' conclusions are the illustrated findings intimating that the majority of JSS principals are engaged in increased and ongoing communication with stakeholders through email, social media platforms, and school management systems (SMS). The National Education Inspectorate's (NEI) (2017) most recent quality assurance report of Jamaica's schools drew attention to the depth of technological change. In the NEI's description, they stated that "many schools have invested in [SMS]...to gather and manage data...that is useful in decision-making at all levels of the schools" (p. 30). Such rapid changes in Jamaican

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principals' work are consistent with the finding in my master's thesis (Walker, 2016) that some rural JSS principals had adapted the use of SMS in their schools.

Limited Resources to Meet Work Demands

Limited resources to meet work demands is understood among principals in this study as the inadequate human and financial capital required to meet the needs of their school. Of these two types of resources, the majority of principals in this study are faced with ongoing challenges with limited monetary resources (Levacic, 2010; P. Miller, 2015, 2018). As I discussed in Chapter 2, Jamaica's fluctuating GDP and colonial history have perpetuated ongoing challenges with resources in an existing two-tier education system (Keith, 1978; PIoJ, 2009). These challenges include barriers to equity in access to resources and adequately resourced traditional and nontraditional schools. Disparity in resources is linked to school type—church/trust (traditional) and government owned (nontraditional) with traditional schools having greater advantage (Francis, 2014; Jamaica Observer, 2016b; Keith, 1978; P. Miller, 2016, 2018; PIoJ, 2009). P. Miller (2016) argued that incongruency between the policy and socioeconomic contexts is at the centre of this problem. For the majority of principals in this study who work in nontraditional schools, they are at a greater disadvantage. The literature in Chapter 2 captured the challenges with the historical and policy contexts that do not consider the overlapping issues within the geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts. P. Miller (2015) and Francis (2018) highlighted the limited human resources in some rural schools that have subjected principals to take on teaching roles. Participants in my research who operate in rural public schools revealed similar experiences.

Moreover, disparities in principals' access to resources at the community level reinforce the disconnect between principals' mandates and available resources that are not of their doing (Baines, 2018; Jamaica Observer, 2016c). Although the Jamaican government has acknowledged these work challenges among principals specific to limited financial resources to meet work demands (PIoJ, 2009) provisions are not made for other areas of their work that require particular skill sets. For example, parents require principals' advice in handling matters concerning students' suicidal ideations among other issues despite having the support of guidance counsellor. This finding signaled that the majority of JSS principals do not have the training and social resources to handle

some of the eclectic human relations challenges they handle. Findings in the Ontario, Canadian context support the notion that disconnect often occurs between what is expected of principals in their position and the current resources provided to create a positive learning environment (Pollock & Wang, 2019). For instance, a small percentage (38.3%) of principals in Ontario believe they are not equipped with the resources to effectively carry out their work. Principals in this study cited the lack of training to attend to the mental well-being needs of students and staff (Pollock & Wang, 2019). Moreover, the sum of JSS principals' perspectives on similar matters in this study such as concerns for teachers' instructional practice and well-being emphasize the complex nature of their work.

Additional Tasks

Ongoing structural change and policy regulations have contributed to the additional tasks principals, including those in this study, carry out (Bamberger et al., 2015; Pollock et al., 2019). Like principals in these studies, JSS principals shared a common perspective that they carry out additional types of tasks along with their existing work. Of significance and in line with the literature is the ministry requiring Jamaica principals to prioritize the well-being needs of students and sourcing additional resources for their schools (MoEYI, 2015). Influencing such focus is the need to improve school success and by extension students' performance in their CSEC examinations (NEI, 2017). Adding to the complexity of the majority of JSS principals' work is the wide range of support they appear to extend to teachers and students' well-being. Grubb and Flessa (2006) described these and other multiple tasks of the principalship as a "job too big for one" (p. 518). Supporting Grubb and Flessa's view are studies highlighting the growing number of teachers who require principals' support in managing their occupational stress related to students' discipline and mental health problems (Kidger et al., 2016; McCallum et al., n.d.; Ross et al., 2013). This support extends to providing teachers with the necessary resources to facilitate learning (Kidger et al., 2016; Ross et al., 2013). In keeping with this perspective and the underpinnings of this study is JSS principals' concern for teachers' well-being that at times can be too much to handle in one day.

Although challenges are inevitably a part of these JSS principals' work, sourcing the requisite resources is a major problem for some (P. Miller, 2016, 2018). This

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additional task of securing the necessary resources is analogous to the notion of entrepreneurial leadership (Devita, 2005; Marinopoulos, 2017; P. Miller, 2016, 2018). This aspect of principals' work in the Jamaican context is viewed along the lines of financial innovation and taking risks (P. Miller, 2018). It further signals that schools are operating within a business model frame that require principals to learn new ways of learning and doing financial management (Leitch et al., 2013; Leitch & Volery, 2017; NCEL, 2017), albeit at the cost of their work intensifying. The sociohistorical connection of this aspect of principals' work is connected to the national economic context and local socioeconomic context (as discussed above) and school type (P. Miller, 2016). With the literature capturing the unique challenges Jamaican principals operating in inner-city school communities experience, the majority of participants with socioeconomic challenges operate in inner-city and rural communities. The challenges highlighted in both contexts in Chapter 2 are reflected in this study. A common theme in the literature that occurred in both contexts is the socioeconomic challenge that requires dependence on entrepreneurialism to obtain additional resources (Jamaica Self-Help, 2013; P. Miller, 2018; Mullings et al., 2018; PJoJ, 2009). Principals in P. Miller's (2015, 2016, 2018) studies reported having similar experiences because the geographical locality of their school and school type do not permit easy access to financial capital to balance their budget.

Pace of Work

The pace of work for some principals is changing. Studies have indicated that principals' increased pace of work is grounded in the number of tasks they complete under time pressure with little or no downtime (Grissom et al., 2015; Sebastian et al., 2019). Driving the increased pace of principals' work, such as JSS principals, are years of continued structural reforms that required education systems and principals to adjust to changes (Grissom et al., 2015; P. Miller, 2018; MoEYI, 2008, 2015, NCEL, 2017; Sebastian et al., 2018; The Education Act, 1980). As a result, Jamaican principals like principals elsewhere work is becoming more challenging as the pace at which they work has increased (Pollock & Hauseman, 2015; Riley, 2016). Principals in this study described an increase in the pace of their work because they contend with workload, amid the existing socioeconomic, disciplinary, and relationship challenges among other

priorities. Research with congruous perspectives support participants' overarching views that increased pace of work is manifested in competing work demands and overlapping deadlines from the ministry and stakeholders (Kuper & Marmot, 2003). Riley (2018) warned that with principals working at increased speed to keep up with the pace of these kinds of works, they are and will see added intensity in their work. Supporting evidence from his research indicated average 71.25% of Australian principals are working at a fast pace. Coupled with Pollock and Wang's (2019) finding that 60.3% of Ontario principals are working at a fast pace, we can infer that the pace at which Jamaican school principals' work will only grow. The illustrated findings revealed, as well, that as principals seek to balance different work priorities, they are engaged in long hours to reduce their workload.

Long Hours

Given that principals' professional and personal lives overlap, exploring their long hours of work is necessary (Pollock & Wang, 2019). Long hours of work as discussed in the literature review is principals working more than the 40-hour work week (Phillips et al., 2007; Pollock & Wang, 2020; Riley, 2016, 2018; Swapp, 2012; Wang et al., 2018). Moreover, change in principals' work across different jurisdictions revealed that they work long hours to reduce higher workload (Phillips & Sen, 2011; Pollock et al., 2015; Riley, 2016, 2018). Driving principals' long hours of work are issues related to time pressure in completing tasks and reducing the volume of paperwork and increased Information Communication Technology usage specific to email and social media (Green, 2001, 2004; Pollock et al., 2015, 2019; Riley, 2016, 2018). These long hours have blurred the lines in principals' personal (home) and professional (school) lives (Oplatka, 2017; Pollock et al., 2019).

Jamaican school principals work long hours regardless of school type and context. For example, the findings demonstrated that the majority of participants are working an average 55–60 hours work week to reduce to tackle the increased workload. Convergent findings in the Ontario, Canadian and Australian contexts indicate that principals in these contexts work similar hours with evidence intimating their work is intensifying (Pollock et al., 2019; Riley, 2015, 2016). Pollock and Wang (2019) reported that principals in Ontario, Canada work an average 59-hour work week. Riley (2018) also presented comparable data that 53% of principals complete an average 56-hour work week, while

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24% worked between 61–65 hours. My participants spent quite a bit of time reading and responding to emails and completing paperwork beyond their regular work hours as a means to tackle their workload. Although they were not asked to state the average hours of work spent on emails, they seem to work beyond their regular hours to read/respond to emails and complete paperwork. Ontario principals in Pollock and Wang's (2019) study described working 11.5 hours of their 59-hour work week on emails. One of the pressing concerns of long hours of work is the overlap in work tasks that often lead to what appears to be increased time pressure among participants in this study. Ultimately, this overlap in participants' work tasks seem to create tensions and additional work pressure. What is clear is that when these issues related to principals' long hours of work are merged with competing challenges in their socioeconomic and community contexts, their long hours of work appear to be cyclical. Unfortunately for majority of participants in this study, downtime from work is not achieved.

No Downtime

No downtime is central to this work intensification. No downtime equates to principals working without having time for scheduled breaks in their day to replenish and restore their energy (Pollock & Wang, 2019). It appears that the majority of JSS principals are engaged in continuous physical and mental work that often does not provide the opportunity for downtime. Wang's (2020b) argument further supports this conclusion, as he noted that principals' work intensification hinders their ability to engage in social reflection and self-introspection about their work. As the findings of the study show and already discussed above, the majority of participants are working at an increased pace and long hours to reduce the volume of their work. Some of these same principals carry out additional tasks because they operate with limited resources to meet work demands. Based on participants' work experiences, I conclude that these five criteria of work intensification are present across different school types.

After careful analysis of the literature and my findings, it is evident that without downtime, the presence of work intensification poses occupational well-being challenges for JSS principals (Dugan & Barnes-Farnel, 2017; Martin et al., 2020, Pollock et al., 2019). What is reflected in the findings is that JSS principals' adherence to the sociohistorical principles of working within a bureaucratic system that they have not

recognized the occupational hazards of their work. Along these lines, the unintended consequences and implications of their work intensifying cannot be dismissed, as participants' collective accounts intimated that some are experiencing occupational well-being issues that mirror the tenets of burnout (Beausaert et al., 2016; Marklin & Wang, 2020). This notion of burnout as suggested in the findings of this research includes principals' ongoing work-related stress that have resulted in exhaustion, frustration, fatigue, anxiety, and powerlessness. In the subsequent section, I bring attention to these occupational well-being challenges that JSS principals' experience and their connection to burnout.

Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Well-being Issues: Its Connection to Burnout

As articulated in the literature and findings, JSS principals' vulnerability to work intensification has a corrosive effect on their occupational well-being (Armstrong, 2014; Bottery, 2016; Ettner & Grzywacz, 2001; Green, 2004; P. Miller, 2015; Nhundu, 1999; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005; Pollock et al., 2015; Riley, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Waddell & Burton, 2006; Wang, 2020a, 2020b; Warr, 1989, 1990). Educational scholars have also posited that principals experience a wide spectrum of occupational well-being issues because ongoing structural changes and policy regulations have intensified their work (Frank, 2015; Green, 2001, 2004; Nemade et al., 2015; Pollock et al., 2015; Pollock & Wang, 2019; Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008; Wells et al., 2011). The findings of the study and relevant literature from the policy context in Jamaica support the perspective that work intensification, as discussed above, has implications for JSS principals' physical, mental/psychological, cognitive, and social occupational well-being (Green, 2001, 2004).

The occupational well-being issues these principals discussed are a result of the inadvertent consequences of work-related stress that mirror the tenets of burnout. Maslach's (1979, 1995) description of burnout as workers', including principals', unfavourable response to continued stress due to work intensification, is consistent with the experiences of JSS principals in this study. In the review of literature, burnout among principals in countries such as Australia and Ireland are considered a process that begins with prolonged work demands that they interpreted as contributing to their work-related stress (Beausaert et al., 2016; Friedman, 2002; Phillip & Sen, 2011; Riley, 2014, 2016).

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Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Experience with Work-Related Stress

Despite the sociological framing of this study, understanding of JSS principals' work-related stress is embedded in the mental/psychological occupational well-being literature (Siegel, 2007; Suleman et al., 2018). Consistent with the World Health Organization's (2014) and Chaplin's (2002) definition of work-related stress is principals in this study shared perspective that they are not equipped with the necessary resources to meet their increased workload and work demands. Marklin and Wang (2020) cautioned that we should be concerned about principals' burnout. According to these two Canadian researchers, principals' susceptibility to burnout is as high as other professionals who experience work pressure and stress from increased workload. In their observation of the literature, they argued that principals' engagement in long hours of work without downtime is a recipe for chronic stress and subsequent burnout. With most principals in this study sharing their ongoing stress because of long hours of work and work demands, they are seemingly prone to occupational ill-health. Confirming this potential health issue are studies indicating that Australian and Irish principals reported high levels of stress when compared to the other professionals in the general population (Phillip & Sen, 2011; Riley, 2014, 2016). Horwood et al.'s (2019) recent study on Australian principals reaffirmed this previous conclusion, as principals experienced 1.7 times more stress than the employed citizenry. In the same report, principals also reported 1.6 times more burnout than other professionals in the general population. Like principals in these and other studies, JSS principals in this research are predisposed to long-term stress because limited resources restrict their capacity to meet their work demands (Beausaert et al., 2016; Pollock et al., 2015; Riley, 2018). This finding is consistent with other studies suggesting that when individuals continuously work with limited resources, they can overtime misrecognize their work pressure and strain that contribute to extensive stress and subsequent burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Bakker et al., 2010; Pollock et al., 2014, 2015, 2017; Riley, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018; Russell et al., 2018). It is this prolonged work-related stress that leading scholars asserted contribute to workers', such as principals', exhaustion (Friedman, 1993, 2002; Gmelch & Gates, 1998; Gmelch & Swent, 1981; Gmelch & Torelli, 1994; Tjindink et al., 2014; Whitaker, 1996).

Exhaustion

Concluding evidence from the study's findings and Friedman's (1995, 2002) conception of emotional exhaustion suggest that some JSS principals understand this principle of burnout as their body's response to work intensification. Exhaustion is an occupational well-being issue that Maslach (1981, 1993) and other scholars defined as a severe state of tiredness resulting from the stress associated with physical and mental work (Adamsson & Benhardsson, 2018). With the tenets of emotional well-being ensconced in the psychological well-being literature, Friedman (1995, 2002) considered the interrogation of workers' emotional exhaustion a central part of understanding burnout in the workplace.

Similar to principals in Karakose et al.'s (2016) study, most JSS principals in this study expressed feelings of being overworked and tired. This feeling of exhaustion or weariness that some principals described is an apparent accumulation of the increased volume of workload and work demands. Adding to the majority of JSS principals' work demands are the additional tasks that are consistent with entrepreneurial leadership practices, pace of work, and longer hours that researchers across disciplines have linked to burnout (Friedman, 1995, 2002; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Riley, 2017, 2019; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2009; Suleman et al., 2018). In this sense, emotional exhaustion among JSS principals in this study seem to "undermine [their] effectiveness, health, and well-being" (Maslach & Leiter, 1997, p. 41). What is conveyed here is that JSS principals in the present study, regardless of gender, are predisposed to and have experienced physical occupational well-being issues or symptoms of exhaustion (Afonso et al., 2017; 2017; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Maslach et al., 1996; Suleman et al., 2018). These symptoms of exhaustion, as understood among the majority of principals in this study, include headaches and fatigue.

Fatigue

Fatigue is the excessive feelings of tiredness associated with principals' physical and mental work (Armstrong, 2009; Ozer, 2013). Fatigue, according to these researchers, is manifested in its physical, emotional, and mental form. For JSS principals who shared their experiences with fatigue, they situated aspects of their physical and mental work within the existing challenges in their socioeconomic and policy contexts. This finding

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reflects Queen and Schumacher's (2006) and Lane's (2018) reasoning that principals experience fatigue when their work challenges, workload, and work demands increase their physical and mental work (Queen & Schumacher, 2006; Lane, 2018). Principals' experience with fatigue is also seemingly aligned with their exhaustion from having to manage a range of additional tasks such as students' well-being.

For some JSS principals in this study who attend to staff and students' mental/psychological well-being issues, they seem to conduct emotional labour (Maxwell & Riley, 2016). Maxwell and Riley (2017) and other scholars described principals' response to mental/psychological ill-health of students and teachers as emotional demands (Berkovich & Eyal, 2015; Blackmore, 2010). Emotional labour, physical and emotional strain, and fatigue are aspects of burnout that researchers such as Hochschild (1983) and others have concluded reduce individuals' energy and concentration (Atkinson, 2004; Kourtesi & Kantas, 2000; Leonard, 2018; Suleman et al., 2018). As Blackmore (1996, 2010) and Hargreaves (1998) have shown, emotional labour is twofold. It is connected to policy reforms that often intensify teachers' and school leaders' work while principals themselves extend care to their staff and students. This care principals extend to teachers and students is contextual and at times performative because of the work-related stress principals experience from additional tasks and demands (Blackmore, 1996; Hargreaves, 1998).

Researchers further concluded that fatigue among principals is a signal of decline in their physical and cognitive occupational well-being (Maxwell & Riley, 2016). The shared experience of fatigue coupled with the exhaustion among some JSS principals in this study may have also contributed to reduced concentration and personal accomplishment, and sense of resignation. Supporting bodies of research corroborated JSS principals' revelation that these feelings of demotivation and diminished productivity occur at different points in their career (Friedman, 2002; Lane, 2018; Leonard, 2018; Queen & Schumacher, 2006). For the most part, the findings in this study illustrated the perspective that reduced personal and professional accomplishment is the negative attitude and self-assessment of one's professional and personal life that often led to indifference, and consideration for abdicating of their role (Maslach, 1993; Maslach & Jackson, 2007; Maslach et al., 2001; Riley, 2018). In addition to these aforementioned

signs of burnout, workers, including principals, often experience hypertension and frustration (Lee & Ashforth, 1990; Leonard, 2018; Salvagioni et al., 2017).

Frustration

The literature suggests that frustration is a negative psychological response to the stress associated with work intensification (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). According to these leading scholars and others, frustration is often manifested in employees' such as principals, experience with anger, cynicism, and decline in self-confidence (Adamsson & Benhardsson, 2018; Karakose et al., 2016). In fast paced and demanding work environments, such as schools, principals work long hours to reduce their workload (Markman, 2011; The Wallace Foundation, 2004). Farber's (1991) description of burnout as the incongruity between educators' work demands and job satisfaction is emblematic of some JSS principals working long hours, which overtime leads to feelings of frustration. This component of burnout is often a result of exhaustion and fatigue that has implications for principals' mental/psychological ill-health (Karakose et al., 2016; Maslach, 1981). Such occupational well-being issues can lead to feelings of being physically and mentally drained and socially isolated (Karakose et al., 2016).

This mental/psychological occupational well-being response to their work-related stress is also triggered because of the lack of support from the ministry in resolving teachers' personal issues. Although most JSS principals expressed concerns about managing human relations issues related to staff well-being, their frustration is often associated with the MoEYI's inaction in resolving teachers' personal issues. Other intimation of frustration with the bureaucratic and political alignment of some decisions among some principals in this study suggest that governance can be improved in some schools (P. Miller, 2013c, 2014). Compounding participants' lived reality with frustration is what some JSS principals perceive as inadequate governance and support from leaders at the school board and ministry level (Nhundu, 1999, p. 262).

Principals in this study had concerns about the disparities in support along the lines of school type—church, trust, and government owned—that magnified their frustration. According to Miller (2015), principals in the rural context of Jamaica appear to have “an overwhelming sense of frustration [because they have perceived that] policy is being decided by those in the centre...the MoEYI, and those closest to the

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centre...meaning principals from bigger schools [i.e., traditional schools]" (para. 11). Principals' perceived exclusion, when compounded with balancing the existing unpredictable challenges in their geographical and community contexts, is grounded in the two-tiered education system. These complex issues substantiate earlier and recent findings that frustration resulting from work intensification can contribute to burnout (Friedman, 2002; Whitaker, 1996). For some participants who experienced frustration, they also reported feeling anxiety and dissociation from others.

Anxiety

Since this study is sociological in nature, I did not set out to diagnose if JSS principals are experiencing anxiety, a mental/psychological occupational well-being issue. Klocko and Wells (2015) and other researchers in the medical and educational leadership fields consider anxiety among people/the principalship as a natural emotion people experience while carrying out their work (Bacon et al., 2014; Carr, 1994; Galders et al., 2011, 2015; Pan et al., 2015; Smith, 2018; Turner, 1981; Wells, 2016). However, when a principal's anxiety exceeds its normal levels, it becomes a mental/psychological occupational well-being issue (Smith, 2018; Wells, 2016). This mental/psychological occupational well-being issue is recognized as a symptom of burnout and is associated with environmental issues (Cole, 2014; Koustimani et al., 2019). Socioeconomic challenges including the inability to source resources to offset expenses have seemingly resulted in this feeling of anxiety for some participants. Supporting this aspect of JSS principals' psychological occupational well-being is Wells and Klocko's (2018) conclusion that severe stress from working with limited resources can lead to anxiety. Scholars also reported that principals found working long hours to keep up with the pace of their workload adds to their existing challenges (Bakker et al., 2005; Klocko & Wells, 2015; Riley, 2016, 2017, 2018; Wells et al., 2011; Wood et al., 2012). Klocko and Wells (2015) also posited that because principals manage a range of unforeseen problems, they are sometimes encumbered with chronic stress from working with limited time and under pressure to meet work deadlines.

The literature and my findings underscore the idea that anxiety is a maladaptive response to occupational stress from the intensification of their work (Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Klocko & Wells, 2015; Smith, 2018; Wells, 2016; Wells & Klocko, 2018; Wells et al.,

2011). Other evidence of maladaptive responses to stress that are also symptoms of anxiety include insomnia, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and inability to concentrate (Cole, 2014). Pollock and Wang found that principals can experience anxiety when they attend to students' and teachers' mental/psychological well-being issues (Pollock & Wang, 2020). Friedman (2002), in contrast, claimed that principals' interpersonal relationships with staff and parents have a significant effect on their levels of burnout when compared to their workload. Since this study is qualitative in nature, I cannot claim that the participants in my study have a perceived higher level than the other. However, some of them appear to have feelings of anxiety when they deal with sensitive issues around students' well-being. For some of these principals, their mental/psychological occupational well-being issues can lead to dissociation from others in their networks.

Dissociation/Isolation from Others

Leading scholars on burnout noted that the symptoms associated with anxiety and/or depression can cultivate feelings of dissociation from others (Maslach et al., 2001). As illustrated in the findings, the participants in this study who experienced anxiety also expressed that they also felt socially disconnected from colleagues and those in their networks of support. Researchers exploring disassociation among individuals with burnout noted its domino effect on feelings of isolation. Isolation is a psychological well-being issue that can affect principals' social occupational well-being (Chen et al., 2015; Nishiruma & Suzuki, 2016). This feeling of isolation among some principals in this study is not restricted to gender as the findings suggested that both female and male principals have similar experiences. Tomac and Tomac's (2008) and Stephenson and Bauer's (2010) scholarly work on burnout supports symptom of burnout among some participants in this study. According to these researchers, principals are susceptible to burnout if they experience isolation. They also identified increased workload, work demands, and role conflict as changes in principals' work that contribute to their feelings of isolation and burnout. Isolation and burnout are, however, felt less among principals with social support (Başol, 2013; Stephenson & Bauer 2010). Başol (2013) and Stephenson and Bauer (2010) reported similar findings that social support reduced principals' levels of burnout. With some principals in this study in their early- to mid-

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career expressing a lack of social support, concerns about their propensity for burnout cannot be diminished.

This characteristic of burnout is perhaps aligned with some participants' experience with exhaustion, frustration, and fatigue that have led to apathy toward their teachers and work. Consistent with these noted characteristics of burnout is the cynicism that a small group of participants have demonstrated towards the role of the principalship. From these participants' perspectives, their passion for the role of the principalship often supersedes their frustration with the challenges and feelings of apathy towards their work. Nonetheless, they have reached the stage of giving up at different points in their career due to perceived reduced personal accomplishment—the negative evaluation of professional output—and powerlessness (Maslach, 2001).

Powerlessness

The findings in this study illustrated that the majority of principals are coping with an ongoing sense of powerlessness. JSS principals' understanding of powerlessness is viewed within the lens of their inability to control their workload and work demands. Researchers concluded, similarly, that this cognitive and mental/psychological well-being issue—powerlessness—is principals having lack of autonomy, mastery, and control over aspects of their work (Lewandowski, 2003; Maforah & Schulz, 2012; Markman, 2011; The Wallace Foundation, 2004; Suleman Başol, 2013, 2018). From the majority of JSS principals' collective experience with this symptom of burnout (Friedman, 2002; Hvidston Başol, 2013, 2015; Leventis, 2017), they are seemingly unable to achieve downtime because of their work intensifying (Goldring et al., 2015; Grissom et al., 2015; Horng & Loeb, 2010; Mitani, 2018; Pollock et al., 2019).

A recent study conducted in Pakistan found school principals felt powerless because of their work intensifying (Suleman et al., 2018). Although Pollock and Hauseman's (2018) work did not focus on powerlessness, Canadian principals in Ontario found that increased Information Communication Technology (ICT) has reduced their capacity to manage their increased volume of emails and paperwork. Participants in this study also encountered a range of challenges in balancing time spent on responding to urgent emails from the ministry and completing their scheduled work. This overlap in some participants' tasks extended their longer hours of work, thus contributing to

no downtime. It is this push and pull in competing challenges in their geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts that have seemingly contributed to their growing sense of powerlessness.

Scholars have also articulated the alignment with powerlessness and sense of isolation that principals experience while carrying out their work (Drago-Severson, 2012; Bauer & Brazer, 2010, 2013; Bauer et al., 2017; Stephenson & Bauer, 2010). For some JSS principals who grapple with this psychological occupational well-being issue, there is also a gnawing feeling of isolation (loneliness) (Maforah & Schulz, 2012). This feeling of isolation among some JSS principals is an inherent part of their work culture because they seem to experience a diminished sense of control in making certain decisions (DeMatthews et al., 2019; Maforah & Schulz, 2012). Perhaps what is preventing the majority of JSS principals from experiencing a greater sense of powerlessness and apathy are the individualized strategies they have employed to cope with their occupational well-being issues. Overall, the majority of JSS principals did not explicitly state they are experiencing burnout. However, the noted work-related stress, overwhelmingness, exhaustion, frustration, fatigue, anxiety, and powerlessness they contend with while at work suggest otherwise. With principals in this study expressing characteristics that are indicating that some may be on the cusp of burnout, the lack of regulated policy to support their occupational well-being have led the majority to rely more on their spiritual well-being and social networks of support as their main coping strategies.

Reliance on Spiritual Beliefs and Social Networks of Support

This section of the discussion chapter provides a rationale for principals' reliance on their three main coping strategies. I begin the section with principals' reliance on their spiritual beliefs in a higher being. Included in this section is principals' use of mindfulness meditation as a part of their spiritual belief. The section ends with participants dependence on their social networks of support with emphasis on the notion of trust to cope with their occupational well-being issues.

Spiritual Belief in a Higher Being

JSS principals' spiritual belief is a social phenomenon that is understood among the majority as their subjective view of reality, relationship with a supreme being, and connection with their spiritual well-being (Garg, 2017; Gomez & Fisher, 2003; Holland

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et al., 1998; Robert et al., 2011). It appears that the lack of support from the MoEYI, JTA, and MoLSS to mitigate the intensification of their work and support their occupational well-being, lead the majority of principals in this study to rely more on their spirituality. This pervasive reliance on their spiritual beliefs in God is a personal and cultural way of being well at work (Allen & Khan, 2014; Dehshiri et al., 2008; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004; Smith, 1950; Williams & Penman, 2011).

This approach to coping with occupational well-being challenges draws attention to the implied benefits these participants discussed such as enhanced social well-being (Allen & Khan, 2014). Other illustrated benefits that confirm the literature include the ability to be focused, rational, and creative when faced with challenges (Allen & Khan, 2014; Boone et al., 2015; Brouwers et al., 2011; Chen et al., 2012; Gauthier et al., 2006; Keyes & Reitzes, 2007; Pargament et al., 2006; Schnittker, 2001; Wink et al., 2005). In addition to supporting principals' overall occupational well-being, we must examine and align the influence of the policy context that holds principals accountable for not only the safety, security, and health of their school but also their school's overall success (Davis, 2004, MoEYI, 2008). It is this inner conflict and tension that drives other principals to take a reactive approach in seeking medical support for their physical and mental/psychological occupational well-being. It, therefore, stands to question why principals as a group are...“reluctan[t] to ‘give’ to themselves, because they think it takes away from their ability to give to others—a practice that defines who they are as leaders” (Pijanowski & Ray, 2018, p. 50). Although this highlights an ethic of care practice, my analysis of the findings suggests that principals' reactive approach to having a medical check-up has resulted in the majority having hypertension and type 2 diabetes, among others.

Of greater significance is that participants' reliance on their spiritual beliefs in God is rooted in the majority's disinclination to seek professional care. Specifically, reluctance to access medical services such as psychologists is connected to perceived stigma around mental health in the Jamaican society as discussed further. Nonetheless, all participants are seemingly not homogenous in their Christian beliefs as some highlighted that while their spirituality is not aligned with Christian norms, they engage in mindfulness meditation practice.

Mindfulness Meditation. Mindfulness meditation is not new to the principalship. For some time now, we have seen the call for principals to engage in this practice to hone their interpersonal and intrapersonal skill sets for improved relationship with self and others. Quite notable is also the need for principals to be present in their interactions to foster greater awareness of existing challenges and how to resolve them before they disrupt the school environment (Mahfouz, 2018; Tickle, 1999; Wells, 2016). In keeping with the findings and literature, JSS principals consider mindfulness meditation as part of their spiritual well-being that supports their mind, body, and spirit while being in the present moment (Mahfouz, 2018).

With this strategy anchored in the Buddhist religion, Christians and secular groups of people have capitalized on its benefits. What has perhaps drawn some JSS principals' attention to mindfulness meditation is the overlapping support it provides for them in coping with their work-related stress, anxiety, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes (Felce & Perry, 1995; Gregoire, 2013; Gupta, 2015; Jayatilake, 2017; Liu et al., 2014; Mahfouz, 2018; Mushoriwa & Dlamini, 2015; Ryff, 1989; Seligman, 2002; Wells, 2016). Other salient findings in this study revealed that, like school leaders in Mahfouz' (2018) study, participants seemed to experience balance in their emotions and enhancement of their cognitive awareness. There was also a recognition among some participants in this study that they are able to make good judgments when they practice mindfulness meditation, especially when they are encumbered with anxiety from socioeconomic challenges. In this sense, improvements in principals' mental/psychological occupational well-being seems to benefit their cognitive occupational well-being (Mahfouz, 2018; Mahfouz et al., 2019; Wells, 2016; Wells & Klocko, 2018) Although the findings have demonstrated principals aligning meditation with their spirituality, the majority have also shown a preference for the support they receive from family and social networks of support.

Family and Social Networks of Support

With trust being the bedrock of all relationships, the findings of the study intimated that JSS principals' reliance on their family and social networks of support is second to their spiritual beliefs in God. For the majority of JSS principals in this study, their family and close networks of support (such as close friends) play an integral role in

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how they cope with the stress and subsequent occupational well-being challenges. The inherent mistrust along the lines of cultural and societal stigma in Jamaica seem to have restrained principals from voicing their occupational well-being issues with internal colleagues. Riley's (2019) research illuminated a contrast in perspective among Australian secondary school principals. Of the total participants in Riley's study, 61.07% Australian secondary school principals reported that they are more reliant on their internal colleagues as a source of support. This finding is antithetical to the majority of principals in this study who expressed more willingness to discuss their occupational well-being issues with their families and some close friends. This points to the importance of establishing trusting relationships beyond the family and networks of support to engender improvements in their social occupational well-being (Altinyelken, 2018; Bauer et al., 2017; Davis, 2019; Felce & Perry, 1995; Noonan & Walker, 2008). Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) directed attention to the importance of principals establishing trusting relationships to reassure themselves that "the confidence that one's well-being or something one cares about will be protected by the trusted person or group" (p. 187). Researchers have suggested that this level of trust creates a sense of reciprocity as principals and their colleagues can extend mutual support to help with managing their work challenges (Davis, 2019; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004). Within the context of JSS principals' work intensifying, the relationships they establish with work colleagues and their social networks help them to share their vulnerabilities (Altinyelken, 2018; Bauer et al., 2017; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Principals' reluctance to share professional and personal information is aligned with the normative idea of leaders being stoic and strong (Elmore, 2000).

Stigma Associated with Mental Health/Well-Being

In this section, I bring attention to the notion of stigma in the Jamaican context. I begin the section with the first subtheme—cultural stigma in Jamaica and principals' mental well-being. I then focus on interpersonal stigma around mental health and trust.

Cultural Stigma in Jamaica and Principals' Mental Well-Being

Historically, in the Caribbean and particularly Jamaica mental illness is considered a weakness, spiritual problem, and a form of abnormality. Despite significant efforts to educate and inform Jamaicans about destigmatizing mental health, concerns

about its embedded influence remains a high point of concern (Hickling et al., 2011). Hickling et al. (2011) argued that the historical underpinnings of cultural stigma around mental health dated back to the colonial period. The institutionalization of and poor treatment toward the mentally ill began with the establishment of the Lunatic Asylum in 1862 in Jamaica. Although the government renamed it the Bellevue Hospital in 1947, citizens with any inkling of unmanaged stress or mental health problems were conceived as ill-equipped to function in society. Despite the deinstitutionalization of patients with mental health problems in 1972, Hickling et al. (2011) argued that the Bellevue Mental Hospital represented a negative period that prompted the entrenched stigma around mental health.

The majority of participants in this study are seemingly aware and fearful of this embedded cultural stigma surrounding mental well-being in Jamaica. The collective views of participants revealed a similar understanding of stigma as a negative character trait and behaviour that subject individuals to stereotypes (Holder et al., 2018; Link & Phelan, 2001). Through their voices, these JSS principals appear apprehensive about expressing their experiences with work intensification and mental/psychological occupational well-being issues (Hickling, et al., 2011). Arthur et al.'s (2010) assertion that most Jamaicans are fearful of being labelled as “mad, sick, head nuh good” is perhaps a mental/psychological issue they are going through. This Jamaican dialect is translated in English as an individual who is insane, mentally ill, and is unable to carry out their normal daily functions (Hickling et al., 2011). The negative construct of the word “mental illness” still permeates the Jamaican culture with 7 in 10 Jamaican youths reportedly struggling with depression and/or anxiety (Jackson & Heatherington, 2006; Williams, 2013).

Perhaps these embedded beliefs, stereotypes, and discrimination of the mentally ill are stoking fear among the majority of JSS principals in this study who understand the negative connotations of the word. Such perceptions of mental ill-health are rooted in stigma at a macro level that seeps through structures and cultures (Corrigan, 2004; Hickling et al., 2011; Hickling, 2019). Stigma at this level also influences interpersonal social stigma in Jamaica where individuals’ “emotional response to the mentally ill and mental illness [is] fear, often specifically a fear of dangerousness” (Arthur et al., 2010, P.

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261). Although JSS principals' understanding of mental illness was not explored, the findings intimated that the majority of principals understand the repercussions of interpersonal and social stigma.

Interpersonal Social Stigma

As my findings revealed, the majority of JSS principals may be vulnerable to the fear of interpersonal stigma. Interpersonal stigma is the social interaction between individuals with stark disparities in their experiences with mental health (Crocker & Lutsky, 1986; Hebl & Dovidio, 2005). In agreement with this definition, participants in this study are seemingly struggling to reveal their own occupational well-being issues to others who might have different experiences (Hebl & Dovidio, 2005). As intimated in the findings, the majority of JSS principals are concerned about how disclosure of their mental/psychological occupational well-being issues will affect their interpersonal relationships with others. Aligned with such heightened fear and vulnerability is what scholars described as existing indifference some Jamaicans have toward citizens with mental ill-health (Arthur et al., 2010; Hickling, 2019). Such concerns among the majority of JSS principals extend to what appears to be the influence these named occupational well-being issues may have on their role as school leaders. Since their role as principal is largely seen through a functionalist lens, there is unintentional pressure for them to be strong and enduring (Alvesson & Spicer, 2014; Perruci, 2011; Ryan, 2005; Northhouse, 2015, 2016; Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). As a result, we can see how JSS principals might perceive their vulnerability in sharing personal mental occupational well-being issues as a sign of weakness. As a consequence, JSS principals in this study are seemingly privileging stakeholders and other principals' conception of who they are over their own mental occupational well-being (Goffman, 1963; Hatzenbuenler, 2016).

Although the majority of participants in this study shared the supports they receive from family members and seldom with friends, this fact still points toward individual stigma (Corrigan et al., 2013; Pachankis, 2007). Individualized stigma is a mental/psychological process people engage in to hide their mental well-being issues because of the humiliation, self-doubt, and fear of being labelled (Holder et al., 2018). Hiding one's feelings is noted in the literature as emotional dissonance, which has influence on their well-being (Brotherridge & Taylor, 2006; Lee & Brotherridge, 2011;

Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). This level of self-doubt among most JSS principals appears to correspond with the principle of trust as mentioned earlier.

Summary

This discussion chapter underscores the need to address the existing work challenges that are intensifying JSS principals' work. My findings and the supporting literature confirm that work intensification is influencing JSS principals' occupational well-being. Given that the aforementioned occupational well-being issues mirror the tenets of burnout, the possibility exists that the principalship in Jamaica will become less attractive for aspiring principals. The chapter further highlighted that while governing and supporting bodies such as the MoEYI, MoLSS, and JTA have not prioritized principals' occupational well-being, the majority of principals in this study have sought to engage in individualized coping strategies. Out of the strategies principals employ, they tend to heavily rely on their spiritual beliefs in God and social networks of support instead of professional care for their occupational well-being. Accounting for this reluctance is the rooted cultural, structural, and social stigma around mental health. The final take-away in this chapter is that healthy principals are more effective at their work and by extension will have greater influence on student achievement and sustainability of Jamaica's growth and development.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Few researchers have focused on Jamaican secondary school (JSS) principals' work (noted exception, P. Miller, 2015, 2016, 2018; Walker, 2016). With these studies highlighting the strengths and inherent challenges of the principalship that are interwoven in the historical and social context of the broader education system, I was inspired to understand more about their work. More importantly, I recognized that despite global trends in principals' work intensifying and impacting their occupational well-being, similar research in the Jamaican context has not materialized. Hence, I thought it prudent to investigate JSS principals' work and occupational well-being in wake of unprecedented waves of new standards, regulations, and accountability governing their work.

The specific aim of the study was to provide insight into 12 JSS principals' work and their occupational well-being. Through the use of qualitative semistructured interviews with these 12 JSS principals the findings of the study revealed that the majority of participants in this study work is intensifying. This intensification is influenced by different factors, including geographical locality, school type, and an existing two-tier education system. As a result, the majority of interviewed participants in this study, regardless of their career stage (i.e., early, mid, and late career) are experiencing occupational well-being issues. I used three questions to guide this research inquiry. The first question—what are the work experiences of JSS principals?—is captured in the theme the intensified work of JSS principals.

The Work of Jamaican Secondary School Principals

The findings of this study revealed that the majority of JSS principals in this study are operating in unprecedented times that have laid bare the complexities of their work. The findings of the study also demonstrated that while the participants in this study follow the guidelines of the 1980 Education Act, how they carry out their work is informed by context. As the principals in this study fulfill their role, different aspects of their work fall within the noted five criteria of work intensification. With participants in this study working longer hours, at a fast pace, and with an increased volume of work that includes additional tasks, the majority do so with limited resources and no downtime (Pollock et al., 2019; Pollock & Wang, 2020; Wang, 2020a, 2020b).

Of the five existing components, limited resources to meet work demands stood out in the findings as an area of major concern for the majority of JSS principals in this study. This component of work intensification is more evident among the majority of principals working in public and some church schools that are situated in inner-city and rural communities. Such experiences are in contrast to principals in trust and some church schools who are less concerned about sourcing financial capital. Deeper probing of this data and my review of the literature reinforced that context matters and shapes the challenges JSS principals encounter while undertaking their work.

From principals' understanding and my interpretation of the findings, upsurge in violence in the geographical and community contexts is cause for concern. However, when this issue is coupled with the policy and socioeconomic contexts at the local and national level, some principals experience additional layers of work challenges. The next question—what occupational well-being issues do JSS principals experience in their work—is discussed below.

Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Well-being

The second significant finding showed that aspects of JSS principals' work have led to work-related stress over a protracted period of time. More specifically, the stress associated with JSS principals' work intensifying is influencing their physical, mental, cognitive, and social occupational well-being issues. Existing inequity in financial resources to meet work demands is the driver of the majority of principals in this study noted occupational well-being issues. In other instances, relationship challenges with and among colleagues present social occupational well-being issues. The occupational well-being issues that some JSS principals in this study reported, such as powerlessness, fatigue, overwhelmingness, and others mirror symptoms of burnout.

The collective conclusion among JSS principals in this study is that there is a lack of policies from the MoEYI, MoLSS, and JTA that support their occupational well-being issues. Such acknowledgment among all principals in this study highlight deficits in the policy context that privileges accountability over the whole person. As a result, they engage in individualized strategies to support their own occupational well-being. The third research question—how do JSS principals cope with their occupational well-being issues?—is discussed below.

Individualized Strategies JSS Principals Employed to Cope with Their Occupational Well-Being Issues

In this study, the majority JSS principals have sought to employ individualized strategies to cope with their occupational well-being issues. From the majority of principals' experiences, they are more apt to draw on their spiritual belief in God to manage their mental occupational well-being issues when their workload and work demands add pressure and strain. The findings also revealed that some principals also incorporate mindfulness meditation as a spiritual well-being strategy to cope with their occupational well-being issues. Second to the majority of JSS principals' spirituality is their reliance on family and close networks of support.

Contributing to the majority of JSS principals' reliance on their spirituality and other individualized strategies is the structural, cultural, and social stigma that pervades the Jamaican society. Stigma for these principals is consistent with fear, vulnerability, and lack of trust in sharing sensitive and personal information about their mental occupational well-being with colleagues. I also observed in the findings that despite participants' lack of downtime, only a few of them have prioritized exercise to improve their physical occupational well-being. What is clear is that engagement in physical exercise for some of these principals is largely reactive. Some principals are, however, intrinsically motivated because of their commitment to the principalship. Since this study provides a snapshot of JSS principals' work and occupational well-being, future research and recommendations are necessary to understand more about and improve these issues across all schools.

Future Research and Recommendations

The open-ended nature of the semistructured interviews invited participants to share additional information about their work and occupational well-being. Along these lines, all participants suggested that the MoEYI needs to be more proactive in the support they extend to educators coping with occupational well-being issues. I, therefore, privileged principals' voices and the individualized strategies they use to help inform the recommendations. I also took into account Wells and Klocko's (2018) inquiry, "What are we doing to help principals learn elements and qualities that can help them to thrive and stay in the profession?" (Wells & Klocko, 2018, p. 169) in articulating the following

recommendations for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI), and the National College of Educational Leadership (NCEL), and the Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA), and principals.

Ministry of Education Youth and Information (MoEYI), Jamaica

As the findings and literature indicated, the MoEYI, through policies, has largely been focused on principals engendering a climate of success for improved student outcomes. A shift toward improving the whole person is necessary to balance the predominant binary focus on improving principals' leadership capacity to improve student achievement. Such focus has to begin at the structural level where "policy makers and school systems...[address]principals' well-being and work-life balance" (Pollock & Edge, 2017, p. ii). Addressing principals' occupational well-being through partnership with the National College of Educational Leadership (NCEL), must first strategically assess disparities across divergent school contexts before developing and implementing policies that will unduly intensify their work. To capture principals' experience with work intensification, the MoEYI may need to consider using a longitudinal quantitative study. Specifically, the use of surveys is needed to explore how their work fits within the concept of work intensification. The survey can be used to understand how principals cope with their work challenges. Questions must be tailored to reflect if and why they may be reluctant to seek medical care. This is necessary to understand how stigma shapes their reliance on their spiritual beliefs in God and other individualized strategies. It is, therefore, incumbent on the MoEYI to collaboratively work with the (NCEL) to implement structural change to mitigate the intensification of principals' work.

Structural Change to Mitigate Work Intensification

As Jamaica moves toward creating a knowledge economy, structural change is necessary to mitigate what appears to be work intensification among JSS principals. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, ongoing structural changes exist within Jamaica's education system. However, Jamaica's positioning in the global economy and overall Vision 2030 plan to improve its standing among developed nations cannot be achieved without a robust education system. A robust education system moves beyond identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, (SWOT) in the education system (PIoJ, 2009). Instead, there also has to be a shift toward restructuring how schools are

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managed while enhancing principal preparation programs. Such changes are necessary given the seeming impact of work intensification on principals' occupational well-being that mirror the tenets of burnout. Part of this refocusing of structural change to support principals' occupational well-being is intertwined with the idea that an unwell cadre of principals will have a domino effect on schools and subsequent national growth and development.

Therefore, the supporting argument for this includes two subthemes—organizational and system support and enhancement of existing NCEL professional learning programs. To support this endeavour, I include a brief discussion on the proposed personal leadership resources (PLRs)—psychological, cognitive, and social resources—that JSS principals are unconsciously employing.

Organizational and System Support

Consideration for proactive organization and system support is necessary to reduce principals' workload and work demands. For example, redirecting some of the responsibilities to the vice principalship to reduce principals' volume of work while devoting more time to instructional leadership. Supporting bodies such as the Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA), school boards, and the NCEL can perhaps consider extending meaningful support to alleviate principals' work pressure and strain. Complementing this support is the JTA taking a more visionary approach in bringing awareness to the consequences of work intensification on principals' occupational well-being issues. Taking such a proactive approach is crucial to the sustainability of the principalship as the findings revealed that the MoEYI has taken a reactive approach in sending bulletins to support educators' well-being after increased evidence of suicide. Enhancement of the NCEL professional learning programs is therefore necessary to support principals' occupational well-being.

Enhancement of the NCEL Professional Learning Programs

The MoEYI, through NCEL has adopted 21st century leadership best practices in their programs through its mission to have a fully trained cadre of aspiring and experienced principals (NCEL, 2017; Newman, 2013). Since policy regulations guiding JSS principals' work are taken from developed nations, the new NCEL director, Dr. Angleton, could perhaps modify programs to improve their capacity (Jamaican

Information Service, 2020). Consistent with this recommendation is Dr. Angleton's proposed webinar training to support school leaders' practice (Jamaican Information Service, 2020). Complementing this novel idea is the implementation of the 3R framework—regroup, recondition, and rebuild—to prepare principals for the new realities of education (Jamaican Information Service, 2020). While vague in its intent, this new proposal may address the unpredictable challenges principals are encumbered with, including the present novel COVID 19 pandemic, that when integrated with other issues within their geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts can exacerbate their occupational well-being issues. What is evident is that despite the ongoing training, contextual issues are fueling existing challenges that intensify their work and affect their occupational well-being. The MoEYI through the NCEL program could perhaps consider the personal leadership resources (PLRs) that are implemented in the Ontario, Canadian context to thwart the effects of principals' work on their occupational well-being. Such consideration is based on what appears to be the majority of JSS principals' unconscious use of these three resources—psychological, social, and cognitive—as detailed below.

Personal Leadership Resources (PLRs). The Ontario provincial government developed and implemented the PLRs to support school and systems leaders' work (The Institute for Educational Leadership, 2012). With the MoEYI adopting policies to inform principals' work, they can perhaps review aspects of the PLRs and apply relevant best practices to the Jamaican context. This suggestion is based on JSS principals' seemingly engaging in similar practices in the recommended psychological, social, and cognitive resources discussed below. This is particularly important because the area of principals' work and occupational well-being in Jamaica is not fully understood. Moreover, evidence of JSS principals' apparent burnout is consistent with growing concern among the principalship in other jurisdictions that the role is becoming less attractive (Goldring & Taie, 2018).

Psychological Resources. The psychological resources are those positive beliefs that principals uphold when presented with unpredictable and inevitable challenges while carrying out their work (Leithwood, 2017; Pollock et al., 2018; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). Drawing on the findings, JSS principals seem to remain passionate, enthusiastic, and committed to their work despite their work intensifying. Moreover, they

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appear to exhibit a sense of pride, optimism, and resilience despite their unpredictable work challenges and occupational well-being issues. These noted characteristics—optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and proactivity—are emblematic of the principals' psychological leadership resources in Ontario, Canada (Leithwood, 2017; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). Leithwood (2017) and others concluded that the psychological leadership resources also assist school leaders to prioritize work that also inspires those they influence such as teachers and students (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

The NCEL's adaptation of the psychological leadership resources course in their revised programs could assist JSS principals in handling unpredictable and complex work practices. This psychological resource program could enhance JSS principals' optimism, self-confidence, and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1997; Byrne et al., 2014). Training for Jamaican principals in these areas could improve how they respond to challenging situations and others (Bandura, 2000, 2009; Federici & Skaalvik, 2012; Yamamoto et al., 2014). The benefits in placing emphasis on self-reflection and self-regulation is also required to prevent undue pressure and strain on themselves and others (Maxwell & Riley, 2017).

Social Resources. As suggested in the findings of this study, some JSS principals who are contending with emotionally draining situations seem to have some knowledge about the tenets of social resources. According to Leithwood (2017), social resources help principals to manage the unpredictable challenges that can affect the successful outcome of their work (Leithwood, 2017). While the NCEL provides emotional intelligence training for Jamaican principals, there is an implied understanding of JSS principals' ability to perceive and regulate their emotions while acting in emotionally appropriate ways (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014).

These principles of social resources are implicit in principals' emotional intelligence as they adjust to ongoing changes that guide their practice (Berkovich & Eyal, 2015; Brinia et al., 2014; Cliffe, 2011; Goleman, 2000; Pollock et al., 2018). With the findings revealing JSS principals' ability to empathize and extend care in resolving teachers and students' well-being issues, the intimated influence on their mental occupational well-being cannot be ignored. Given such implications on school principals' occupational well-being, it is prudent for the NCEL to consider these issues as a

launching point to proactively help principals understand the implications of their work on their occupational well-being. And while Jamaica's education system is in stark contrast to Ontario, Canada, the consensus in principals building and maintaining a trusting relationship with staff is integral for success. Notwithstanding the divide in professional and personal trust, the social and cognitive resources highlighted in the OLF can be used to assist principals in balancing the scale of trust.

Cognitive Resources. The cognitive leadership resource is principals' ability to make decisions, resolve problems, engage in systems thinking, and carry out instructional leadership practices (Fielder & Garcia, 1987; Leithwood, 2012; Lockett, 2014; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018). The totality of JSS principals' experiences with different aspects of their work illuminated that they are knowledgeable, savvy, and forward thinking in their capacity to anticipate and resolve problems as they arise (Fielder & Garcia, 1987; Gronn, 2003; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018). This ability is evidenced in the individualized strategies the majority of them in their early- to mid-career employ to cope with their increased stress levels and its impact on their occupational well-being. However, as the findings reflected, there are JSS principals in their early- to mid-career who seem to be experiencing some inability to concentrate during challenging moments. This cognitive occupational well-being issue has implications for principals to remain positive and on tasks (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018).

Equally important is for the NCEL to modify their program design to support principals at different stages of their careers. Such modification is imperative since the majority of JSS of principals who expressed a sense of apathy were in their early career stage. Researchers consider the early career stage of principals are critical because they are adjusting and understanding their role (Arar, 2017; Hvidston et al., 2015; Oplatka, 2004, 2012). This perceived apathy among many JSS principals is evidenced in their engagement in systems thinking, specific to wicked problems (i.e., problems that are difficult to resolve) and unique to their contextual challenges (Pollock et al., 2018; Riehl, 2000; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018). Embedding systems thinking resources for principals to handle wicked problems could support their ability to carry out their work.

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While these recommended PLRs are integral to handle the unforeseen problems while on task, there are a few points of cautions and ideas for further consideration.

Point of Caution and Further Consideration. Consideration must, however, be given to the rationale behind Ontario principals being encumbered with work intensification despite having these resources (Lim & Pollock, 2019). Although the aim of the PLRs in the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) was to enhance principals and VPs instructional leadership practices, the intensification of their work has not permitted this change for many end-users. Instead, Ontario principals and VPs are more reactive in consulting this policy document to improve their work outputs (McCarthy, 2016; Riveros et al., 2016).

The NCEL needs to consider expanding its existing module on developing principals' skills in soliciting resources to meet work demands. Since there is an acknowledgment of the existing challenges in this aspect of principals' work, modifications should reflect the unintended consequences for their occupational well-being. In doing so, principals will be able to proactively prepare for stress that can affect their physical, mental, cognitive, and social occupational well-being. By drawing principals' attention to these issues, the NCEL could educate and train aspiring and early career principals about the implications of caring for teachers' and students' well-being—specifically, the emotional labour affiliated with attending to students' suicidal ideations. This will help aspiring and early principals to proactively use the PLRs to manage their emotional response to suicidal issues among students and teachers' occupational well-being.

Moreover, with the responsibility of allocating additional resources being placed on principals, training must reflect how colonialism has left a legacy of inequity in outcomes among students attending traditional and nontraditional schools. P. Miller (2015) proposed that one way to improve the perception of traditional schools as being in a place of privilege is for the NCEL to organize professional training programs in nontraditional school communities. This enhancement in practice will allow principals in nontraditional schools to have a voice in the programs that shape their work and their occupational well-being. Programs must, therefore, examine principals' susceptibility to burnout, as evidenced in their experiences with work-related stress, exhaustion,

overwhelmingness, among others. Although these recommendations are intended to improve school principals' occupational well-being, they also have a personal responsibility to ensure they are well while at work.

Principals' Occupational Well-Being. The following four recommendations for principals' occupational well-being were developed in response to the 12 JSS principals' experience with work intensification and their shared individualized strategies. Although “the challenge of addressing principal well-being... extends beyond principals and their professional associations” (Pollock & Edge, 2017, p. ii), principals can take personal steps to manage their workload. Firstly, JSS school principals could capitalize more on their secretaries managing more of their email correspondences to help reduce the volume of emails and associated work-related stress. Combining this strategy with assigning specific time for emails will perhaps reduce their long hours of work that often overlap with their personal time spent on work at home.

Secondly, there is need for principals to consider “monitor[ing] their energy levels” so that there is synergy in their work–life balance (Riley, 2015, p. 25). Riley's (2015) recommendation is fitting for principals in Jamaica who are faced with ongoing challenges that require emotional regulation (Brinia et al., 2014; Goleman, 1998; Naiker et al., 2015). Supporting this recommendation is Superville's (2018) suggestion that school principals must constantly find time for their self-care. Finally, consideration for allyship among principals regardless of school type—trust, church (traditional), and public (nontraditional)—is important to enhance their social networks of support. Complementing these recommendations is the need for structural change to sensitize and improve education about mental health.

Improve Education About Mental Well-Being

The sum of participants in this study views of mental health stigma is fear of being judged and the belief that mental health problems are dangerous. With this being a pervading issue in the Jamaican society (Clarke, 2017; Hickling et al., 2011; Jamaica Information Service, 2012), the MoEYI needs to consider making education about mental health stigma a mandatory component of the curriculum. Such structural change is necessary to continue the work in changing perceptions and attitudes around mental health (Clarke, 2017; Hickling et al., 2011; Hickling, 2019).

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Education should, therefore, begin at an early age to dismantle the embedded cultural, structural, and social stigma that have created a sense fear of others with mental well-being issues (Hickling et al., 2011). Integral to this sensitization of mental well-being among our youth and adults is the importance of empathy, acceptance, trust, positive relationships, and access to professional care. Incorporating these teachings in the curriculum is crucial to changing perceptions and attitudes around mental health.

Final Thoughts

The intensifying nature of JSS principals' work has consequences for their occupational well-being in ways that are comparable to burnout. With principals in other jurisdictions leaving the profession at a faster rate, the government of Jamaica needs to implement structural changes to prevent this pending problem. This urgent call for structural change is necessary given the important role of the principalship in driving change to enhance students' success. If our cadre of principals are unwell, they are unable to directly and indirectly influence student achievement; a goal that the Jamaican government considers crucial to economic growth and development (PIoJ, 2009). Improving existing disparities in student achievement has to be addressed through the efforts of the MoEYI and to improve principals' access to needed resources to meet their work demands. With limited resources at the centre of increased levels of stress in this study, the existing inequity in resource allocation is not tenable for the principalship. Yet, beyond the challenges within JSS principals geographical, community, and socioeconomic contexts that are affecting their occupational well-being, the existing stigma around mental health is preventing access to care.

Rooting out stigma at the structural, cultural, and social level requires change through education that will disrupt the status quo of fear for being vulnerable and labelled as mentally ill. Attention to this issue through education to reframe perceptions of stigma will alter how citizens at all levels view others and will open the door for everyone to seek help for themselves and others.

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Appendix A: Research Ethical Approval



Research Ethics

**Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board
NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice**

Principal Investigator: Dr. Katina Pollock
Department & Institution: Education\Faculty of Education, Western University

NMREB File Number: 108679
Study Title: Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Mental Health and Wellbeing

NMREB Initial Approval Date: December 13, 2016
NMREB Expiry Date: December 13, 2017

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Western University Protocol		2016/11/25
Letter of Information & Consent		2016/12/13
Recruitment Items	Email Recruitment	2016/11/25
Recruitment Items	Telephone Script	2016/11/25
Instruments	Principals' Interview Protocol - Received October 30, 2016	
Other	Letter of Approval, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Jamaica - Received for Information October 30, 2016	


The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the NMREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.


The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.


Ethics Officer, on behalf of Dr. Riley Hinson, NMREB Chair or delegated board member

Ethics Officer: Erika Basile ___ Nicole Kaniki ___ Grace Kelly ___ Katelyn Harris Vikki Tran ___ Karen Gopaul ___

Western University, Research, Support Services Bldg., Rm. 5150


Appendix B: Permission Letter to the Ministry of Education (MoE) Jamaica



Letter of Approval, Chief Education Officer in the Ministry of Education, Jamaica

Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Mental Health and Wellbeing

December 13, 2016.

To: XXXX Chief Education Officer in the Ministry of Education, Jamaica

My name is Annette Walker and I am a 3rd year PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Education at Western University, Canada. As partial fulfillment of my PhD degree in Educational Leadership, I am currently conducting an investigation into Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Mental Health and Wellbeing. This letter serves to request permission to conduct my research in 15-20 secondary schools.

The study seeks to explore how secondary school principals' deal with occupational mental health and wellbeing issues in Jamaica. It is, therefore, aimed at understanding how the principals' work impact their occupational mental health and wellbeing. This is a critical sociology study that is not seeking to diagnose any mental health and wellbeing issues or to treat principals of any such issues. The study will take place in urban, rural, and inner-city secondary schools in Jamaica. The research will focus on understanding the different occupational mental health and wellbeing issues that principals are struggling with and how such mental health and wellbeing issues influence their work. Attention will also be given to the strategies that principals engage in to cope with their occupational mental health and wellbeing and the challenges they encounter when trying to cope with these mental health and wellbeing issues (see attached copy of proposal for ethics review).

Participants will be asked for permission for the semistructured interviews to be audio taped. All the information from the interview will be strictly confidential and will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher's office at the faculty of education at the University of Western Ontario. The collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required the Office of Research Ethics, University of Western Ontario. After the duration of five years, all relevant information including the audiotapes will be destroyed.

The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Western University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, you may contact the Chairperson of the Office of Human Research Ethics at XXXX

Sincerely,
Annette Walker
Graduate Student
University of Western Ontario,
London, ON, Canada

JAMAICAN SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' WORK AND OCCUPATIONAL WELL-BEING

Appendix C: Permission Letter to Researcher (MoE, Jamaica)



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
YOUTH & INFORMATION

Reply or subsequent reference to this communication should be made to the Permanent Secretary and the following reference quoted:

January 16, 2017

Ms. Annette Walker
Graduate Student
University of Western Ontario
London, ON, Canada

Dear Ms. Walker:

This serves to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated December 13, 2016 requesting permission for you to conduct a study with research titled "**Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Mental Health and Wellbeing.**"

Please be advised that the Ministry has granted permission for you to proceed with this research, with the understanding that confidentiality and anonymity be maintained.

Please find attached a copy of the **Guidelines for conducting research at the Ministry of Education, Youth & Information.** We would appreciate you forwarding a copy of the findings of this research to the Ministry.

The Ministry wishes you all the best in completing your dissertation.

Yours sincerely,



Chief Education Officer

Copy: Ms. Dorrett Campbell – DCEO, Schools' Operation Unit

Sen. the Hon. Ruel Reid, O.D., J.P. **Minister** • The Hon. Floyd Green: **Minister of State** • Mr. Dean-Roy Bernard: **Permanent Secretary**

*Every Child Can Learn
Every Child Must Learn*

Appendix D: MoE Guidelines for Conducting Research (MoE, Jamaica)



Guidelines for Conducting Research at the Ministry of Education

Introduction

It is the policy of the Ministry of Education to support research on the education sector for its improvement, whether for the systematic collection of data / information to test a hypothesis or for study of existing practices with a view to changing or improving the sector. As such, the following are guidelines for individuals requesting permission to conduct research in the Ministry of Education and/or its agencies and entities.

Procedure:

Ministry

- A letter from the researcher as well as the documentation from the relevant institution should be sent to the Planning and Development Division through the Permanent Secretary/CEO indicating the background of the research and the rationale for undertaking the particular research.
- The Planning and Development Division in consultation with relevant Senior Officers and/ or Executive Management Group, determines whether or not approval will be granted
- If approval is granted, the request is forwarded to the respective division/ unit/ department for follow up with the researcher.
- Where schools will be requested to participate in the research, an introductory letter is prepared under the signatory of the Chief Education Officer/Deputy Chief Education Officer or the Regional Director for the respective School Administrator.
- Divisions/units/departments provide guidance on protocol and availability of data/information to be collected. Where personal student information is requested, written approval must be sought from the individual school and parents/guardians.
- Researchers must be aware of the Child Care and Protection Act.

School

- The researcher makes contact with the Region and the school(s) and provides a schedule of his/her activities.
- The researcher must present the institution's standards of integrity and ethical practice form to the school in which they intend to carry out the research.
- Researcher must present proper identification

Appendix E: Email Script for Recruitment—Semistructured Interview



Invitation to participate in the research Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Mental Health and Wellbeing

Hello XXXX,

You are being invited to participate in a study that Dr. Katina Pollock and I (Annette Walker) are conducting to understand how secondary school principals deal with occupational mental health and well-being in Jamaica. This is a critical sociological research that is not aimed at carrying out any diagnostic tests or treatment of any occupational mental health and well-being issues. Briefly, the study involves participating in a 45 to 60 minutes telephone or skype semistructured interview in the privacy of your office or any other place that is mutually convenient. This semistructured interview will be audio-recorded and is a mandatory component of the study.

You will not receive any compensation for your participation in this study. However, after completion of the study, I will give you a hard copy of an executive summary of the thesis in person. The executive summary will include the results/findings and implications.

If you would like more information on this study or would like to receive a letter of information about this study, please contact me (the researcher) – Annette Walker at the contact information given below.

In the event that you do not respond in a week, we will send you two email reminders in two consecutive weeks.

Thank you and we are looking forward to hearing from you.

Annette Walker

Email: XXXX

Telephone: XXXX

Western University of Ontario

Appendix F: Letter of Information and Consent Form



Letter of Information and Consent

Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Mental Health and Wellbeing

Letter of Information and Informed Consent: The Principal

Principal Investigator (PI)

Dr. Katina Pollock, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Western, Ontario,

Invitation to Participate

My name is Annette Walker and I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at Western University, Canada. As partial fulfillment of my PhD degree in Educational Leadership Studies, I am currently conducting a study into *How the Nature of Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Work Influences their Occupational Wellbeing*. You are being invited to voluntarily participate in this study because you are a secondary school principal in Jamaica.

Purpose

This study seeks to understand how secondary school principals' cope with occupational wellbeing issues in Jamaica. It is, therefore, aimed at understanding how occupational wellbeing issues influence principals' work. The study further seeks to discover the strategies principals use and challenges they face when trying to cope with such occupational wellbeing issues.

Duration of the Study

Your expected participation in this study will last for approximately 45 to 60 minutes in one face-to-face semistructured interview. This semistructured interview will be audio-recorded and is a mandatory component of the study.

Study Procedure

If you agree to participate in this study, I will meet with you to discuss details of the study and answer any questions, concerns or comments that you may have, and sign the consent forms. I will conduct a face-to-face semistructured interview in the privacy of your office or any other place that you may find convenient. During the interview, I will ask you questions related to your professional background/ experiences before you accepted this role as the principal of your school, your leadership roles and responsibilities, and their implications on your occupational

wellbeing. I will also ask you questions about the different strategies you use in coping with occupational wellbeing issues and the challenges, if any, you encounter when trying to cope with such issues. I will also ask you follow up questions to probe deeper into some of the responses

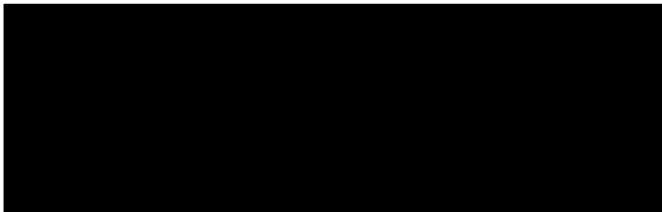
JAMAICAN SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' WORK AND OCCUPATIONAL WELL-BEING

you will provide. After I complete the interview, I will transcribe the audio-recorded interview, print, and return to you (in person) in a sealed envelope marked confidential, and addressed to you. You will be asked to verify and make any necessary changes as you see fit to the transcribed data within 48 hours. This is necessary to ensure that I present an accurate account of your views in the study findings. We will decide on a mutual time for me to pick up the document at your office. With your permission, I will use direct quotes in articulating the findings and analysis, and will ensure that I use a pseudonym to protect your identity.

Risks and Harm of Participation

There are no known risks associated with your participation in this study. However, due to the sensitive nature of the interview and your personal experience, certain questions and answers may trigger an emotional response. In the event that this happens, you will be advised to seek support from the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) representative in Jamaica Dr. Noreen Jack.

Contact Information:



Benefits of Participation

Your participation in this study may not provide any direct benefit. However, the information collected may help you to understand how Jamaican secondary high school principals cope with occupational wellbeing issues. Your participation in this study may also contribute to understanding the implications of principals' work on their occupational wellbeing. The study findings may further assist principals working in similar and different school context to share in their experiences to better support and strengthen their networks. The study findings will also contribute to areas of policy development and implementation.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not waive any legal right by consenting to this study and signing the consent form. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your employment status. If you decide to withdraw from the study, even after the completion of the interview, you have the right to request withdrawal of information collected about you. If you wish to have your information removed, please let me know and your data will be removed/destroyed from our database/computer. I will also ensure that any printed versions are shredded. If you wish to withdraw from the study when withdrawal of your data is no longer feasible (for e.g., when personal information has been anonymized, included in the data, and published), the information that was collected before you decide to leave the study will still be included. However, I will not collect any new information without seeking your permission.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

During the data collection process in Jamaica, I will be the only one with access to the data. The principal investigator (PI) will have access to the data when I return to Canada, as well as other representatives of the University of Western Ontario Non-Medical Research Ethics Board who

may require access to monitor any changes related to the data records. After completing the interviews, I will transfer the audio-recorded files to a password protected and encrypted file on my laptop. My laptop is also password protected and encrypted and I am the only person with access to the password. I will then delete the file from the recording device. All other documents including the signed consent forms and any notes taken with your given pseudonym will be stored in separate and sealed envelopes with the electronic data and placed in my car trunk. Upon leaving the school, I will drive directly to my home in Jamaica to avoid any stops in transit. I will ensure that I store the sealed envelopes with the data, consent forms, and recording device in a locked cabinet, for which only I have a key. Before leaving Jamaica, I will ensure that consent forms, transcribed data, and the electronic device are stored in my carry-on luggage and locked. When I return to Canada, I will keep the data on my encrypted and password protected laptop for ease of analyzing the data. Upon completion, I will transfer and store the files with all electronic data to an external hard drive, which will be password protected and encrypted using Vera Crypt (AES Twofish Serpent). This is a high volume encryption software accepted by the University of Western Ontario and locked at the Faculty of Education at Western University.

All data collected will be used only for the purpose of this research. Audio files and other data materials will not be associated with your identity in any way. I will ensure that your real name and that of your school is not disclosed in the study or any other document, publication or presentations of the study findings. However, with your consent I will include direct quotations in the findings/analysis of the study. All information collected in this study will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside the study unless required by law. I will ensure that your information is not shared with the Ministry of Education, Jamaica, the Jamaican Teachers' Association (JTA), or any other organizations. All efforts will be taken to ensure that your information is stored properly and cannot be identified. Any hard copies of the data materials including the notes, informed consent forms, and any materials used in this research will be kept in a locked storage in the principal investigator's office at the Faculty of Education at Western University for 5 after the results have been published. After the 5 years, the results will be shredded.

Compensation

You will not receive any compensation for your participation in this study. However, after completion of the study, the student researcher will give you a hard copy of an executive summary of the thesis in person. The executive summary will include the results/findings and implications.

Contact Information

For any questions about this study, please contact:

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Principal Investigator: Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario, Canada Email: XXXX Telephone: XXXX	Research Assistant: Annette Walker, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario, Canada Email: XXXX Telephone: XXXX
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If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, please contact:

The Office of Human Research Ethics, University of Western Ontario, Canada Telephone: XXXX Email: XXXX

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.



Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Mental Health and Wellbeing

Consent Form

Principal Investigator

Dr. Katina Pollock, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario, XXXX

Research Assistant

Annette Walker, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario, XXXX

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me, and I agree to participate. All the questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to be audio-recorded in this research YES NO

I consent to the use of personal, unidentifiable quotes obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research YES NO

_____	_____	
Participant's Name (please print)	Signature	Date (DD/MM/YYYY)

My signature means that I have explained the study to the participant named above. I have answered all questions.

_____	_____	
Name of Person (DD/MM/YYYY)	Signature	Date
Obtaining Informed Consent		

Appendix G: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Principals' Interview Protocol

Jamaican Secondary School Principals' Occupational Mental Health and Well-being

Interview Time with Principal: _____

Location of Interview: _____

Date: _____

A. Background

1. How long have you been a principal at this school?
 - How many years were you a teacher before taking on any formal leadership roles? How many years have you spent in teaching before taking on the role of principals at this school?
 - How many years have you spent in different leadership roles (formal and informal) including this administrative role?
 - How many years have you spent in different leadership roles (including your current role)?
 - What formal academic and professional experiences did you take to this position?
 - What is the student/teacher population at your school?
 - Do you receive support from parents and community in program develop and policies?

B. Leadership

1. How would you describe a normal day as the leader of your school?
 - How much time do you spend on management issues (matters related to human resources, reports, meeting regulations outlined by the Ministry of Education, reports, financial matters)?

- How much time do you spend on work-related matters external to the school to procure resources and other support to enhance your school development programs?
- How involved are you in curriculum and teacher related tasks (such as teacher evaluation, lesson planning, and teaching)?
- Do you share the leadership roles with your teachers?
- How many hours do you work per day/week?
- At what point during the day do you find your role as principal is more demanding?
- Do you spend the same amount of hours working each week during school holidays? On average, how many number of hours do you work each week during school holidays?

2. What aspects of your work do you find most challenging?

- Can you say what are the sources of your stress during the last 3 months?
- How much time do you spend networking and seeking support (financial and otherwise) from external organization to support your school programs?
- How much time do you spend on occupational health and safety compliance?
- What kind of support do you receive from your colleagues (other principals)?

3. How has the work of the principalship compromised your health over the past two years?

- What were the symptoms you experienced before being diagnosed with this health issue?
- Are these feelings associated with your paid work or unpaid work?
- How often do you feel overwhelmed?
- Do you experience feelings of fatigue or low energy?
- Do you think about work when you are at home?
- What measures do you put in place to ensure that you manage your professional and personal life?

Challenges

1. What are some of the challenges you face when dealing with occupational well-being issues?

- Has your level of performance declined in carrying out leadership duties?
-
- Have these challenges impacted your personal life?

JAMAICAN SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' WORK AND OCCUPATIONAL WELL-BEING

- How have the different challenges affected your relationships (with teachers, principals, parents, and external constituents)?
- Has your confidence in executing work-related duties declined?
- How often do you find yourself unable to concentrate on doing simple work-related tasks?

Strategies

1. How do you maintain good occupational wellbeing?

- How important is balancing your happiness with your work?
- How important is your physical health to you? What steps do you take to ensure that you stay physically and mentally healthy?
- What are some of the policies they have in place to assist principals with occupational mental health and wellbeing issues?
- Does the Ministry of Education (MoE) or the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA) provide support for principals who experience different levels of stress due to the work?
- What policies are in place for you to address safety for your students and staff?
- How much support do you receive from your family, friends, principals within your regions?
- How often do you seek medical care for issues related to coping with your work?

Personal

Is there anything that you would like to add that was not mentioned in the interview?

Curriculum Vitae

Annette R. Walker

Education

Doctor of Philosophy

(Critical Policy, Equity and Leadership Studies in Education)

Western University of Ontario

London, ON, Canada

Master's Degree *(Education Leadership Studies)*

Memorial University of Newfoundland

St. John's, NL, Canada

Bachelor's Degree *(Business and Professional Management)*

Nova Southeastern University 3301 College Avenue Fort

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Relevant Experience

Research Assistant

Western University of Ontario

2014 – 2020

Teaching Assistant

Western University of Ontario

2017-2018

Teaching Experience

Secondary Education – 4 years

Award

University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) David L. Clarke Award (2016)

Selected Publications

Walker, A. R. (2020). "God is my doctor": Mindfulness meditation/prayer as a spiritual well-being coping strategy for Jamaican school principals to manage their work-related stress and anxiety. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 58(4), 467-480.

Walker, A. R. (2019). The impact of principals' work on their well-being. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 190, 57-63.

Pollock, K., Walker, A., Swapp, D., & Ben Jaafar, S. (2018). Personal resources for leading schools. In J. Weinstein & G. Muñoz (Eds.), *¿Cómo cultivar el liderazgo educativo? Trece miradas*. Santiago, CL: Centro De Desarrollo De Liderazgo Educativo.