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School Principals' Work in Grenada

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Abstract

This dissertation explores school principals' work in Grenada, a former British colony in the Caribbean. The dearth of perspectives of school leadership in/on the Global South, broader tensions in the field around standards, frameworks, and expectations around the principalship, and, particularly in Grenada, the lack of documentation around principals' work, geo-economic challenges including fiscal constraints, and sociohistoric ideologies and tensions around labour, civic duty, and Christianity contextualized the study. The study was qualitative and interpretive, utilizing direct observations and semi-structured interviews to garner eight (four each in primary and secondary schools) public school principals' understandings, actions, and challenges relative to their work. The research framework constituted a relational understanding of principals' labour as embedded and embodied in context intertwined with a conceptualization of work as a social construct. This necessitated a focus on principals' thinking about their work and the actions they undertook daily but also probing the conditions and relations around which such thinking and actions unfolded. Principals understood work as, a calling/vocation, service, and commitment to student learning. Consequently, they undertook many denominational-based actions and other duties around organizational management, instructional supervision, and community relations, overall reporting high volumes of administrative tasks, little time for instructional supervision, and high volumes of unfree labour. Limited governmental and denominational supports, inadequate and outdated infrastructure, pedagogy, and resources, negative public regard for some schools, and intimidation dictated day-to-day undertaking of work, driving high rates of manual labour, fundraising, and charity among principals. The findings underscore the highly administrative nature of the work of school principals and corroborates incumbents' admissions in the literature of time constraints in undertaking instructional work. The findings also illuminate wider evidence in the field of the highly compliant nature of principals' contemporary work, with Grenadian principals working long, arduous hours notwithstanding grave socio-economic hardships – not of their making – constraining their abilities to perform their work. Principals ascribed this commitment to their Christian (moral) principles and broader civic beliefs, but it was apparent that broader societal expectations around principals' labour and some principals' fear of victimization also ensured compliance and control of principals' labour in Grenada.

Summary for Lay Audience

Grenada is a small nation state in the Caribbean also discussed as part of the Global South. In the field of educational administration and leadership, our collective understandings of the work of school principals are largely informed by perspectives in/from the Global North, especially the United States and some parts of Europe. Herein, the most influential literature around principals' contemporary work promotes instructional leadership and other types of leadership that prescribe behaviours that "successful" principals purportedly undertake in turning schools around. This is despite evidence that principals are bombarded with administrative tasks, emergencies, and other issues demanding attention during the workday, finding little time to undertake instructional supervision or consciously demonstrate prescribed "leadership" behaviours. This thrust toward leadership, including instructional leadership, is couched in dominant, neoliberal-centered discourse wherein principals' labour is commodified, and the principal is cast as the instrument of school reform, discourse that drives the proliferation of long working hours, work intensification, and wellbeing issues for school principals. This study problematizes this universal acceptance of not just what school principals do but what drives their work. The study defines work as a socially constructed phenomenon unfolding in context. Such a situated gaze exposes for analysis not just the kinds of understandings, actions, and challenges that characterize principals' work in Grenada, but the conditions and relations in and around which such work unfolds and is sustained in this small nation state in the Global South. Through qualitative inquiry, eight public school principals shared their perspectives on the understandings, actions, and challenges of their daily work and the conditions around which they undertake work in Grenada. The results corroborate broader evidence of high volumes of administrative tasks and little time for instructional supervision. Particularly noteworthy were the long working hours and copious amounts of manual labour, fundraising, and charity performed by Grenadian school principals. Overall, principals' work in Grenada was contextualized by longstanding sociohistoric, political, and economic arrangements including poverty, principals' Christian (moral) principles and civic beliefs, broader societal expectations around principals' labour, and fear of victimization.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the two most important ladies in my life: my dearest mother, Margaret Swapp-Steele; and my remarkable daughter, Nia Margaret Swapp. Having the second made me appreciate the first infinitely more. A mother's love is truly incomparable.

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Acronyms & Definition of Terms

A' Level   Advanced Level. This refers to academic certification at the tertiary level. Until the early 2000s, these were exclusively taken through Cambridge, UK-administered examinations, called the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Level Examinations. The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) now administers Advanced Level certification through their own Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) A' Level Examinations

CPEA   Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment. This is a primary exit examination for advancement to secondary schools taken my primary school students in Grade 8. This exam is administered by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) and is described by this body as "an assessment of the literacies required by all pupils exiting the primary school system". In Grenada, this determines secondary school choice.

CXC   Caribbean Examination Council. The official examination certification body for exit exams at the primary, secondary, and tertiary (college) level.

CSEC   Caribbean Secondary Examination Council. The name of the Ordinary Level (O' Level) certification issued by the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC).

DEO   District Education Officer. These are personnel from the Ministry of Education who work in division field offices in a more hands-on capacity with schools.

HOD   Head of Department

MOE   Ministry of Education

OECS   Organization of Eastern Caribbean States

O' Level   Ordinary Level. This refers to academic certification at the secondary level. Until the early 1980s, these were exclusively taken through Cambridge, UK-administered examinations, called the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level Examinations. The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) has been administering Ordinary Level certification through their own Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) O' Level Examinations

PSC   Public Service Commission

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This thesis explores school principals' work in Grenada. Grenada is part of a tri-island state that includes the sister isles of Carriacou and Petite Martinique and is situated in the southernmost part of the Caribbean just over the apex of South America. It is a former British colony and relatively new nation state, having gained formal independence from Britain in 1974. Grenada has been categorized by global economic organizations such as The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund as a third world or developing country and, in more contemporary parlance, as part of the Global South. Grenada is also the land of my birth and upbringing.

The study draws on a relational lens, is couched within an interpretivist paradigm, and utilizes a qualitative approach to garner the perspectives of eight public principals in elementary and secondary schools about their work. I utilize direct observations and semi-structured interviews to collect data for the study. My interest in school principals' work partly originates from my lived experiences as both a citizen and schoolteacher in this country. I witnessed firsthand the shortcomings of my country's education system, including the lack of proper and adequate infrastructure, the ill-preparedness of some teachers and principals for their work, and the contested understandings and expectations around educational work undertaken in schools.

At the same time, my rationale for conducting this study extends beyond personal motivation. I am passionate about the field of educational administration and leadership and committed to scholarship that meaningfully supports school principals in their work. Towards these ends, I problematize the dominant, neoliberal-leaning discourse in the field of educational administration and leadership that casts principals' labour as a commodity and the school principal as *the* instrument of school reform. In problematizing this solitary gaze on the school principal, I draw on scholarship mobilizing relational and other critical frameworks privileging context to draw attention to our propensity in the field for fixating on the concept "leadership" and its many handles while placing blame for school failure on principals and teachers in schools. I argue that too often, this discourse insufficiently attends to the conditions that foster and

sustain educational work and educational workers. Instead, in this study, I privilege context and draw on Eacott (2015a) who asserts of the relational approach to the study of the school principalship, "[t]he lack of attention to the situatedness and specificity of contexts leads to a privileging of the directly observable features of practice rather than the underlying generative principles. The loss of context creates the illusion of 'leadership' as a universal construct" (p. 43). The relational approach advanced in this thesis therefore attempts to bring to the fore not just the kinds of work that Grenadian principals undertake daily, but the conditions (historical, social, cultural, economic, and physical) in and around which principals' work emerge and is sustained.

The Research Question

> *Research is never neutral. It is sensitive to political, ideological, social, religious, and cultural factors in the particular setting in which it takes place. Education is a social phenomenon intricately interwoven in the social, economic, and cultural fabric of any given society. Of necessity, therefore, educational research must be interpreted within the context in which it is taking place.*

Errol L. Miller[1], Renowned Caribbean Scholar (Miller, 1984, p. 27)

Grenada has faced social, political, and economic challenges over its history. Not many years after independence, growing political and civil dissent over the ruling party's ideology, governance, and vision of nationalism culminated in two violent and bloody political revolutions that created instability, thwarted development efforts, and inspired direct intervention by then United States President Ronald Reagan (Brizan, 1998; Hickling-Hudson, 2000a, 2014; Jules, 2013; Rose, 2004; Steele, 2003). In 2004, the passage of Hurricane Ivan impacted Grenada's gross domestic product (GDP) at a rate of 200% (Government of Grenada, 2020). Hurricane Emily, though not as strong a storm as Ivan, also set Grenada back in 2005, as did the global financial crisis in 2008

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[1]Miller, E. L. (1984). Educational research: The English-speaking Caribbean. *International Development Research Centre.*

(Government of Grenada, 2020). In addition to challenges that natural disasters, political revolutions, and world markets have presented to this small nation state, Grenada has amassed a high public debt and continues to borrow from regional and international organizations to both service this debt and undertake development efforts (see Government of Grenada, 2020; International Monetary Fund, 2018a, 2018b; The World Bank, 2020). This overarching reality is important to consider because it impacts the scales and kinds of development projects that Grenada's government can undertake, including in education.

But while the government of Grenada has acknowledged deficiencies in education quality and delivery in the country – deficiencies that are substantially rooted in economic constraints and have persisted over decades (Knight, 2014; Ministry of Education, 2006) – other sociohistoric and cultural arrangements with respect to institutional norms, citizens' beliefs and way of life, and societal understandings around morality, religion, and civic duty further shape Grenada's educational context. Owing to its colonization by Europe, with Britain being its last and longest ruler, Grenada identifies as a Christian nation. This legacy of slavery has fostered complex relations in contemporary Grenada as evidenced in discourses, expectations, and practices relative to public life and, more central to this study, understandings around occupational labour, notions of "hard work", "service", and "charity", and what it means to be a "Christian" and "servant leader". It is in this context that I situate the study, drawing on Eacott (2015a) in mobilizing a relational understanding of the school principalship to explore how social relations, as constituted and enacted in sociohistoric, economic, and cultural arrangements, produce and reify certain forms and scope of work for school principals in Grenada.

The research question posed in the study is: *What is the work of school principals in Grenada?* Four sub-questions support this main question:
1. How do principals understand their work?
2. How do principals spend their time?
3. What challenges do principals face in their work?
4. What strategies do principals employ in their work?

This study positions work as emerging in context. Necessarily then, I situate work as a socially constructed phenomenon (Applebaum, 1992; Fineman, 2012; Hall, 1975, 1986). Grint (2005) concurs that work is "socially constructed and reconstructed….it is contingent and requires perpetual action by agents for its reproduction" (p. 2). In other words, what constitutes work is amenable to change, shaped by pervading socio-historic conditions and people's lived experiences within said socio-historic contexts. For Eacott (2015a), work is embedded and embodies. In his quote above, renowned Caribbean scholar and historian Errol Miller alludes to work's embedded and embodied constitution in the Caribbean. As Miller (1984) recounts of the Caribbean in the mid to latter parts of the 20th Century, the colonial systems and structures that had anchored the region for well over a century and a half became the source of disenfranchisement after the economic depression of the 1930s, with Caribbean citizens across the islands clamouring for self-governance from imperial rule. Miller continues that the ideology, institutions, and norms that flourished across the islands during this period reflected the social, economic, and cultural ambitions of the people that largely unraveled without political and/or civil unrest, with Grenada representing "the only instance to date in which a government has changed in the English-speaking Caribbean by means of armed struggle" (p. 28). While much has been written about this period in Grenada's history, there has been a dearth since, so little is known about the contemporary way of life in Grenada, whether in the context of social, economic, or educational ideology and norms. In fact, this study represents the first of its kind, empirical or otherwise, to document the work of school principals in this country.

The research question and four sub-questions facilitate an in-depth probe into the substance, scope, foundations, and conditions of Grenadian school principals' current work. The notion of work, that is, what is work and who engages in what kinds of work, how and why, is influenced by the meanings (i.e., understandings) people develop from their lived reality within sociohistoric context (Applebaum, 1992; Fineman, 2012; Hall, 1986). In studying the work of Grenadian school principals, I examine how incumbents spend their time daily as I see this as a reflection of what [their] work is. Put another way, it is my position that what principals do, i.e., how they spend their time, reflects their

interpretations of and participation in the range of relations in and around work. I also examine conditions and events that test principals' capacity to undertake their work, to the extent that they exacerbate, impede, increase, and/or otherwise impact principals' work. I describe these as challenges that principals face in their work as they speak to the overarching context within which principals' work unfolds, shaping not just what principals do, but how and why they do it. I also explore how principals respond to their work and, more specifically, the challenges around such work by examining the course of actions or plans principals employ daily. I describe such responses as strategies and focus on those that mitigate or otherwise respond to the challenges that principals face in their work. Further, getting to the "why" of Grenadian principals' work involves probing the understandings principals hold about their work. For, the meanings people ascribe work are enmeshed within bounded and dynamic social interactions (Applebaum (1992; Fineman, 2012). Indeed, this study underscores Hall's (1986) assertion that work is a multifaceted and complex social phenomenon, with overlapping, intersecting and interdependent dimensions. Overall, I surmise that exploring the understandings principals hold about their work, how they spend their time, the challenges they face, and the strategies they employ given these challenges facilitates a fulsome probe into the substance of the work of school principals in Grenada.

Defining Work

But what do I mean by *work*? I have alluded to work's socially constructed and modulated nature and pointed to the centrality of participants' lived experiences of work in generating any meaningful account of what work is for school principals in Grenada. However, it is important to be explicit about what I mean by work and what it means to study the work of school principals in Grenada.

In the educational administration and leadership literature, work broadly refers to what principals do in their capacity as, depending on jurisdiction, school administrators, school managers, or head teachers. Educational scholars have employed different terms to describe what principals spend their time doing, such as actions, activities, tasks, thinking, decisions, and behaviours (for example, see Gaziel, 1995; Horng et al., 2010;

Miller, 2013; Mulford et al., 2004; Swapp, 2012; Pollock et al., 2015a; Pollock, et al., 2015b; Winton & Pollock, 2013). In conceptualizing what I mean by [principals'] work and what it means to study [principals'] work, a necessary component of the study for me is examining *how principals spend their time* as a reflection of such work. In other words, what are principals spending their time *doing*? This necessitates exploring principals' *actions*, by asking them about these actions, observing them undertake (these) actions, examining policy documents that direct and mandate (these) actions, and probing other sociohistoric, economic, political, and cultural conditions that shape (these) actions and around which (these) actions unfold.

Hence, in this study, I define work as the actions that principals spend their time undertaking in, or relating to, their capacity as head of their schools. And, because work is conceptualized as a social construct enacted in context, the definition of work employed in the study is necessarily expanded to encompass the understandings, challenges, and conditions around which these actions emerge and are sustained. This overarching framework is in keeping with the relational approach that drives the study. Further, within this framing and definition of work, the notion of time is not advanced as a strictly quantifiable element in the data collection process, nor is it privileged in the follow up discussion of the study's findings. While I take note of the duration of principals' actions during the observations and interviews, I am more concerned with the qualitative purpose, that is, the (symbolic) *meaning*, that participants ascribe an activity. I probe not just the actions but what drives them as this latter focus allows for the generation of the kinds of productive and generative principles that the relational approach seeks to uncover and promote. Hence, my focus is on how and why principals undertake an action with respect to their work as a school principal in Grenada, in the sense of that action's connection (or disconnection) to a perceived understanding of work and/or a challenge, strategy, or broader condition around which work unfolds in the Grenada context.

Lastly, in probing this "doing" relative to principals' work/actions, I make space for both physical and mental actions. Broadly speaking, an action is the state or process of doing something, typically to achieve an aim. I describe actions in the study as

behaviours, thinking, activities, and/or tasks principals undertake or participate in that achieve some purpose related to their position as a school principal (Pollock et al., 2015b; Swapp, 2012). I extend my examination of work to include principals' actions before, during, and after official school hours and any categories of non-paid, voluntary, unfree, and/or coerced work. This expanded conceptualization of work takes into consideration changing ideologies, constitution, and practices around principals' work (England & Harpaz, 1990; Gaziel, 1995; Livingstone, 2001; Miller, 2013; Tancred, 1995; Pollock et al., 2015a; Pollock et al., 2015b; Swapp, 2012; Willis, 1980). A comprehensive exploration of how principals spend their time also necessitates a general accounting of the people with whom principals interact, where interactions and other actions take place, and the nature of interactions and actions (Gaziel, 1995; Horng et al., 2010; Swapp, 2012). Moreover, there is growing attention to principals' mental health and wellbeing including the emotional and cognitive actions and processes involved in principals' labour (Darmody & Smyth, 2016; Hauseman, 2018; Pollock et al., 2019a; Riveros, 2015b; Walker, 2020, 2021; Winton & Pollock, 2013). Considering this evidence, my definition of work encompasses these dimensions of work to more thoroughly account for the range and dimensions of actions that Grenadian school principals undertake in their day-to-day work.

I find it important to make explicit here that while my conceptualization and engagement of work in this thesis necessarily draws on frameworks and understandings in the broader educational administration and leadership literature, the relational approach that I am advancing in this study leads me to prioritize my analysis of this phenomenon specific to the context(s) that Grenadian school principals find themselves working in, recognizing, of course, that some aspects of such contexts may be shared with principals in other jurisdictions. For instance, as I examine in the thesis, the standards that the Grenadian school principals in the study draw upon for their work substantially are moral standards stemming from their Christian faith and their civic convictions enacted against grave socioeconomic constraints. This reality is at odds with the more highly professionalized and de-spiritualized practices and the standardized, prescriptive standards and frameworks of principals' work in many other jurisdictions

and so represents a noteworthy analysis as a particular contextual influence on the work of Grenadian school principals.

Rationale

In many Western societies, the school principalship represents the onsite, de jure head of day-to-day operations in schools (Owens & Valesky, 2011). As holders of this office, and considering the current strong push for principals to be instructional and visionary leaders (Barnett et al., 2012; Day & Gurr, 2014; Fullan, 2014; Grissom et al., 2013; Maxwell, 2014; Swapp 2012), increased surveillance and accountability regimes in principals' work (Alvoid & Black Jr, 2014; Arlestig et al., 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Hauseman, 2020b; Pollock, & Winton, 2016; Riveros et al., 2016; Winton, & Pollock, 2015), and the creation of increasingly prescriptive leadership frameworks to monitor and gauge principals' labour (Ball, 2011; Riveros et al., 2016; Swapp, 2012), school principals are positioned as central facilitators of the education process. However, how principals go about fulfilling these expectations and the courses of action they employ to do so are caught up in a range of interactions and conditions that have hithertofore been sidelined in school leadership inquiry. Instead, the school principalship, seemingly irrespective of jurisdictional contextualities, has become commodified and instrumentalized along particular ends due to a pervasive neoliberal agenda driving education reform on a global scale (Ball, 2011; Eacott, 2011, 2015a, 2015b; Riveros, 2016; Riveros, et al., 2016; Swapp, 2012). The preoccupation has been with the principal as the agent of change in schools. As Lynch (2014) asserts, current education reform attempts to offload the responsibility of education to the individual. Consequently, incongruence between school leadership standards and principals' practices are either ignored, explained away, or attributed to an 'unsuccessful' or 'ineffective' principal and the notion of 'success despite context' continues to be advanced, somewhat unencumbered. In this study, I challenge decontextualized and ahistorical representations of and discourses around the work of school principals by privileging the study of the conditions in and around which such work unfolds.

Hence, one of the central propositions I take up in this study is the school principal as instructional leader. Principals are widely tasked with the responsibility of leading a school's instructional program (Barnett et al., 2012; Grissom et al., 2013; Maxwell, 2014; Owens & Valesky, 2011), and evidence suggests that in schools they are second only to classroom teachers in influencing student learning (Leithwood & Seashore Louis, 2011). I am not suggesting that principals do not and/or should not share the responsibility of student learning and neither am I objecting to the school principalship being ascribed importance in supporting this goal. My discomfort is with the categorization of principals (solely or chiefly) as instructional leaders when the evidence strongly indicates that principals are mostly engaged in other kinds of daily work; many hardly find the time in their busy work lives to engage in sustained and meaningful instructional work. In many Western countries, many government policies and some of the educational administration and leadership literature, including those around principal leadership frameworks – arguably beginning with the International School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISSLC) standards in the United States and then catching on in other countries –explicitly push instructional leadership as the central work of a school principal. And many principals acknowledge that they would like to be able to prioritize instruction-related work, but they also tell us that high volumes of work, escalating pace of tasks, and other emergencies and deadlines consuming their time make it difficult, impossible even, to undertake such work (Brauckmann & Schwaarz, 2015; Grissom, et al., 2015; Gronn, 2003; Swapp, 2012). This dissonance has not been substantially taken up in the literature and is an incongruence that I highlight in this study.

At the same time, the lack of empirical evidence around Grenadian principals' work makes it difficult to discuss, theorize, or otherwise address such work. This dearth accounts for the study's exploratory nature and is partly why the specific research question posed is, "what is the work of school principals in Grenada?". However, there is some evidence of such work's problematic state. The government of Grenada acknowledges in its vision and strategic plan for education document, *Strategic Plan for Educational Enhancement and Development 2006-2015* (SPEED II) that "lack of teacher training and principal preparation continue to hamper the realization of learning

objectives at both the school and national level" (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 45). However, apart from this broad admission of the poor state of principals' preparedness for their work in Grenada, SPEED II offers no other details. Given the dearth of empirical evidence around principals' work in Grenada, it remains unclear what such "lack of teacher training and principal preparation" constitutes and how, if at all, this issue, and others, impact or are impacted by the contexts in which principals work, and/or how incumbents think about and undertake their work. This study addresses these questions.

The government offers further insights into the state of education in Grenada, hinting at issues that may factor in principals' work. According to SPEED II, "few students in primary and secondary schools acquire the necessary knowledge and skills as outlined in the prescribed curriculum especially in the areas of Mathematics and Language Arts" (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 44). The document continues that this deficiency "impedes government's target of developing a more diversified, competitive and knowledge-based economy through the development of its human resource" (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 40). The neoliberal rhetoric in this statement is problematic, especially for a small, developing country such as Grenada that struggles to secure needed human and material resources for its development. Small nation states are not insulated from globalization and are particularly vulnerable (Alexander, 2001; Ball, 1998; Moutsios, 2009; Naude, et al., 2009). Smaller islands in the Caribbean are especially so because they lack the knowledge, skills, and resources to compete (Ali, 2010; Green, 2002; Louisy, 2001; Melville, 2002). This is an important context to consider in this study because it speaks to the constraints facing Grenada relative to educational development.

Neoliberalism's economic stealth is advanced through political, linguistic, and social channels, with education served up as both panacea and vessel (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Rizvi and Lingard (2010) refer to the global politics of education, positing that one way that neoliberalism's reach is furthered in/through education is through governments lacing bilateral reports and discourse as "global education imperatives" with language around how to align to this ideal (p. 37). As scholars assert, the school leadership standards movement, the more recent thrust of the New Managerialism in education, and

the instructional leadership rhetoric are all rooted in economics and global competitiveness (Brown, 2016; Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Lashway, 2006; Lynch, 2014). In the context of Grenada, the government's response to low student achievement is to leverage the nation's school principals as "instructional leaders and agents of change in schools" (Ministry of Education, 2006, SPEED II, p. 44). But, in addition to scarce resources, the government has not kept abreast of current technology, research, and practices to improve student learning, so schools in Grenada today continue to be served by outdated technology, curricula, and teaching methods (Grenade, 2015; Knight, 2014). Consequently, this emphasis on instructional leadership, absent other structural reform around educational funding, policy, and work, may yield little fruitful results. At a minimum, an important precursor to any such discussions is the collection of empirical evidence around how school principals in Grenada spend their time, and the conditions that inform how such time is spend. This study addresses these important questions.

Positionality

My positionality in this research stems from my years navigating Grenada's education system, first as a student, then as a secondary school teacher, and now as a budding doctoral scholar based in Canada. I left Grenada in 2010 to take up graduate (and after postgraduate) studies in Canada, after 11 continuous years of fulltime employment with the government of Grenada as a secondary school teacher. The politics of national-diaspora identity (Premdas, 2004; Sutton, 2000; Wilson, 2012), ascribed to Caribbean nationals who live or spend time overseas and 'visit' their homelands, goes before me, influencing how I am perceived and received by 'locals' and the doors that are opened or shut to me consequently. In some ways, I remain "one of them", and this insider status (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) allowed me much leeway in recruiting participants and generally establishing a relatively smooth data collection experience. In other ways, the hyper-personal political context, experiences of oppression, and crab-in-a-barrel, clientelism, and patronage mentalities endemic to Caribbean, Black, formerly colonized, and otherwise small nation states constrain and frustrate the citizenry (Steele, 2003; Veenendaal & Corbett, 2020). Indeed, much has been written about the complexities and

contradictions of the colonial experience, including colorism, and notions of deficit mentality and migrant mentality in the Caribbean (Miller, 1984; Newton Moses, 2019; Rubenstein, 1983). The process of conducting this study was made unduly harder because locals, particularly some in the Ministry of Education whose job was to facilitate this research, needed me to "know my place", so to speak, and otherwise show me that I was not better than they for having studied (and/or lived) abroad (a coveted feat). Indeed, the complexities of the colonized individual and our postcolonial struggles and contradictions continue to make interesting fodder for research. Despite the setbacks, I persevered, and the rich accounts of Grenadian principals' work generated made all the challenges worthwhile.

The issues that inform my stance relative to the historic, social, political, economic, and educational context of the study revolve around my experiences and knowledge of discrimination, negative public regard for schools, and grave fiscal constraints manifested in unsatisfactory teacher and principal training and qualifications, pedagogy, and curricula. As a student in Grenada's education system, I experienced first-hand schooling's punitive, rigid, classist, and inequitable structure. Most traumatic for me was corporal punishment, still a main form of discipline in Grenadian schools. Further, I was educated in, and largely taught students using, deductive, teacher-centered methods. Individualized instruction was minimal, and many students struggled to keep up with the pace of instruction. Truancy rates were also high (Ministry of Education, 2006). Questioning teachers (and parents, and pastors, and political leaders – any elder or superior, for that matter) was frowned upon and deemed rude, and discipline was strict and abusive.

And while Grenada's classism may not be as palpable as Jamaica's, Guyana's, or Trinidad and Tobago's, for instance, it still left an indelible mark. I was poor, very dark-skinned, vocal, and female; four strikes amplified together. Despite being a bright child, I was sidelined for my fairer-skinned companions at school and in banks, government ministries, and wider society. Further, high public regard for a Catholic education, especially at the secondary level, strongly influenced how citizens interacted with non-Catholic schools and thus the work of educators in Catholic and non-Catholic schools

alike. As I examine in Chapter Three, Catholic schools are among the oldest and most prestigious institutions in Grenada, with many lighter-skinned and well-to-do Grenadians attending and graduating from these institutions. And while these schools have become much more accessible by the poor and working-class Grenadian, the stigma and prestige around schooling continue to shape local culture.

In addition to the superiority of a Catholic education, geography also factored; the schools considered most esteemed were in the capital city (i.e., the town) in the south of the island and better supported by government and citizenry. This directly impacted lesser regarded schools' ability to generate funds to meet school needs, impacted staff and teacher morale in these schools, and created tension among schools. As an example, while I attended the top secondary school (of Catholic denomination) in my parish, by societal standards, I still only attended a "country" school, not one of the esteemed Catholic "town" schools. My contributions in the classroom at college, education workshops, and other public spheres were not as valued as my peers who attended these more well-regarded schools in the capital city. Further, I taught in a (non-Catholic though denominational) school located in the north and while it was nestled just atop that parish's main town and performed well both academically and in sports, by societal standards it was still considered a mere "country" school. Our contributions in academics and sports were often trivialized and as educators at that school we worked extra hard, it seemed, to earn the respect of society.

Notwithstanding the many hardworking educators in Grenadian schools, I considered some principals academically, professionally, and emotionally unprepared to hold any position of authority over others. With regards to their academic qualifications, few principals had up to a bachelor's degree by the time I left the system in 2010. For many years, the accepted protocol has been to get into teaching straight from secondary school to teach at the primary level and from (tertiary) college to teach at the secondary level. This meant that well into the 1980s most of Grenada's primary school teachers had only O' levels and secondary teachers only A' levels as their highest level of qualifications. So, Grenada's educators started their careers with no formal specialization in teaching or subject knowledge, and then a few years later (and after becoming

permanent, i.e., attaining permanent teaching contracts usually after a two-year period of probation) secured their teacher certification – a two-year program – first year full time, second year part time – through the Teachers College division of the country's sole national college in affiliation with The University of the West Indies, the region's oldest postsecondary institution. I deemed this level of preparation for teaching inadequate and I was often vocal about it. As an example: I started teaching in 1999 with O' and A' levels (see list of acronyms at the beginning of this dissertation); by 2003 had completed this two-year training; the next year (2004) started my bachelor's degree in education – delayed one year by Hurricane Ivan's passing – and completed in 2008; the next year (2009) successfully applied for a scholarship to pursue a master's degree in education in Canada; and left Grenada in 2010 to take up same. And, whether due to knowledge deficit or a lack of vision or funds, there has not been any sustained and/or substantive principal training and/or preparation programs to support teachers and principals in and for their work in Grenada. Further, some principals were spiteful, domineering, and aloof both in principle and to those they disliked, seemed contented with the status quo, interpreted and applied polices, rules, and regulations rigidly, sought compliance through punitive transactions, and from what I could see, spent their time undertaking menial labour, writing letters soliciting donations, attending funerals, and holding staff meetings. All rose to the position through teacher seniority, and most were male, married, and Christian. These are the experiences that go before me in conducting this research.

In sum, my experiences of unprofessionalism, poverty, neglect, and discrimination in the education system and my beliefs that principals needed to attain better qualifications, their work could be more meaningful and impactful, and they, more knowledgeable, visionary, compassionate, and eager administrators/managers, drove my interest to specialize in the study of the school principalship at the graduate level. So, my lived experiences go before me in this research. These experiences are firmly embodied and have been marked by violence, race, ethnicity, class, ideology, culture, politics, and location. They frame the lens through which I conceive of principals' work and my approach to the study. From an emic perspective (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) I want to investigate principals' work in Grenada because I see such work as practiced around

problematic ideologies and expectations, severe economic constraints, and content knowledge limitations. However, as a student and teacher there were limits to my understandings of principals' work and so I want to garner fuller, current perceptions of the work of Grenadian school principals from those who practice it.

In self-positioning in this study, I attempt to make visible and keep track of my subjectivities (see England, 1994; Gadamer, 1970, 1977; Gallagher, 1992) because "the 'practical' activities of generating and interpreting data…are linked in a continuous process of critical reflection and transformation" (Schwandt, 2000, p. 190-191). I concur with Gunter (2005) that no one floats free of field positions and positioning regarding knowledge claims. I further concur with Riveros (2015a) who credits Thom Greenfield with positing that "our observation is infused with values and therefore we cannot have neutral or objective perceptions of the social world" (p. 63). Indeed, "[c]onceptualization does not float free of field positions and positioning regarding knowledge claims and so field members must always ask: who is doing the conceptualization, why and to what effect and what impact is it having?" (Eacott 2015a, p. 166). So, I draw on Patton's (2002) concept of "researcher reflexivity" along with Fine's (1994) notion of "working the hyphen" in situating my positionality as researcher vis à vis my participants in being as conscious as possible of the cultural, political, ideological, and linguistic foundations of my perspective as well as and against the voices of the principals in the study. I agree with Schwandt (2000) that the social researcher's aim needs not be to extricate themselves from their experiences and subjectivities, but one of critical self-examination and modification to facilitate maximal understanding between themselves and participants. My attention to subjectivities and biases is thus deliberate and not linear. While I do not speak for participants, I attempt to be conscious of how my subjectivities and biases color the lens through which I view the study and my approach to its conduct. It is my hope that my explicit articulation of my biases and my commitment to intentional reflexivity yield a rich account of Grenadian principals' perspectives of how they have come to think about and undertake work and the substance, conditions, and challenges of such work.

Significance of the Study

From a comparative perspective, Dimmock & Walker (1998, 2000, 2005) have long lamented the Western-centric nature of the field of educational administration and leadership. As I outline in the next chapter, the field of educational administration and leadership has its genesis in the United States and its subsequent developments have been substantially framed within the mores of this country (Owens & Valesky, 2011; Tyack & Hansot, 1982). Developing countries, like those in the Caribbean and/or that are part of the Global South rhetoric, struggle to build their education systems to the scope and technologically advanced level of sophistication as their counterparts' in more developed countries. But their reliance on international aid from organizations controlled by North America and Europe, high consumptive culture, and porous borders make them especially vulnerable to assimilation of discourse and standards coming from these developed regions (Jules, 2011; Miller, 1984; Sutton, 2000; Swapp, 2015). In other words, small developing states like Grenada, while they may have escaped the full(er) force and impact of globalization, are susceptible to its implications, and oftentimes these states' relationships with bigger countries are to their disadvantage (Alonso, 2002; Archer, 2006; Swapp, 2015; Tikly, 1999). The challenge this unbalanced relationship poses for Grenada, particularly, is that discourse around education has not been informed by local context but adopted from the policies and mandates of other influential international organizations and global discourse. There is a lack of empirical evidence around the work of school principals in this country, a void this study attempts to fill. Absent such data, government rhetoric often seems decontextualized and ahistorical in nature, not rooted in or particularly germane to the educational climate in the country. It is not surprising, though disappointing, that international interests in Caribbean affairs have been largely economic. The Caribbean boasts features that make it attractive to the developed world/Global North. The region remains historically connected to Europe (through the Commonwealth, diaspora, language, and culture, to name a few) and has rich natural resources, a tropical climate that makes it popular with North American and European tourists, proximity to three continents, namely South America, North America – in fact, it is nestled between North and South America – and Africa (separated by the

Atlantic Ocean), lax tax laws, receptive immigration laws, and is geographically accessible to and from other parts of the world, making it an international gateway to these parts.

Certainly, neoliberalism has wrought significant changes to the work of school principals in more economically advanced societies, and heightened accountability and surveillance systems serve to channel school principals' practices in particular directions. This trajectory heavily hinges on performativity, accountability, the use of data, test scores, and, more broadly, the instrumentalization and commodification of school principals' labour (Armstrong, 2014; Eacott, 2015a; Pollock, 2016; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015, 2018; Pollock & Winton, 2016; Pollock, et al., 2015a; Pollock et al., 2015b; Riveros, 2016; Riveros et al., 2016). Contemporary principals in these regions thus work in a tense and hectic environment and studies have begun paying attention to principals' emotional, physical, and mental wellbeing (Hauseman, 2018, 2020a, 2020b; Pollock et al., 2015b; Pollock et al., 2020; Pollock et al., 2019a; Walker, 2020, 2021). But is this the same or similar in the Grenadian context? There is room for more robust, empirical probe around how jurisdictional contexts account for differences and subtleties in and across local education settings with respect to principals' contemporary work (Eacott, 2015a; noted exception Miller, 2018a, 2018b; Pollock et al., 2015a). This study takes up the latter part of this void. Such a focus underscores how (and that!), despite pervasive economic-driven discourse, local and subregional contextualities are powerful shapers of understandings, discourses, and practices in school administration. The same attention that has been given the study of the school principalship in developed regions has not been applied to other, lesser regarded spaces and this is a gap this study seeks to address.

As I articulated above, the lack of empirical evidence around Grenadian principals' work constrains any meaningful efforts to address such work. It is true that serious economic challenges impede the quality and delivery of education in developing countries such as the Caribbean, but other historic, political, and social antecedents also flavour and muddy developmental paths. While most of the islands that comprise the Caribbean are now independent states and share a common language and colonial heritage, richly unique characteristics differentiate islands from each other. The region

thus represents an ideal site to investigate the phenomenon of principals' work, in bringing to the fore and exposing for analyzing the ways the region's colonial history, current geo-economic and political struggles, and complex social life contextualize understandings and practices relative to education and educators' labour. In fact, Jules (2015) has argued that from a comparative perspective, there is much that unites the Caribbean into a common space for comparative study and analysis.

It is within this context that I place the significance of this study, in illuminating the context of Grenada, a small island in the Caribbean, characterized as a poor, developing country in the Global South. I make the argument that though, in some ways, the principalship in Grenada is discussed and legislated similarly as in other, more developed nations or other Caribbean islands for that matter, and principals experience work in some similar ways as their peers in these nations, particular contextual circumstances shape what work is for principals in Grenada and how incumbents go about their daily working lives. Such a targeted exploration of the conditions, understandings, strategies, and actions of school principals can inform local and regional diagnosis of persistent issues in Caribbean countries around school reform and how principals' work supports, and can better support, this outcome.

It is limiting, inaccurate, but not inevitable, to continue to talk of the school principalship, or more specifically the work of principals, in universal terms when this phenomenon has gone undocumented in many jurisdictions of the world. It is irresponsible for us as scholars to clump the work of school principals into a unitary or dominant category without empirical basis. We do a disservice to principals, and for the purposes of this study I zero in on principals in Grenada, to articulate ahistorical and/or decontextualized understandings of the how, why, and when of their work. Hence, the academic potential of this study to the broader literature on school administration as a subset of the field of educational administration and leadership makes it worthy of undertaking. As scholars concur, there is rich comparative analysis (Dimmock & Walker, 1998, 2000; year; Hickling-Hudson, 2000b, 2006) or, as Larsen (2018) puts it, transnational value, in garnering and examining evidence of how the school principalship

is conceptualized and enacted in jurisdictions that have traditionally been ignored or cut off from mainstream educational research.

Further, mobilizing the relational approach to illuminate the conditions in and around which work emerges and is sustained in Grenada adds depth to the study of the school principalship in Grenada, and fosters more productive discussions of the scope, substance, and challenges of principals' work. Such a framework also has the potential to inform our collective, theoretical understanding of the dynamics of school administration, illuminating the ways school principals understand and translate legislation around their work and the factors that drive certain kinds of work. The research thus has immediate utility to Grenada but wider relevance to the field of educational administration and leadership. At a minimum, research conducted outside the radius of the Global North (i.e., the United States, Canada, and Europe) broadens discussions about the substance of school principals' work in other parts of the world, the shapers of and constraints to such work, and the possibilities that hitherto unknown knowledge around work offers up for comparative, cross-cultural insight. More specifically, renowned Caribbean scholar Anne Hickling-Hudson (2006) has called for research into Caribbean school leadership that examines school leaders' work from a postcolonial perspective, especially in relation to small islands' developmental challenges in the face of globalization. This research into the current work of school principals in Grenada thus adds an international, 'Global South' perspective to discourse and debates around the school principalship.

Thesis Outline

In Chapter One: Introduction to the Study I outline the focus of the study as the work of school principals in Grenada. I identify the main research question and four sub-questions that guided the study, as well as its undergirding ontological, epistemological, and methodological considerations. I also justify why the study is relevant and timely, for Grenada, the Caribbean region, and the wider international literature informing the school principalship.

In Chapter Two: Review of the Literature I situate the foundations of understandings of the school principalship in the broader context of educational

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administration and leadership. I also examine early schisms and continued tensions in the field and important implications for empirical study of the work of school principals. The chapter also situates the contemporary practice of work in broader neoliberal discourse around the performance, commodification, and instrumentalization of school principals, problematizing this prevalence and arguing for a context-focused examination of school principals' work in Grenada. The chapter ends by examination the denomination-based work of school principals working in religious schools, mobilizing the notion of servant leadership to examine how such work is undertaken in some jurisdictions.

Chapter Three: The Grenada Context is dedicated to presenting the Grenada context. Herein, I examine the foundations, structure, and aims of the country's education system, describe the composition and demographic makeup of students, teacher, and principals in the education system, and then highlight some major challenges facing education and educators in this small nation state. I also situate major sociohistoric, economic, and cultural antecedents shaping ideology and norms in Grenada and end by examining the policy documents that inform how principals are to spend their time.

Chapter Four: Research Framework describes the study's framework, which is constitutive of a conceptualization of work as a social construct, framed through the lens of the relational approach. Within this overarching framework, the concepts understandings, actions (including strategies), challenges, and conditions are analyzed within and against the overarching context of principals' work in Grenada. The chapter also situates interpretivism as the overarching paradigm undergirding the study.

Chapter Five: Methodology picks up from the previous chapter to expand on the overarching methodology informing the study. I situate and justify the use of qualitative inquiry and two research methods, direct observations and semi-structured interviews, in collecting data on the research question. I also describe the research participants, explain my selection and recruitment processes, and end by describing my steps in data collection and analysis.

The findings of the study are presented in chapters six through nine. Each chapter addresses one of the four research questions. Chapter Six: Principals' Understandings of

Work addresses the first research sub-question around the understandings principals hold about their work. Three such understandings are examined, work as a calling/vocation, work as service, and work as commitment to student learning. Chapter Seven: How Principals Spend Their Time addresses the second sub-question, describing how principals spend their time undertaking faith-based, administrative/management, and instructional work. In Chapter Eight: Challenges Principals Face in Their Work, I address the third sub-question around the challenges that principals face in their work. Some major challenges presented are limited supports, ambiguities around formal work, and implicit beliefs and expectations around labour and the work of school principals. And, in Chapter Nine: Strategies Principals Employ in Their Work, I examine how principals navigate the challenges and broader reality of their work. Key strategies highlighted for analysis included an ethic of care, knowledge acquisition, self-help, collegial supports, and micropolitics.

In Chapter Ten: Discussion, I engage in a critical discussion of the study's results. In doing so, I return to the literature, research question, and research framework. I critically interrogate the nature of Grenadian school principals' work, especially in terms of its intensity, volume, and ambiguity. I also problematize the notion of work as service in the Grenada context, especially principals' self-identification as stewards, servants, and Christians compelling problematic volumes and scope of work. I also examine compliance and control as exhibited in the Grenada context, arguing that though principals' actions in securing compliance and control may resemble their peers in other jurisdictions, particular sociohistoric and prevailing regimes fuel such compliance. The discussion also centers the micropolitical nature of school principals' work also fueled and sustained by and through these regimes.

In Chapter Eleven: Conclusion, I recapped the study's overarching conceptualization of work as a social construct embedded and embodied in context, revisited the major findings around how work is understood and undertaken and the challenges and conditions impacting understanding and undertaking of work in the Grenada context, articulated some future research directions that can support the school

principalship in Grenada, and described the important contributions this study makes not only at the local level, but the regional and international, as well.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, I locate my study within the context of the existing literature. This is important because our understanding of the field of educational administration and leadership is based on a cumulative history of the ontological and epistemological foundations of school organizations and the people who work in them (Burgess & Newton, 2015). It is important to acknowledge, draw on, and examine this history in ongoing quests to improve our thinking and practices relative to schooling and the organizations in and through which schooling unfolds. Herein, I highlight major movements in the history of educational administration and leadership as an area of inquiry and practice, situating same within and against sociohistoric, economic, and cultural arrangements and describing the changes in the thinking and practice of school leadership and principals' actions over time, place, and space. Hence, the chapter outlines educational administration and leadership's historical trajectory to expose for discussion the founding principles, places, and spaces upon which the practice of school administration still hinges, center the major highlights over decades and examine the current neoliberal thrust in education and the school principalship and locate the study of principals' work within and against this broader reality. I also introduce the relational approach that undergirds this study and examine faith-based work as undertaken by principals in denominational schools.

Early School Administration

The birth of educational administration and leadership as a field of inquiry was in the United States, over a century and two decades ago (Allison, 1989, 2015; Tyack & Hansot, 1982). The origins of the field drew from the positivistic tenets of the natural sciences, in that the epistemology, ontology, and methodology of early research in school administration were predicated on the assumption that human behaviour was predictable and structured and so could be studied as cause-effect hypotheses (Greenfield, 1980; Owens & Valesky, 2011). This is an important element of the field's history to situate because it speaks to current (and persistent) debates in the study and practice of educational administration. In fact, some assert that logical positivism, especially in the

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application of Systems Theory in studying organizations, is still popular in educational research today (Bush et al., 2010; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008; Owens & Valesky, 2011). As Gulson & Symes (2007) put it, "educationalists tend to be the followers of broad epistemological trends, or 'turns', rather than their initiators" (p. 97). I call to the fore the genesis of educational administration because to better situate the persistent disagreements over knowledge production it is important to consider the field's origins.

Owens & Valesky (2011), in providing a historical treatise of the study and practice of school administration, described the formation and rise of Taylorism and Fayolism in the early 20th Century. These educational scholars credit the latter movement and its pioneer French industrialist Henri Fayol with shaping our historical and contemporary knowledge and practice of educational work and school organizations. Some of the earliest pieces of work in the field of administration examined the functions of managers/administrators (for e.g., Drucker, 1974; Getzels, 1958; Getzels & Guba, 1957; Gulick & Urwick, 1937; Simon, 1960, 1950, 1946). Specific to educational administration, Owens and Valesky (2011) assert that earlier studies built on, in design and theory, Fayol's 1916 scholarship into the work of managers, specifically his five-pronged characterization of administrative/management functions, namely: planning, organizing, co-ordinating, controlling, and commanding. For their work in public administration, for instance, Gulick and Urwick (1937) expanded Fayol's characterization to develop the renowned acronym, 'PODSCORB', to refer to seven tasks chief executives undertake in their work, namely: planning, organizing, developing, staffing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting. (As I reference below, the PODSCORB framework constituted an entire module in my teachers' training in 2003.) Irwin Miklos then built on Gulick and Urwick's work to make the first substantial attempt to theorize the work of school principals (Allison, 1989). In 1968 and 1975, Miklos substituted the functions controlling, commanding, and directing for stimulating, influencing, leading, and evaluating results, and altogether identified seven processes of administration, and six areas of administrative operation (Owens & Valesky, 2011). The processes were: (i) planning; (ii) making decisions; (iii) organizing; (iv) coordinating; (v) communicating; (vi) influencing; and (vii) evaluating. These processes were carried out in relation to the

following areas: (i) the school program; (ii) pupil personnel; (iii) staff personnel; (iv) community relations; (v) management; and (vi) the physical facilities. These processes and areas made their way into the earliest efforts to theorize the field of school administration (Gronn, 1982; Morris et al., 1981; Owens & Valesky, 2011) and there is evidence that subsequent foray into the study of principals' work continue to bear elements of Miklos' matrix (for e.g., see Gaziel, 1995; Martin & Willower, 1981; Morris et al., 1981; Wolcott, 1973). This is an important foundation to establish because it points to the origins of (even contemporary) understandings of the dimensions, actions, and areas of school principals' work.

However, the founding frameworks for studying and evaluating the work of school principals were problematic. Scholars asserted that simply lifting and applying research designs from other fields including psychology, business, and the hard sciences to study what school principals do was impractical and futile. Critiques argued that these designs were fundamentally incongruent for studying principals, and that the field of educational administration would be better served by its own theoretical science (Allison, 2015; Owens & Valesky, 2011). This period became known as The Theory Movement or The New Movement.

The Theory/New Movement

The Theory/New Movement (hereafter referred to as the Theory Movement) did not aim to generate practical knowledge to train school administrators. Instead, the idea was to generate a theoretical framework with which to "give meaning and order to observations already made and …specify areas where observations still need to be made" in the areas of school administration (Getzels, 1958, p. 235). In so doing, papers adhering to the philosophy of the Theory Movement attempted to make space for the psycho-social dimension of schools as organizations, an element deemed absent in prior research foci (Allison, 2015; Getzels, 1958). Proponents theorized that to arrive at a much fuller picture of school administration, it was important to account for the complex interplay between a school as an organizational structure (the nomothetic) *and* its human side (the idiographic) (McGregor, 1978; Owens & Valesky, 2011, Ubben et al., 2011). In fact, Owens and Valesky credit the Theory Movement with the emergence of a 'systems

theory' approach to the study of schools as complex human organizations. These works on school administration borrowed from Herbert Simon's (1946) pioneering (and positivistic) work on administrative behaviour (Allison, 2015; Owens & Valesky, 2011) which deemed the prevailing administrative principles guiding the work of administrators simplistic and obsolete and thus ineffective in ensuring organizational efficiency.

Unsurprisingly, dissent continued in the field. It continued to be assumed that principles developed elsewhere could be applied to the work of school administrators with similar results. Not only was Simon's work in administrative behaviour considered inadequate for school settings, critics argued that there was no science to explain human behaviour in organizations; no way to "give meaning and order" to principals' work. As Wenger (1999) argues, "one can design roles, but one cannot design the identities that will be constructed through those roles" (p. 229). A most ardent critique of The Theory Movement, Thom Greenfield, argued that it was an epistemological fallacy to view school organizations as 'real entities' acting independently of human control and thus amenable to change. Instead, Greenfield (1977) espoused, "[t]he dynamic of organization is made from nothing more substantial than people doing and thinking" (p. 92). He went on to argue that organizations were intangible entities, "expressions of will, intention, and value (p. 104), representing "arbitrary definitions of reality woven in symbols and expressed in language" (p. 109). He further reasoned that "if there is no science that explains human action within organizations…. how then can administrators be trained and made to serve their organizations beneficially?" (p. 111). Thom Greenfield is credited with recognizing the limits of educational training programs to, as Gronn (2003) describes, "tightly and precisely mould the consciousness and future behaviour of its products" (p. 2). Instead, Greenfield (1984, 1991) asserts that the focus should be on studying principals in their context, and their character and actions, and not generating abstract theories of leadership that do not reflect the complexities of principals' daily working lives. Importantly, Greenfield interrogated the very assumptions that were and, I argue, remain at the heart of the study and practice of school administration.

Implications for Studying Principals and Their Work

Thom Greenfield's contributions, and indeed the early study and practice of school administration, present important implications for the contemporary study of school organizations and principals who oversee them. To begin, Greenfield's critique of the then popular thinking and practices around school administration, and in particular the people who work in them (and are served by them), lies at the heart of questions of epistemology and ontology. In arguing that it was impractical and futile to strive for, and hence that theory and practice should go beyond, a science to explain human behaviour, he was sounding an important caution, one against the generation of prescriptive frameworks and conceptualizations around the school principalship and the incumbents who occupy the position. This argument goes to the heart of my discussion below about the mobilization, absent a situated understanding of context, of the terms 'management', 'administration', and 'leadership' at different periods of history to advance particular understandings and expectations around the work of school principals, including the attachment of other leadership handles to more contemporary discourse around school administration.

Instead, as scholars writing on Thom Greenfield's contributions concur, the subjective perspective is an important epistemology in 'understanding' organizations and the principals who work in them (see Allison, 1989; Riveros, 2015a). As Riveros (2015a) reiterates, people (i.e., human beings) are inherently moral beings and our social institutions reflect (and inform) our moral nature; school principals, then, are active moral beings with values and the capacity of forethought, hence any "notion of moral order contrasts with the idea of natural order, that is, the idea that the laws of nature determine the structure of reality" (p. 61). Riveros expands:

> To Greenfield (1991), organisations are first and foremost moral orders that legitimate a particular structure through symbols, meanings, and actions. It is worth noticing that Greenfield was not opposed to the idea of structure or hierarchy in organisations. He was interested in the justification of hierarchies as moral orders. He questioned models of organisation whose sole purpose is to impose and coerce. In his view, the legitimation of a hierarchical structure should

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rest on the recognition of different values and voices within the organisation; dialogue, conflict, and dissent become essential to the functioning of schools (p. 61).

It goes to reason that a hierarchical education system that prescribes, punishes, and/or lauds specific kinds of educational behaviour while stifling and/or not making space for individual, diverse, and/or even differing voices is antithesis to what Greenfield was advocating. The contested and complex ways that education unfolds across borders is testament to the myriad social relations that have played out in and through organizations and systems, and with the people who fill and serve in them. Indeed, social, economic, and political movements have, over the course of different periods of time in history, produced particular understandings and actions relative to educational workers, including teachers and principals (Eacott, 2015a; Larsen, 2011) and this basis must not be slighted and/or ignored. At any given time and in any given space or place, school principals confront and must decide between competing values, intentions, and purposes, and so mere rational/logical analysis of their actions will not suffice (Hodgkinson, 1978). Hence, our empirical investigations of principals and their actions must be reconsidered to reflect the complex relations around how work is produced, in other words, work's embedded and embodied nature. As Allison (2015) puts it:

> university departments should rid themselves of the historically rooted grand delusion that they can or should train administrators in the specific techniques of their trade and accept that their modern mission is to educate prospective and practising administrators in the complexities of their work and responsibilities. (p. 46)

Given educational administration and leadership's strengthening propensity towards accountability and surveillance, however, it is evident that the pull towards prescriptions and frameworks to control (measure and survey) principals' work may continue unabated into the near future.

Hence, Greenfield's contributions underscore the subjective nature of the study of the school principalship and the people who occupy the position. Such studies necessarily

reject predictability and universality claims and rely on the human perspective. Hence, a qualitative inquiry that draws on the interpretivist paradigm seems well suited to this study. But, I argue, the value of such an undertaking does not have to have limited utility – a claim often made against qualitative research and the interpretivist paradigm – and neither is such an undertaking definitive. As Eacott (2015a) asserts, "the scholastic endeavour is never complete or settled once and for all" (p. 54). Following Eacott's position, studying principals and their work is an ongoing exercise; what we are attempting in each piece of research is a "grounded description of the specific conditions" in which principals' actions play out "at a particular time and space" (p. 54) and our "construction and ongoing re-construction of the research object in time and space would advance our understanding of the administration of organisations in new and fruitful directions" (p. 27). In this study, I pay attention not only to the actions that play out with respect to principals' work, but the conditions under which they do. In other words, I address how and why are principals undertaking work in Grenada.

As scholars argue, not only does educational administration as a field of scientific inquiry have its genesis in the United States (US), but major developments and trends in funding, evaluation, research, policy, and practice have occurred within the mores and standards of this jurisdiction (Allison, 1989, 2015; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Tyack and Hansot, 1982). In fact, even with strides made in educational research exploring the school principalship in many jurisdictions over the last several decades, the most influential data informing the field is still considerably based on context in, from, and around the US (Owens & Valesky, 2011; Tyack and Hansot, 1982). Conspicuously negligible are rich and robust accounts of principals' work from other perspectives, such as of the Global South (Hickling-Hudson, 2000b, 2006; Dimmock & Walker, 1998, 2000; Miller, 2016, 2018a, 2018b). Instead, developing countries, many susceptible and reliant on foreign aid, typically are on the receiving end of discourse and policy transfers around education. Larsen (2018) considers the limits of traditional comparison and transfer research in comparative international education (CIE) and as a replacement advances a transnational history perspective to inform research in this field. As she asserts, a transnational history perspective represents a "shift beyond the comparative to consider

historical links, flows, and connections across national boundaries" and, importantly, "the connections and links enabled through such flows" (p. 102). I contend that by failing to investigate education systems and the regimes that sustain them, including the school principalship, in hitherto ignored jurisdictions we miss an opportunity to do so.

As I describe in the next chapter, this missed opportunity is keenly apparent in the Grenadian context, what with our alarmingly high public debt, vulnerability to economic instability, crippling dependence on international aid both financial and resource-wise, and troubling public systems, including education. The lack of empirical and theoretically grounded discussions on not just what the climate of the school principalship is in Grenada but the sociohistoric links and connections that shape this climate and principals' thinking and practices of work, complicates attempts to engage in balanced, informed discussions on charting a course of action going forward. Unless we reconcile our priorities as a people and confront the historic, economic, and cultural decisions that have led us to this time and space relative to the practice of education in Grenada, I fear our current challenges will continue unabated. Hence, as I articulate in this thesis, I position educational research in the Caribbean relative to, against, and within this historical foundation to articulate the field's Westernized and Eurocentric genesis and prevalence and justify this research into the school principalship in Grenada, a developing country and part of the Global South. The relational approach I advance in the study sets the tone for such a research inquiry.

Introducing the Relational Approach

I have posited in this thesis that notwithstanding similarities in principals' work across different (and even within) jurisdictions, such work "on the ground" unfolds within shifting socio-political climates, norms, and ideologies. For instance, Pollock et al.'s (2015a) comparative study of the changing context of school principals' work in three jurisdictions – in the American states of Arizona and New York and the province of Ontario in Canada – illustrates the different ways in which school leadership and principals' work were defined and enacted across borders. A pervasive neoliberal agenda, and issues around standardized testing, accountability, lack of principal autonomy, work

intensification, and student diversity among others overshadowed principals' understandings and undertaking of their work in all three jurisdictions, but differences in school funding, laws, regulations, and public sentiments on immigration and the education of visible minorities, high-staked accountability, and the pace of school legislation resulted in appreciable divergence in how principals thought of, prioritized, and addressed these issues. What this study illustrated was that contextual differences in education ideology, political ethos, and societal values in the three jurisdictions accounted for the emergence and emphases of varied kinds of thinking and actions on the part of principals and other administrators. My position in this thesis is that principals' thinking and undertaking of their work (in Grenada) coalesce around broader sociohistoric, economic, and cultural circumstances peculiar to Grenada but also symptomatic of a pervasive Caribbean ethos. I examine this context in more detail in the next chapter.

The concepts *context* and *relations* referenced earlier speak to another important takeaway from Greenfield's contributions to the theoretical study of principals' work. Above, Greenfield (1977) describes organizations as "arbitrary definitions of reality woven in symbols and expressed in language" (p. 109). He is pointing to the centrality of context in studying educational work and the people who undertake them. He is also alluding to the privileging of relations, that is, the dynamism of people's actions and reactions within the structures, rules, and other social arrangements of the institutions and broader societies in which they work. This calls into question the proliferation of the school effectiveness discourse and the articulation of prescriptive frameworks for principals' work. This is not to suggest doing away with standards in place to govern school systems; governments have a fiduciary duty to educate and account to its citizens, and to have and maintain integrity of government systems, standards are appropriate, even necessary. However, the commodification and instrumentalization of terms such as leadership (Eacott, 2015a; Riveros, 2016), the recasting of administrative labour towards more market-driven ends (Riveros, 2016; Riveros et al., 2016), and the proliferation of increasingly punitive surveillance and accountability measures that typify school administration in some jurisdictions (Darling-Hammond, 2009; Pollock & Winton, 2016)

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belie governments' legal and ethical responsibility to enact policy in the best interests of citizenry. There hardly seems anything fair, just, or reasonable about the ahistorical and decontextualized nature of some of the literature on contemporary educational administration and leadership.

However, situating context and relations as central to the study of principals' work is an important step in addressing the instrumentalization and recasting of principals' work. This is where the relational approach comes in. This is not to say that this approach will be the panacea to the study and practice of school administration but that the findings of such investigations will tell a more accurate and meaningful story to inform discussions going forward on the future of the field and the work of principals. This is particularly significant in the Grenada context given government's porosity of foreign policy and wherein serious deficiencies in the education system exist that are compounded by the lack of any meaningful documentation and/or description of school principals' work. Eacott (2015a), in advancing the relational approach, situates context and relations in the study of principals' actions and problematizes what he characterizes as the organizing of administrative labour in this way:

> [L]eadership remains a vacuous concept connected to attributes, factors, behaviours, interventions, all of which lack a solid grounding in a specific context. It is however the context that gives behaviours or interventions meaning and significance. Similarly, the values, philosophies or other aspects of the individual articulated in neo-trait perspective lists only exist through practice. Any separation between the individual actor and their attributes is premature. Or more forcibly, they cannot be separated from the self. The lack of attention to the situatedness and specificity of contexts leads to a privileging of the directly observable features of practice rather than the underlying generative principles. The loss of context creates the illusion of 'leadership' as a universal construct. (p. 43)

It is a more accurate and productive examination that Eacott alludes to above that I hope to bring to the study of the school principalship in this study. In my understanding of

Eacott above, researching the work of school principals necessitates engaging with the political, economic, ideological, and historical influences on knowledge generation and the lived, human experience, a position that Thom Greenfield alluded to but did not make explicit in his critique of the Theory Movement. Instead, engaging in a critical geography around socio-spatial contexts help illuminate the subtle and coercive rationalities and arrangements that underlie educational practices, especially around social inequity and cultural norms (Gulson & Symes, 2007). The relational approach that I advance in the next chapter and that Eacott alludes to above facilitates this position. As Eacott (2015b) asserts, the goal of this approach "is a theoretical informed description of what is taking place in the empirical …. the purpose is the description of the unfolding political work of social groups and institutions in a particular time and space" (p. 182). This alludes to an implicit as opposed to a direct relevance of academic knowledge and investigatory inquiry on the school principalship – that nevertheless seemed forgotten in the literature that came after the Theory Movement (Allison, 1989). The current heightened era of accountability, standardization, and centralization in education certainly belie Greenfield's warnings. Existing rational concepts defy our attempts to understand increasingly bureaucratic and hierarchical educational organizations (Owens & Valesky, 2011) and so more unconventional ideas, such as the relational approach mobilized in this study, may lead to more accurate and productive understandings. Greenfield's approach to the study of school organizations that focuses on the subjective and emergent nature of social reality "has the power to interrogate those current prevalent discourses that overlook issues of meaning, power, and politics in schools" (Riveros, 2015a, p. 64). This is especially critical in these current times when principals' work continues to evolve in many jurisdictions.

The Changing Nature of Work

A review of the educational administration literature would illustrate how societies have, over time, responded to pervading ideological, political, and economic conditions through their education systems. In the context of Grenada, more specifically, there are accounts around how political ideologies and citizens' ideological leanings in Grenada drove a socialist-inspired dismantling and reformation of the education system

in the early 1980s (Bizan, 1998; Hickling-Hudson, 1988, 2000a; Steele, 2003). Since the 1990s, however, policy changes across global governments coalesced around shifting global developments including in education, the economy, politics, government, and civil values. For instance, Gidney (1999) describes how shifting societal values and a crippling economy led a provincial government to manufacture a crisis in education to push through reform in (Ontario) Canada; Smyth (2008) laments Australians' complicity in the privatization of education; Day and Armstrong (2016) and Miller (2016) illustrate the coercive influence of market driven ideology, racism, and inequities in England's delivery and quality of education; and Darling-Hammond (2009) and McDermott (2007) and Powers (2004) all describe the high stakes nature of principals' work in the US, the strong push towards school choice and charter schools, and the impact of racist policies on equity. These studies point to the ways that educational administration and the work of educators including school principals have been impacted over time. I discuss the changing nature of principals' work in the context of New Managerialism and work intensification.

New Managerialism

While the current market driven nature of the field of educational administration can be traced to key movements in the 1980s, the mid-1990s and onwards were arguably the tipping points of a continuing crescendo of neoliberal-driven education reform. Clearly palpable were the shift towards New Managerialism (NM) and the subsequent commodification and instrumentalization of education and educational labour (Ball, 2003; Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2009). Speaking of the educational climate in 1995, Carnoy and Rhoten (2002) assert that educational work was changing, ushered in by rising admiration for neoliberal policies and the marketization of education. There are volumes of work depicting the rise of Thatcherism in the UK and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policies of the Bush era, including the introduction of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISSLC) standards (initially conceptualized in 1996 and revised in 2008). These major movements set the tone and stage for educational policy and discourse across developed and developing countries to the extent that in almost all, if not all, developed (and in many developing) countries, formal leadership

frameworks, standards, and policies govern schooling, the administration of education, and the work of educators.

On account of world economic recessions in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, global economic competition surged among nations and, within and against this milieu of shifting perceptions, education was (re)envisioned as the panacea to these economically driven crises (Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Faubert, 2012). Education became retooled, and school reform emphasized managerialism, school choice, marketization, accountability, standardization, and performance evaluations (Ball, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Smith & Piele, 2006). Lashway (2006) wrote that the landscape of school leadership had changed so significantly by 2006 that it seemed every time one looked up there were new demands for accountability, heightened expectations and policies around work, and new mandates for how school principals were to spend their time. Principals, especially in the US but increasingly elsewhere, were facing heightened surveillance and accountability as a consequence of the school choice movement, increased focus on parental involvement and school-community relations, dwindling funding, and increasing number of students with diverse needs that stretched already scant resources, among other challenges (Darling-Hammond, 2009). By 2010, educational researchers and scholars were routinely referencing "the changing nature of school principals' work" in their papers.

Scholars argue that within this changing and *changed* nature of work, the tenets of New Managerialism (NM) have taken hold and recast the landscape of the school principalship in Western and other Western-influenced jurisdictions, indeed thinking and practice around notions of education delivery, purpose, and quality. Scholars including English (2012), Lynch (2014), and Smyth (2008) describe the contemporary school principal as caught up in dominant discourse around productivity and accountability under broader guises of compliance and control that reify inequitable and exploitative arrangements of work and work contexts. More specifically, Lynch (2014) discusses NM in the context of the offloading of public costs and responsibilities, including in education, health, and other public services, to individuals, including schools and educators; a shifting emphasis from process and input to product and output; and

quantitative and punitive accountability and surveillance regimes in educational work and for educational workers, including monitoring and self-monitoring mechanisms. As Riveros et al. (2016) also describe, within this current milieu, the school principal is marketed – and forced to market themselves – as an instrument and commodity and, as these authors assert, the proliferation of leadership frameworks and standards are directly related to this neoliberal mandate.

It is within this current system of surveillance and heightened accountability that school principals navigate their work, bringing their passions and commitments to bear, as far as they are able, in making a positive difference in the lives of their students. As educational researchers have laid bare, the current work of a school principal is no easy feat; incumbents attempt to navigate, circumvent, and keep abreast of the politics, inequities, funding shortfalls, and myriad other circumstances influencing and dictating their work (Pollock & Hauseman, 2015; Pollock et al., 2015s, 2015b; Pollock & Winton, 2016; Ryan & Armstrong, 2016; Sebastian et al., 2018; Schechter & Shaked, 2017). Particularly, Ryan and Armstrong (2016) draw on micropolitics to expand on the issues impacting contemporary school administration, including scare resources, external accountability systems, religion and culture, and market conditions. They then map principals' challenging road towards social justice and illuminate how these school leaders work "with/out" the system to achieve desired results. Importantly, these scholars emphasize the link between what happens at the organizational level of schooling and wider societal and world context, making the point that "what happens in educational institutions is intimately associated with what happens in large communities" (p. xiii). It is this attention to context and making connections between wider social relations including around social, cultural, historical, and economic arrangements and what happens in schools that this study privileges.

At the same time, school principals are not often able to identify or articulate the foundations of challenges impacting their work or advocate for change. So insidious and coercive has been neoliberalism, and in the context of the school principalship, New Managerialism, that market-driven organizational activity in school systems seems to have become normalized (Eacott, 2015; Ryan & Armstrong, 2016). Hence, for English

(2012), who draws on Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical mobilization of the concept *misrecognition*, this illustrates how discourse, standards, and expectations around the principalship have been "promulgated as an agenda to control and dominate" (p. 155) principals and commercialize, commodify, and instrumentalize their labour towards particular ends. In this thesis, I argue that these 'ends' in the Grenada context are the proliferation of high volumes of work, long working hours, and (un)free actions that allow the government to skate free of its financial obligations to, more adequately, support schools and those who work in and benefit from them. At the same time, as I examine later in the thesis, it is less the case of neoliberalism's direct impact and more the case that other, more longstanding sociohistoric regimes have structured and reified such work in Grenada.

Work Intensification

In the last fourteen years since Lashway's (2006) pronouncement of the unrecognizable nature of the field, the school leadership environment has only intensified. Principals are almost at the brink of collapse with workload, stress, and wellbeing issues. And while it can be argued that principals' work has always been hectic, fast-paced, and demanding, Pollock et al. (2015b) argues that it is the pace of change and heightened regulations, policies, and expectations that characterize contemporary work. Whereas principals traditionally relied on written correspondence, the telephone, and face to face contact with superiors, parents, and the wider community in undertaking their work (Gaziel, 1995; Wolcott, 1973; Martin & Willower, 1981; Owens & Valesky, 2011), in more recent times changes in social and economic discourses around work and, more specifically, advances in technology and communications have reconfigured principals' work (Horng, Klasik & Loeb, 2010; Pollock et al., 2015b; Swapp, 2012). More broadly, current global trends have elevated the sophistication of educational work, but they also contribute to precarious forms of work, the normalization of unfree labour and unpaid work, and longer working hours for educators (Mindzak, 2016). While principals, specifically, still employ traditional means of undertaking work, they are now utilizing smartphones, electronic/wireless technology including emails, blogs, videos, and e-Newsletters to accomplish significant aspects of

their work (Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Swapp, 2012). A plethora of new and/or modified polices, regulations and other mandates, increased public surveillance, and heightened accountability complicate educational work, extending educators' workdays into nights, weekends, and sometimes holidays (Jang & Sinclair, 2018; Mindzak, 2016; Pollock & Winton, 2015; Swapp, 2012). These contemporary changes influence not only the kinds of tasks principals undertake daily, but, more broadly, how principals think about and engage in their work (Hauseman, et al., 2017; Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Pollock et al., 2020; Pollock et al., 2019; Pollock, et al., 2015b; Swapp, 2012). It is promising and timely, therefore, that emerging research is focusing attention on the unintended consequences of the changing nature of work, particularly to principals' emotional and mental health and wellbeing (Hauseman, 2020a, 2020b, 2018; Pollock et al., 2020; Pollock et al., 2019; Walker, 2021).

At the same time, Eacott's (2015a) criticism that the "lack of attention to the situatedness and specificity of contexts leads to a *privileging of the directly observable features of practice* rather than the underlying generative principles" (p. 43, my emphasis) stands. While appreciable attempts to discuss the historical, political, and economic impetuses of these reform have been made by some scholars, the focus has been on the quantifiable and tangible manifestations of the changing nature of work and work intensification. There is still inadequate interrogation of the conditions and relations through which problematic thinking and practices of work have emerged and are sustained. As Eacott asserts, work is embedded and embodied in/of social relations and studying work from the relational approach privileges a "grounded description of the specific conditions in which a policy is enacted at a particular time and space" (p. 54). At any given point in time, in any given (jurisdictional) context, school principals navigate external and internal pressures, including pedagogical and organizational forces in schools and other intersecting social, economic, and political influences in the environment that shape new leadership landscapes (Lashway, 2006; Miller, 2018a, 2018b; Murakami et al., 2014; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Pollock & Winton, 2015; Winton, 2013). Research into the school principalship misses the mark if these conditions are not given meaningful consideration in the inquiry. This gaze becomes critical when

one considers some of the terms that have been mobilized in what Eacott (2015a) describes as the recasting of educational administrative labour.

Management, Administration, and Leadership as Discourse

The terms management, administration, and leadership have been advanced throughout time and space to invoke particular, desired outcomes and expectations around the work undertaken in school organizations. Scholars have employed varied descriptive language to describe this occurrence, including "mobilization", recasting", "commodification", and "instrumentalization" (Eacott, 2020, 2015a; Riveros, 2016; Riveros, et al., 2016). The first two terms, management and administration, predated emphases on the third term, leadership. These terms enjoy an uneasy truce in the field of school administration. Although, some have delineated the three (such as Eacott, 2015a; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Pollock et al., 2017), others have used management and administration interchangeably (Pollock et al., 2017), and still others conflate all three, use the terms interchangeably, or refer to leadership to refer to the overarching work of school principals (such as Day & Armstrong, 22016; Horng et al., 2010; Miller, 2018a; Owens & Valesky, 2011). My intent is not to offer a historical treatise around any (perceived or real) nuances around the terms but to establish that, and demonstrate how, they have been advanced towards particular ends across different times and spaces in history. Generally speaking, management and administration are broadly conceptualized as the processes and procedures principals perform to keep the organization running smoothly, while leadership denotes a more specific reference to principals' capacity to influence people and change towards a desired vision. Put another way, while management is work principals perform in supporting instruction in a school so that student learning is prioritized, leadership work is considered the lynchpin to effect and build organizational contexts that would enable and support this effort (Leithwood, & Seashore Louis, 2012). Pollock et al. (2017) assert that management (administration) and leadership are intertwined and important dimensions of principals' work, and that any perceived differences lie in the intent of a principal's undertaken action.

Hence, grounded in scientific understandings of the role of managers and drawing on administrative theory (discussed at the start of this chapter), earliest articulations around the work of school principals emphasized management. And it is not difficult to picture principals undertaking actions that could be considered management-/administration-oriented if we agree that, by virtue of being school administrators, the quintessential work of a school principal is management/administration. For instance, principals generally engage in a range of managerial and administrative actions designed to maintain the school building, budget to meet resource needs, supervise school staff, report to parents and superiors, and monitor and improve student learning (Alvarado, et al., 2019; Gaziel, 1995; Grissom et al., 2013; Grissom et al., 2015; Horng et al., 2010; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015). In fact, as I have articulated elsewhere in this thesis, principals describe typical work as management/administration oriented. More specific actions principals undertake in fulfilling management/administrative work include school and classroom walkthroughs, meetings with various stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, community and supervisors, staff professional development, teacher and curricula evaluation, budgeting and buying school materials and equipment, and either directly hiring or participating in the recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff (Horng et al., 2010; Grissom et al., 2013; Grissom et al., 2015; Swapp, 2012). To accomplish these dimensions of work, principals are often in interaction with others, on the phone, in their office, in classrooms, or away from the school compound (Horng et al., 2010; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015; Swapp, 2012). Principals accomplish this work either in interaction with others or alone (Grissom et al., 2015; Swapp, 2012). Further, a lot of these tasks are unplanned and/or spontaneous, often interrupting other tasks in progress while others are planned and can extend for considerable time (Grissom et al., 2015; Horng et al., 2010; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015; Swapp, 2012). It is the changing nature of school principals' work, especially and increasingly over the last two or so decades, that has made such work more complex, demanding principals' proficiency in a wide range of skills and abilities and ushering in new expectations around leadership and shared decision-making.

Recasting Principals' Labour: The Thrust Towards Leadership

It is within this milieu of school reform movements and understandings and expectations around the school principalship that I situate the turn towards *leadership* in educational administration and leadership. Riveros et al. (2016) assert that "the "leadership turn" in education reform has been manifested in numerous policies that have positioned the practice of leadership in schools as a key mechanism to reform educational systems" (p. 595) and that "[p]ositioning leadership as a driving force behind reform initiatives has the effect of casting leaders as the agents responsible for the implementation of policy" (p. 596). Larsen (2010) makes the same argument with respect to teachers.

It is this unreasonable, solitary gaze on the principal that I find problematic. In many jurisdictions over the last two and half decades, we have witnessed the creation of leadership institutes, standards, and frameworks to increasingly surveil and discipline the school principal and prescribe his/her work. The language in and of these frameworks explicitly promotes the notion of *leadership* and includes numerous competencies, descriptors, and practices for principals that are purportedly derived from 'evidence of successful principal leadership' within or outside of local jurisdictions. An unintended consequence of this leadership thrust that centers the school principal as *the* (principal) agent of school reform – and when positioned within the broader context of work intensification and greater surveillance and accountability – is the unbearable, daunting, and unrealistic weight this solitary gaze places on the shoulders of incumbents and aspirants alike (see Gronn, 2003; Smith & Piele, 2006; Spillane, 2014). Even further, within the broader context of the inward gaze on the principal, a number of 'leadership handles' have also been attached to the work of the incumbent. Hence, at one point or another over the last three or so decades, discourse around principals' work has emphasized desirable principals' actions around a number of themes and emphases, including: head teacher; instructional leader; spiritual leader; instructional leadership; democratic leadership; building relationships and leadership capacity; system leadership; school-community relations; building manager and the physical facility; parental and community relations; and, more recently, leadership for 21st Century schools (Day, 2014;

Day & Gu, 2018; Drysdale & Gurr, 2011; Fullan, 2014; Gurr et al., 2010; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Rousmaniere, 2013; Tyack & Hansot, 1982). These shifting emphases have worked to not only (re)configure the nature, scope, and practice of principals' work but intensify in volume and complexity such work.

I see the leadership gaze as the strongest targeted focus on the contemporary school principalship. *Instructional* leadership is one central aspect of this gaze that is particularly troubling. Instructional leadership describes principals' efforts in managing and leading the school's curriculum and instruction. By the high stakes, political, and consequential nature of educational administration today, school principals are compelled to undertake 'leadership' actions that purportedly achieve substantial gains in student learning and drive school organizations forward, to the extent that Gronn (2003) writes that school principals ignore this to their peril. With respect to formal leadership frameworks articulated for principals' work, specifically the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) in Ontario, Canada, Riveros et al. (2016) assert that principals have little choice over these standards as they are used to evaluate their performance. These linkages between principals' actions and student learning emphasize the role of principals as instructional leaders. Critiques center these linkages as disputed, or at the least ahistorical and decontextualized, connections between principals' actions and student success (Eacott, 2011, 2015a). The 'mantra' of principal leadership idealizes the school principal as some sort of 'education saviour', exacerbating physical and wellbeing issues principals face in their work (Spillane, 2014). Riveros et al. (2016) draw on the contributions of other colleagues including Newton et al. (2014) to argue that "the discursive connection between leadership practices and student achievement has the effect of assigning school leaders a direct responsibility over a goal that could be equally conceived as a goal of the entire educational system, not only a responsibility of principals or vice-principals" (p. 596). Recall Faubert's (2012) argument that student success is a responsibility of school systems. Still, while the recognition that student learning is a collective and not individual responsibility is laudable, there are still considerable inroads to be made in disrupting the prevalence of ahistorical

pronouncements and "one-size-fits-all" tendencies in how we think about and enact school administration.

We know that given work intensification and the myriad layers of accountability complicating work, leadership is often an abstract idea to principals (Brauckmann & Schwaarz, 2015; Grissom, et al., 2015; Gronn, 2003; Swapp, 2012). As I articulated previously, the evidence indicates that principals are spending inordinate amounts of time engaged in managerial/administrative actions. More specifically, for instance, although many principals concur with the literature that instructional leadership might be the most important dimension of a principal's work, it is often not their most urgent (Brauckmann & Schwaarz, 2015; Grissom, et al., 2015; Gronn, 2003). Any number of emergencies, deadlines, and interactions compel principals to prioritize emergencies and people during the day and complete paperwork later. Principals report being so overwhelmed that they have little time to consciously engage with and/or reflect on (overt) leadership actions.

For instance, my own empirical study of an Ontario elementary school principal found that outside of the annual performance review, the principal did not consciously engage with the leadership standards articulated for her work (Swapp, 2012). Riveros et al.'s (2016) subsequent study found the same. They recount, "[i]n all cases, the participants' interaction with the OLF was largely circumscribed to the annual performance evaluation in the case of appointed principals and vice-principals, or recruitment and promotion, in the case of aspiring principals or vice-principals" (p. 600). Indeed, the school principal wears (too) many hats. But while it seems unrealistic to expect principals to "do it all", Pollock et al. (2015b) do not envision that the current intensity of work is going to ebb anytime soon. This dissonance - between work that principals say they would prefer to be engaged in, work espoused in the literature and leadership frameworks, and work principals accomplish daily – warrants stronger acknowledgement than has hitherto been evident in the literature. Few researchers have acknowledged or probed the dissonance in principals' actual time use against standards and/or the literature (noted exceptions, Bezzina, et al., 2018; Blair, 2001; Brauckmann, 2015; Grissom et al., 2015; Sebastian et al., 2018; Swapp, 2012; Van Vooren, 2018) but

it is important to examine how and why principals spend their time undertaking work in order to better inform and support them in such work.

At the same time, it would be remiss to not acknowledge that the school principalship is structured differently in some jurisdictions. We can apply a transnational lens (Larsen, 2018) to examine examples in Latin America and the Caribbean. Chile and Haiti, for example, have reconceptualized school administration and the work traditionally undertaken by school principals. In some areas of these education systems, school administration is split, between principals (called directors in both jurisdictions) and pedagogical directors (the equivalent of vice-principals in Western countries) in Haiti (Verret, 2017) and pedagogical chiefs or heads (jefes pedagógicos) in Chile (Flessa, 2014). These systems, though with its own unique features, offer us a way to rethink Western-centric fixation of the school principalship as commanded by a lone ranger to one that embraces a vision of shared and distributed school administration. Flessa (2014) asserts that the Chile model strikes such as balance, allowing for both distributed and instructional leadership, with directors as managerial heads and liaisons between the school and the Ministry of Education (external responsibilities) and pedagogical heads with leadership over instruction, teachers, and curricula (internal responsibilities). Further, Haiti's structure is such that one school can be served by more than one director (and/or pedagogical directors), each having responsibility for different levels of the school (Sider & Jean-Marie, 2014; Verret, 2017). Though not without implications for financing and resourcing in developing countries such as Grenada (not that my suggestion is to adopt arbitrarily), these models demonstrate the possibility and utility of (re)casting principals' work to better reflect the contexts and needs in a given space and time.

Denomination-Based Work

The concept and practice of work as an enterprise, for Max Weber, has religious roots. In his seminal text, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber (1930) traced contemporary work ethic to ideologies and values of Puritan churches and sects in the 16th and 17th Century. What Weber refers to as "the Protestant ethic" spread

through imperialism and globalization over centuries across the world. Europe has its foundations in this trajectory and through its colonization of large parts of the world the foundations of this history have been enshrined in the values, ideals, and norms across places, spaces, and time. The notion of work as or in a religious imperative is therefore endemic to the Caribbean and thus rooted in Grenada's historical legacy. Hence, owing to this religious history and trajectory, most schools in Grenada are denominational, with seven of the eight participants in the study working in such schools. Particularly, religious education in Grenada is practiced around the Christian faith, specifically the teachings of the Holy Bible and the life of Jesus Christ (World Atlas, 2021). Within this encompassing view of Christianity, several different denominations operate in Grenadian schools, although, as I explain in the third chapter, Catholic schools largely outnumber other denominations. Hence, whether through Catholicism, Evangelicalism, Pentecostalism, Episcopal, Seventh Day Adventist, or Methodist among others, the teachings and precepts of the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible are furthered in affiliate primary and secondary schools in the country.

Generally, denominational schools are governed according to the principles of the church/religion with which they are affiliated (Nthontho, 2020; Pollock & Winton, 2016). And principals who work in these schools have an added and/or different layer of expectations around their work, specifically around operating within the ambits of the prescribed faith (MacLellan, 2012; Pollock & Winton, 2016). Accounting for cultural and other local norms around practice, denominational expressions in public schools include reciting prayers and singing of religious hymns and choruses, participating in worship services including sacred ceremonies and festivals, reading and studying Biblical scriptures, and adhering to rules around decorum, dress code, and other morality-infused standards (Crotty, 2009). At the same time, particularly in publicly funded school systems, principals must balance faith-based *and* state/government expectations. In some jurisdictions, for example, principals serving publicly funded denominational school communities oversee the work of instilling the core values of a democratic society through the processes and practices that govern not just their faith but government legislations and policies (Nthontho, 2020). This is not always or often a linear,

uncomplicated feat as principals acknowledge conflicts and schisms in balancing accountability and compliance between denominational and state/government regulations (Pollock & Winton, 2016). Adding more scrutiny and pressure to principals' denominational-based work are the high expectations and demands that are often placed on churches, church-affiliated schools, and principals who manage such schools to be the example of morality and spirituality and solution for moral decay in society. Specifically, Nthontho (2020), referring to Catholic education, situates religious education in schools as a response to declining moral standards, crime, and diminishing regard for the value and worth of human life. These dimensions are talking points in public rhetoric around religious education in the Grenadian context. Public discussions around crime, youth delinquency, and what are considered deteriorating family values in Grenadian society often refer to and situate Christianity as the panacea to resolve these issues. Whatever purpose religion plays in Grenadian schools and however conceptualized the role of principals in facilitating same, denominational-based work constitutes a significant fabric of the Grenadian school principalship that can be further explored from the perspective of school principals as servant leaders and the notion of servant leadership.

Servant Leadership

Scholars discuss servant leadership, morals, and values as integral to faith-based work in schools. For instance, faith-based work is seen as creating venues for "imparting moral values in the teaching of and learning about religions and other value systems" (Nthontho, 2020, p. 77). In the context of denominational education, then, the notion of morality is often associated with religious (in this case, Christian) values and practices, and even sometimes framed as a calling or vocation. For instance, Nsiah and Walker (2013), describe Catholic principals' faith-based work as deeply grounded in morality, selflessness, familial upbringing, extracurricular experiences, and religious convictions and practices as priests. Further, they see:

> the personal identity formation and faith identify in Jesus Christ as foundational
> for authentic servant-leadership in the context of Catholic high schools .... with
> the understanding that servant-leadership is established and strengthened in the

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very act of a high school principal's rendering of service. Servant-leadership for Catholic school principals is considered one of the most meaningful and effectual callings imaginable (p. xi).

The emphasis on values and morals in principals as servant leaders is therefore significant in the study. It is within this discussion of values, meanings, and norms that I situate principals' understandings and approaches to work in this study. In their systematic review, Parris & Peachey (2012) drew associations between servant leadership and discussions on ethics, virtues, and morality and found that the principle has been applied in a range of studies and fields. In education, servant leadership is advanced as a way to understand school leaders' engagement with work and promote positive and sustainable principal leadership (Holmes, 2020; Lapointe Terosky & Reitano, 2016; Nsiah & Walker, 2013; Parris & Peachey, 2012).

Robert Greenleaf is credited with academia's surging interest in servant leadership beginning in the 1970s. According to Greenleaf (1970), servant leadership is concerned with the idea of work as service and emphasizes leaders' interactions with their subordinates as one premised on the desire to serve and uplift others as opposed to building or sustaining authoritarian regimes. Within this perspective, school leaders consider their work a calling and themselves servants of the people with whom they work (Greenleaf, 1970; Nsiah & Walker, 2013). Among other qualities, servant leaders also demonstrate empathy, stewardship, and commitment to the development of others (Spears, 2005). These are all perspectives I examine in this study. I draw attention to these associations between faith-based work and notions of servant leadership, not to equate them, but as interesting and useful perspectives in examining the production of work in Grenada and the emergence of school principals as workers within and against Grenada's overarching sociohistoric, economic, and cultural context.

Summary

In this chapter, I traced the trajectory of educational administration as a scientific field of inquiry, examining how early developments continue to shape contemporary understandings about how we study the school principalship. I also situate this study

within and against the broader context of new managerialism, examining how dominant discourse of leadership have shaped the productivity of school principals as commodity and instruments of labour and reform. Within this discussion, I situated the utility of a relational understanding of the work of school principals to center the undergirding regimes and conditions that contextualize work for school principals in Grenada.

CHAPTER 3: THE CONTEXT OF GRENADA

Before the Caribbean, and the islands herein, assumed the names given by European imperialists, it was home to the Taíno, a peaceful Arawak people indigenous to the Caribbean and Florida. By the time of European arrival, Grenada – whose Indigenous name, Camerhogne, means Conception Island - was the home of the Kalinago people (otherwise called the Caribs), a band of Indigenous people from South America more skilled in warfare who had pushed the Arawaks further up the chain of islands. The Caribs ultimately lost the war against the European invaders; those who did not die from diseases transmitted by Europeans – for which they lacked immunity - were killed in the brutal war that followed over land appropriation and cultural extinction. My ancestors were then forcibly removed from their home in Africa, endured a horrific journey across the Atlantic Ocean, and made to work as slaves on the plantations of European masters in what is now known as the Caribbean. This historical context is important to situate because, as the findings of this study show, it has had long lasting implications for the development of the country and the lives of the people who call it home.

As I introduced in the first chapter, Grenada is a former European colony – Britain is its last and longest ruler – and since 1974, an independent nation state. Christopher Columbus first sighted Grenada during his third voyage to the Americas in 1498 (Martin, 2013; Steele, 2003). However, fierce resistance from the Carib inhabitants impeded European settlement until around 1649 (Martin, 2013). Grenada was colonized by France until 1763 and then again between 1779-1783. From 1763, and except for that brief period between 1779-1783, the island was under British rule (Steele, 2003). Grenada is 133 square miles long and 33 square miles wide and has a population of 110, 000 people. The country produces an abundance of spices and herbs and is also known as the Isle of Spice (now officially Pure Grenada). Grenada earns its gross domestic product (GDP) primarily through agriculture, tourism, and diaspora remittances and is a lead, global exporter of nutmeg (second to Indonesia). Grenada enjoys an Olympic distinction, ranking first for the most gold medals per million capita. The official (and only) language spoken is English, unlike St. Lucia, for instance, that also boasts a thriving French creole dialect.

In addition to the challenges that natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanoes, and hurricanes present, Grenada has a high public debt and continues to borrow from regional and international organizations to both service this debt and undertake development. I have examined elsewhere (Swapp, 2015) the dependence of Caribbean territories on the Global North and its institutions; these territories were violently colonized and later forced into debt through international lending organizations. Grenada is no exception. The role that this history of colonization has played in present day educational challenges that Grenada faces must be acknowledged in this piece of scholarly work. This bleak economic landscape challenges priorities in every public sector to the extent that severe deficiencies in quality and delivery have persisted over decades.

In what follows, I situate Grenada's geographical and economic constraints and historical, political, and cultural arrangements in discourse and ideology around labour and, more specifically, the work of school principals in schools across the country. I continue to unpeel this context by next describing the structure of education in Grenada, presenting an overview of student, teacher, and principal populations, and detailing teacher and principal qualifications. Another important layer of context I expose for examination is principals' legislated work, and in the final section of the chapter I articulate the formal expectations for principals' work and issues impacting education quality and delivery and principals' understandings and practices relative to their work.

Geographical and Economical Constraints

The Caribbean is vulnerable to natural disasters including earthquakes, hurricanes, and volcanoes (see Naude et al., 2009; Shotte, 2013). And, while earthquakes, and to a lesser extent, volcanoes, have wreaked havoc in the recent past, hurricanes pose an especially continuous and demonstrated threat to islands in this region. The winds from hurricanes cause major damage but secondary devastation such as floods and landslides are also severe. This geo-economic reality influences a government's priorities in any given budget year and so has significant implications for the kinds of development

initiatives that are conceptualized and implemented in Caribbean countries, including Grenada.

Though an unspoiled paradise, Grenada faces severe fiscal challenges that impede its all-round development. While Grenada experienced destruction by hurricanes prior to the 21st Century, two hurricanes during this period stunted growth. In 2004, Hurricane Ivan devastated Grenada, at 200% of GDP (Government of Grenada, 2020). Hurricane Emily (2005) compounded this context, and the global financial crisis in 2008 further complicated an already terse fiscal environment: public debt in that period stood at 109% of GDP and by the end of 2017, debt-to-GDP ratio was 68.9% (Government of Grenada, 2020). Hence, as of April 2021, Grenada has a public debt of EC $1.97 billion (Government of Grenada, 2021; see Appendix J), the equivalent of approximately 0.73 billion US dollars and repayment obligations with several international and regional lending organizations and foreign governments, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) better known as The World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), and the People's Republic of China. In fact, the country is classified as being "in debt distress" (IMF, 2018). This is an alarming economic reality for a country that is only 133 square kilometers and has, based on The World Bank's (2020) statistics, a population of 110,000 people.

I therefore position Grenada's economic woes as the country's most serious challenge. Relative to this study, fiscal poverty and high debt service quota make it a challenge to prioritize education and invest in the education and preparation of schoolteachers and principals in the country. This is an important context to highlight for the purposes of this study. Further, as I articulate below, the education system is a relic of colonial times, inherited from Britain. Since its independence in 1974, Grenada, not unlike other formerly colonized countries, built on – as opposed to dismantling or modifying in any significant respects – this inherited civil service system (Alonso, 2002; Louisy, 2001; Melville, 2002; Naude, et al., 2009). And so, over the years, despite societal shifts and emphases, new knowledge relating to teaching and learning, or the advancement of science, technology, and communications changing how we learn and

disseminate information – to name a few – this specific form of bureaucracy remains substantively unchanged within societal structures and norms. While the lack of data makes it difficult to ascertain the full extent of the state of education quality and delivery in Grenada today, there is evidence of a troubling reality. The Ministry of Education in Grenada has acknowledged deficiencies in the education system, especially in the areas of pedagogy, school leadership capacity, and student learning (Global Partnerships for Education, 2020; Ministry of Education, 2006; The World Bank, 2020). These challenges predated, but were exacerbated by, the passage of and Grenada's subsequent devastation by the two recent hurricanes. Many buildings, including some schools, remain unrepaired or partially repaired from this devastation.

Thus, Grenada's fiscal challenges greatly constrain the education system. Such challenges are not unique to Grenada, however. Limited advanced, formal education, widespread poverty, unstable social safety net programs, and hyper-personal political clientelism are endemic to the Caribbean (Roy, 2016; Veenendaal & Corbett, 2020). Brain drain is also a severe issue that has impacted the region (Hickling-Hudson, 2000b; Miller, 1984; Rubenstein, 1983). With regards to the education system in the Caribbean, young people often get into teaching because other jobs are not available and then move on at the first opportunity, away from teaching and sometimes their native islands (Hickling-Hudson, 2000b). In the 1990s and early 2000s, for instance, scores of Grenadian and other Caribbean teachers were recruited by the US and UK governments (Knight, 2014; Rubenstein, 1983; Verret, 2017). Others leave for better opportunities elsewhere with little to no incentive to return. Overall, Grenada's economic woes translate to poor remuneration, inadequately equipped schools, teachers, and principals, dilapidated buildings, and outdated curricula, resources, and teaching methods (Knight, 2014; Ministry of Education, 2006).

Historical, Political, and Cultural Arrangements

While in its first ten years of existence as a sovereign state Grenada made some strides relative to developing self-proficiency including in education and manufacturing, this period was marked by political, civil, and social unrest that stunted growth and

reversed progress (Brizan, 1998; Hickling-Hudson, 2014, 2006, 2000a, 1988; Steele, 2003). Between 1974 and 1983, Grenada made some strides in opening schooling to the broader citizenry and establishing regional and internal relations to secure assistance in manufacturing and the training and staffing of the civil service (Hickling-Hudson, 2014, 2000a, 1988). These relations included with the Soviet Union, South Africa, and Cuba, with Cuba providing financial and human capital to construct the now Maurice Bishop International Airport and renowned scholar Paulo Freire working with the New Jewel Movement government to develop the education pedagogy (de Grauwe, 1991; Hickling-Hudson, 1998, 2000b, 2014; Spencer, 1998; Zakula, 2012). However, a dictatorship, two government coups, and the mass murder of citizens, the prime minister, and other cabinet members shocked the world to the extent that then US President Ronald Regan invaded Grenada, sending his military troops, and coming himself, to Grenada in October of 1983 just days after the assassination of Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop (Brizan, 1998; Steele, 2003). This period marked US intervention in Grenada and was the genesis of the proliferation of international organizations in Grenadian affairs and the country's burgeoned public debt (Brizan, 1998; Swapp, 2015). In fact, from 1984 to present, Grenada has consistently depended on aid and approval from the Global North in domestic affairs, and an overall consumptive local culture has whittling away of local, regional, and indigenous heritage (Miller, 1984; Steele, 2003; Swapp, 2015).

This historical overview is important because it sets the stage for our examination of work in the Grenadian context. A careful study of the literature describing society and development in post-independent Grenada reveals how underqualified, at least with respect to formal education, were many appointees in the public sector (see for e.g., Brizan, 1998; Steele, 2003). This is not unlike how this process played out throughout the Caribbean. Indeed, in assuming control over governance, a number of positions in Caribbean islands including Grenada needed to be filled and local governments had to implement some criteria in such selection. Some of the Caribbean nationals who were awarded scholarships returned to public positions in their home countries (Hickling-Hudson, 2000b) but other people were needed to complete the public sector. Moreover, colonial understandings of the roles of "boss" and "subordinate" and biblical precepts

dictating moral conduct also play a role in the hiring process (Brizan, 1998; Grenade, 2015). By this I mean that well into the 1990s, Grenadian workers attained promotion based on their years of service, political affiliation, and in some respects, perceived Christianity; in fact, civic leaders in Grenada were mostly "family men": male, married, authoritative, overt churchgoers with loyalty to the government of the day (Brizan, 1998; Grenade, 2015).

Indeed, sex, religious identity, political affiliation, social class, economic capital, and skin hue have long determined employment opportunities and social mobility in Caribbean society. Miller (1984), Premdas (2004), Sutton (2000), and Wilson (2012) unpack the still pervasive colonial vestiture between Black and Indian citizens in Trinidadian society and the deleterious impact on schooling, employment, and political aspirations to the advantage of the Indian population. Samuel Selvon's literary masterpieces illustrate all too well classism, colorism, and inferiority complex in early 20th Century Caribbean society while Brizan (1998), Steele (2003) and Grenade (2015) depict these issues as still pervasive in 21st Century Grenada. These and other works lay bare the complexities of the colonial experience in the Caribbean. They depict how, for instance, persons of lighter skin hues have been favoured for jobs; certain schools – and the people educated therein – are more positively regarded over others; and "foreign" education completed in North America and Europe is more highly regarded than qualifications attained at local or regional universities (Rubenstein, 1983; Hickling-Hudson, 2000b). Hence, I argued elsewhere that social research based in and/or on the Caribbean must therefore "attend to the heritage of colonialism inextricably woven into the cultural fabric of each island in this region" (Swapp, 2015, p. 19). This is because playing central roles in the production and emergence of the Caribbean and Grenadian citizen are colonially inherited and influenced institutions and structures such as the church, the school, and the family. Our aspirations, values, and imagination, and our attendant actions and thinking, as a people are tied up in such upbringing. It is the manifestations of these thoughts and actions in the context of educational work and specific to the lived experiences of school principals that I aspired to explore in this thesis.

The Education System

Prior to the 1940s, schooling in the Caribbean was limited to the children of wealthy (White and Mulatto) landowners and a handful of poor, Black Grenadians who, mostly through scholarships, migrated to complete education beyond the secondary level (Alonso, 2002; Hickling-Hudson, 2000; Steele 2003). Beyond this colonial arrangement, the majority Black population was uneducated, peasant folk (Brizan, 1998; Miller, 1984). In the English-speaking Caribbean, for example, initial strides towards formal education in the 1940s mirrored a hierarchical arrangement in Britain and the West with small buildings, a handful of teachers, a headmaster who was sometimes a teaching principal, local school inspectors, and a central education office (see Allison, 1989; Gidney, 1999; Green, 1990; Hans, 1958 for full accounts of these patterns of early western education). By this period, the financial prosperity of the plantation system had dwindled to the extent that the British colonizers began relinquishing local governance on the islands (Rogozinski, 1999). Within this context, most schools in Grenada were privately run by churches, most prevalent the Catholic and Protestant (Anglican) dioceses and later other denominations including Methodist, Presbyterian, and Seventh Day Adventist, with public/government funding and the addition of some non-denominational government schools by the 1980s (Brizan, 1998; Grenade, 2015; Steele, 2003). But as I examined elsewhere (Swapp, 2015), Britain's exit in these Caribbean territories' affairs left regional governments unprepared to chart and execute a clear and successful path to development. The economies of Caribbean islands were founded on the plantation system (Ali, 2010; Naude et al., 2009) that was no longer a profitable enterprise, especially given the Caribbean's susceptibility to natural disasters and a largely uneducated population (Brizan, 1998; Miller, 1984; Steele, 2003).

Another important dimension of schooling in Grenada that is important to take up is the historical structure and trajectory of schooling and overtime, the socio-cultural biases for certain schools, especially at the secondary level. As previously stated, most schools in Grenada are Catholic (figures outlined below), signalling a strong Catholic presence in education. Further, the Catholic church was the first to extend this presence at the secondary level in Grenada, with the St. Joseph's Convent, St. George's (all girls)

being the oldest secondary school on island, established in 1875 by the Irish sisters of the Order of St. Joseph of Cluny. Subsequent secondary schools to be established were the Grenada Boys Secondary School in 1885 (all-boys and first non-denominational secondary institution), the Anglican High School in 1916 (all-girls), the St. Andrew's Anglican Secondary School in 1945 (the first secondary co-ed institution), and the Presentation Brothers' College in 1947 (all-boys Catholic). Except for the St. Andrew's Anglican Secondary School, located in the "countryside" and enjoying modest public regard, the other four, earliest schools have historically been the most highly regarded and prestigious secondary institutions in Grenada. These schools are all located in the south of the island, in the capital city, St. George's and are locally referred to as "town" schools. As these schools' websites prominently feature, many high-profile alumni including prime ministers, governor generals, attorneys, doctors, university lecturers, and wealthy business owners attended these institutions, so it is not surprising that Grenadians have come to associate these institutions with prestige and success. This notion of success and prestige is reinforced by the Ministry of Education in several ways, most palpable being awarding the top student performers in the primary school exist exams (namely the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment - CPEA) their "first choice" placements in these "top" schools (for example, CPEA results for 2021, New Grenada, 2021). This is despite government rhetoric of the zoning of schools (Richards, 2017). Another way biases are displayed is in how schools are staffed, with the most qualified teachers often recruited to work in these schools. Figures from the *Statistical Digest* (2017) show that these four schools have the highest number of qualified teachers and teachers holding first and second degrees. This context is an important dimension shaping ideology and practice of schooling in Grenada and thus has implications for how school principals understand and approach their work, and the conditions and challenges around such work.

The Ministry of Education provides statistics on Grenada's education system by way of the *Statistical Digest* (the Digest, for short). The figures that follow on student enrolment and teacher and principal population and qualifications are reproduced from the latest publication of the Digest which covers the period 2017 (see Ministry of

Education, 2017). The Digest details figures for both private and public education, although the government is not responsible for education delivery in private schools. According to the Digest, only 8% of school-aged children attend private schools in Grenada; a total of 1767 primary school students in 28 schools and 155 students in the three secondary schools. The Ministry of Education oversees public education in Grenada, through the Minister for Education and administrative personnel including permanent secretaries, a chief education officer, district education officers (DEOs), curriculum heads, and statistical, financial, technical, and human resource divisions. District and area education officers employed by the Ministry work more directly with principals on school matters. Principals are selected from the teaching population, as are many district and area education officers. Teachers largely receive training in-service, through affiliations between Grenada's only college, the T. A. Marryshow Community College, and the University of the West Indies. This means that teachers at both the primary and secondary level generally start teaching with qualifications in General Certificate of Education (GCE) or Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate – Caribbean Examinations Council (CSEC CXC) O' Levels, GCE or Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination – Caribbean Examinations Council (CAPE CXC) A' Levels, and technical certificates issued by the college and later undergo a two-year teacher training program.

Beginning around 2009, the government began clamouring for teachers to upgrade their qualifications to at least a first degree and required all principals to have at least a first degree. However, minimum qualifications for employment in the education system is legislated: minimum age of 18 years for both primary and secondary school teachers, and four GCE or CXC O' Level subjects, including English language, a science subject, a social science subject and mathematics for teaching at the primary level, and five GCE or CXC O' Level subjects, including English language and two A' Level subjects or their equivalents for teaching at the secondary level (*The Education Act*, 2002, p. 370, Part VIII, 121). There are no separate legislated qualifications for school principals. However, when the Ministry of Education sends out job applications to fill principal positions, a criterion is that applicants be holders of at least a first degree.

Without referenda, however, the government was legally unable to enforce a mandate of a first degree for teachers in Grenada. Further, with few scholarship opportunities available for teachers to further their education, the cost is prohibitive and the returns negligible; Grenadian teachers and principals are among the lowest paid in the OECS, if not the English-speaking Caribbean. However, as the figures below indicate, many teachers, especially at the secondary level, now possess at least a first degree. At the same time, government had a tendency well into the 1990s to move educators earning degrees (bachelor's and master's) into administrative positions in the Ministry of Education, so this has contributed to rates of non-degree teachers and principals serving Grenadian schools.

Grenada's Vision for Education

Grenada's vision and strategic plan for education is articulated in the document titled, *Strategic Plan for Educational Enhancement and Development II 2006-2015* (SPEED II) (Ministry of Education, Grenada, 2006). At the time of writing, this document has not been updated beyond this one publication, and no other document of its kind describes a strategic plan for education beyond the 2015 outlook of SPEED II. In fact, there is often little formal documentation and a lack of public input in government planning around education in Grenada (Richards, 2017). SPEED II is patterned after the regional Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS, 2012) Education Reform Strategy (circa 2000). It identifies the philosophy and goal of education in Grenada as "the development of the whole person leading to the production of good citizens through harnessing the physical, mental, spiritual, and social power of humankind within a nation that is 'ever conscious of God'" (Ministry of Education (SPEED II), 2006, p. 8). This philosophy ties in with the Ministry of Education's overall vision of providing "universal access to lifelong learning through well-managed and efficient systems that enable children and adults to maximize their personal development and equip them, as ideal Grenadian citizens, for productive engagement in social, national and international development" (p. 6). How this strategic plan aligns with school curricula and instruction and, particularly, the work of school principals in realizing the government's aims for education is not teased out.

Further, there is evidence of neoliberal discourse in SPEED II. Not only does the Ministry of Education aim to develop citizens who can contribute to, among other areas, international development, emphasis is placed on developing "a more diversified, competitive, and knowledge-based economy through the development of its human resource" (SPEED II, p. 65/40). The MOE confirmed that SPEED II was designed to align with international organizations and agreements such as Education For All (EFA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (p. 38). Concomitantly, other neoliberal rhetoric is evident in this document. SPEED II aims to promote "client and service-centered approaches to managing schools and engaging all stakeholders" (p. 32), ensure that principals are "using data for school management and development" (p. 62), and with regard to tertiary education, facilitate "the establishment of other postsecondary institutions offering international curricula and diploma" (p. 41). I could find no evidence to date of the current state of progress of these goals. Regardless, the emphasis on developing the economy and eliminating poverty by leveraging education as the panacea was discussed as problematic in the previous chapter.

Another problematic focus in Grenada's vision for education is on what Riveros (2016) describes as the instrumentalization of the school principalship. While the government recognizes that principals need to be better supported to undertake their work, SPEED II positions principals as "central to the success of the delivery of education" (p. 57), and, among other goals, aims to "revise the role of principals and school management teams to emphasize instructional supervision", "ensure that all principals and school management personnel are provided with comprehensive training in school administration and management and school improvement planning" (p. 32), and "develop a management and administration policy with recruitment, operational and evaluation guidelines for Principals and Managers of schools" (p. 59). From these emphases, it can be inferred that relative to the work of school principals, the MOE has identified areas for improvement in operations, administration and management, improvement planning, and instructional supervision. However, there is no underlying

evidence supporting how these conclusions have been drawn and this calls into question their authenticity.

Further, while the language set out in this policy is not as explicit or stringent as other principal leadership frameworks articulated in more developed jurisdictions, the school principal is being unduly positioned as the agent responsible for school improvement. As Riveros et al. (2016) have argued, "the discursive connection between leadership practices and student achievement has the effect of assigning school leaders a direct responsibility over a goal that could be equally conceived as a goal of the entire educational system, not only a responsibility of principals" (p. 596). The dearth of data on schooling and the principalship in the Grenadian context also has another implication. In the absence of locally derived, empirical data around education, the government will continue to uncritically frame educational discourse on policy frameworks and findings from other settings, including adopting regional benchmarks and standards without significant thought, and acceding to the language and tone of international organizations who provide financial and other types of aid to the country. However, a localized body of research around Grenada's context prepares the government to address school needs including the work of principals more accurately and better articulate the country's needs at regional and international levels.

The Structure of Education

In Grenada, the *Education Act* outlines the purpose of schools and the laws and regulations governing schooling and teachers' and principals' duties and legal conduct. The Grenada Union of Teachers (GUT) is the country's sole union and represents both teachers and principals. The Ministry of Education is responsible for the day-to-day operations of schools, with area education officers serving as liaisons between schools and the Ministry. While the Ministry outlines the general curricula and provides broad overview and duties of work, curriculum materials, teaching aids, and instruction strategies are largely decentralized to schools, with teachers making final decisions on content and instruction. The Ministry retains control on resources and personnel. Hiring is exclusively the purview of the Ministry of Education, although the school principal and

in denominational schools, a representation of that management board would form part of the interview team for teacher candidates. Schools set up their own timetables and principals (sometimes working with a senior management team) develop timetables and class rosters and assign teachers to grades and subject areas. The principal gives his/her recommendations for heads of department to the Ministry of Education which then makes final decisions. This organization is in place for both primary and secondary schools in Grenada, although timetabling is more complex in secondary schools due to the volume of subjects and teachers needed to be assigned and competition for spaces for instruction to take place. The figures outlined below are from the Digest (2017) unless otherwise stated.

Primary School Level. Within the primary school education system, each school is served by one school principal, and one teacher is assigned to one grade. There are no split grades or educational assistants (EAs) or other supports in Grenadian classrooms as these exist in other jurisdictions such as Ontario or many American states. The number of staff would depend on the number of grades which in turn is dependent on student population. Of the 56 public primary schools in the country, 50 are located on the mainland of Grenada, five are in Carriacou, and one is in Petite Martinique. Seventeen (17) of these 56 schools are government/non-denominational and 39 are denominational. Of the 39 denominational schools, 24 are Roman Catholic, eight are Anglican, four are Methodist, two are Seventh Day Adventist, and one is Presbyterian. Some classroom teachers in primary schools also serve as Heads of Departments/Blocks and are usually teachers with seniority and/or, in more recent years, a first degree and among their chief duties is ensuring that the teachers within their division/block are following the curriculum and using effective teaching strategies. Duties include observing teaching and classroom learning, checking teachers' lesson plans, and liaising with principal on teacher needs to support staff development planning. Grade levels at the primary level are from kindergarten to grade eight. In the earlier grades, attention is given to literacy and numeracy, and as grades go higher, include more subject areas such as science, social studies, religion, and civics. Although universal secondary education was achieved in 2012 (Knight, 2014) the next government rescinded this policy and students now

continue to compete for spots in secondary schools through their performance in the CPEA. Every year, there are fewer available spots than students writing the exam.

Secondary School Level. At the secondary level, schools are also served by one principal each. There are 21 secondary schools in the state of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Nineteen of these schools are on the mainland and two are in Carriacou. Nine of the 21 schools are government/non-denominational, six are Catholic, two are Anglican, two are Presbyterian, one is Seventh Day Adventist, and one is Christian. Staffing in secondary schools also depends on numbers, but in this case, the emphasis is on assigning teachers to teach the various subjects. For most secondary schools, students are assigned to a form and the teachers go to that form room to teach. Exceptions are mostly for the technical and science subjects, in which case students go to a lab or room designed for that subject. Forms run from form one to form five. Students typically enter the first form around age 12 and complete at form five around the age of 16. Teachers are also assigned to forms and are called form teachers. In addition to their regular teaching duties, these teachers are responsible for taking the register of attendance every day, fielding complaints from teachers and students, liaising with other teachers, the principal, and parents on students' behalf, and preparing report cards. Heads of Departments are also assigned at the secondary level, and heads have similar responsibilities as their counterparts in primary schools. At the end of form five, students sit the regional CXC exams, competing for space to advance to the tertiary level at the national college or the local university. Schools also have a graduation ceremony at which time students deemed to have successfully complete their years are awarded a certificate; hiring or continuation to higher education is based on CXC results and not graduation certificates. A fraction of students may go on to study at universities, either in Grenada at St. George's University (SGU), in the region such as the University of the West Indies (UWI), or internationally. There is a handful of scholarships for postsecondary education. Most students, however, do not go on to any higher level of education beyond secondary schooling. It is also significant to note that special needs students largely receive instruction in schools designed as special needs and not in the

'regular' classrooms. Denominational schools are also partly governed by a Board of Management, a provision legally enshrined in the *Education Act*.

To sum up, a vice-principal is appointed by the Ministry of Education in both primary and secondary schools in Grenada. While principals' appointments, once confirmed (made permanent) cannot be revoked outside of criminal or other gross misconduct, and only enforceable through the Public Service Commission (PSC) of Grenada (see Public Service Commission, 2021), other appointments withing and across the system such as heads of departments and vice-principals are subject to renewal and/or confirmation, and positions as form room teachers or grade teachers are at the discretion of principals as outlined in the Education Act. However, also as per the *Education Act*, principals cannot mandate a teacher to teach in a subject outside of his/her specialization, so principals' autonomy to assign teachers to subject areas must be within regulation and as identified upon hire in a teacher's appointment letter. Every teacher (including principals) receives a letter of appointment and upon advancements through the grades, a new one confirming the promotion and any new duties (Appendix G).

Student, Teacher, and Principal Population

Education in Grenada is compulsory from aged five to 16 and free across public primary and secondary schools (UNESCO, 2006). The study was restricted to the public-school system and to principals working on the mainland of Grenada. Seven of the eight principals in the study worked in denominational schools and held leadership positions in their respective churches, including as pastors, priests, deacons, women leaders, and elders.

According to the Digest (2017), at the primary level, there are 11,716 students of which 52% (6189) are males. There are 678 primary school teachers: 78% (534) are female and 71% (487) are trained. Table 3.1 below details school composition in Grenada. Of the trained teacher population, 82% (402) are female. Unfortunately, the Digest provides no statistics on how many, if at all any, primary school teachers hold an undergraduate (i.e., first degree), graduate, or postgraduate degree. It also does not indicate the sex and qualifications of primary or secondary school principals. However,

based on email correspondence between me (the researcher) and the Statistician, Ministry of Education, Grenada (February 3, 2016, 1:19pm), there were 56 primary schools in Grenada in 2016, with one principal in each school for a total of 19 males and 37 females (Appendix K). All 56 principals were trained and 25 held first degrees: seven males and 18 females. No primary school principal held a masters' degree in 2016, 31 held non-graduate status, and none were undergoing training. This meant that in 2016, while all (100%) of primary school principals were trained, more than half (55%) did not possess a first degree.

Table 3.1. School composition by institution type, student population, and number of teachers in 2012/13.

Institution Type	Number	Students	Teachers
Pre-primary schools	107	2649	163
Primary schools	56	11404	757
Secondary schools	21	9851	719
Tertiary institutions	3	8957	148*
Skilled institutions	1	196	No data
Special Education schools	3	119	21

*Denotes figures from the T. A. Marryshow Community College only. There were no statistics pertaining to the number of teachers for the University for the West Indies Open Campus and St. George's University.

As per the Digest (2017), there are 8679 secondary school students receiving public education in Grenada, half of which (4343) are males. There are 733 secondary school teachers, of which 476 are female and 327 are trained. Therefore, more than half (65%) of secondary school teachers is female. But only 45% of the total secondary teaching population is trained. Of the total trained teachers, 226 are female, which means that 69% of male secondary school teachers are untrained. Further, 294 are graduate teachers, with 212 of these identified as female. This means that only 40% of the secondary teaching population has at least a first degree, and the majority (72%) of these graduate teachers are female. Further, of the 294 graduate teachers, 137 are trained and 157 are untrained. So, less than half (47%) of secondary school teachers in Grenada are *both* trained and holders of at least a first degree. Of the 327 trained teachers, 139 are graduate: 105

possess a first degree and 34, a masters' degree. Among the 404 (sic) untrained teachers, 137 are graduate (first degree), 20 are graduate (masters), and 247 are non-graduate (note a disparity of 2; as per these figures the total trained and untrained teachers equal 731, but The Digest puts the total number of teachers at 733). This means that one third (34%) of Grenada's secondary teacher population are untrained and do not possess a first degree.

Based on email correspondence referenced above, in 2016 there was one principal each in the 21 secondary schools: nine males and 12 females. All 21 principals held at least a first degree (Appendix K). Sixteen (16) principals were both trained and graduate principals: 15 held a first degree, of which five were males and ten were females and one principal (male) held a masters. The other five principals were untrained but all holders of a first degree: one (male) and four (4) females. No secondary school principal was undergoing first degree studies, but one was undergoing master's studies (female). Table 3.2 below provides an overview of principal qualifications.

Table 3.2. Number of Principals in Public Primary and Secondary Schools by Qualification and Training

| Level | Trained | | | Un-Trained | | | Total |
| | Graduate | | Non – Graduate | Graduate | | Non - Graduate | |
	First Degree	Masters		First Degree	Masters		
Principals (Primary)	25	0	31	0	0	0	**56***
Principals (Secondary)	**15**	**1**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**	21
Total	**40**	**1**	**31**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**77***

Five female and three male principals participated in the study. Seven participants confirmed their status as trained, graduate principals; and several held a masters' degree. While the study focused on the work of school principals and not on the student and/or teacher population, the above statistics provide an informative overview of the student

and teacher population in Grenada's schools and the qualifications of teachers and principals who staff these public schools.

Formal Expectations of Principals' Work

The legal duties and responsibilities governing the work of school principals in Grenada are outlined in the *Education Act 2005* (Appendix H). A principal's *Letter of Appointment*, received upon assuming the position of principal, also broadly outline work (Appendix G). A third document, titled *21 Responsibilities and Day-to-Day Management of a School* (*21 Responsibilities)*, outlines 21 areas of work for school principals in primary and secondary schools in Grenada (Appendix I). This is an undated document, carrying no publication date, or information around who created its contents. School principals have copes of it in their offices. Principals also receive circulars from the Ministry of Education from time to time that speak to duties and responsibilities, and the *Education Act* mandates that principals adhere to circulars from the MOE that must be in keeping with the guidelines and areas of work the *Act* articulates. The *Act* also requires principals working in denominational schools to perform work legally set them by Boards of Management. Below I describe the contents of all three documents.

(i)   Letter of Appointment

All teachers and principals receive a letter of appointment (Appendix G) when they are hired to work in the education system, and they receive a new one for every new appointment within the system. The appointment letter is specific to the position and the teacher's or principal's scale or salary. Principals' letters of appointment detail the position they have been placed in, the salary, pay grade and scale, and the duties of the position (with language around duties being in keeping the relevant sections of the Act. The letter also indicates who principals' primary superiors are, namely the Chief Education Officer, and through him/her, the district education officer. For principals who work in denominational schools, the letter would also include principals' responsibility to report to their board of management and adhere to regulations set out by this board in compliance with the Act.

(ii)   The Education Act

The *Education Act 2005*, 139 (1) outlines 26 broad duties of school principals that have been compiled into 21 areas below:

1. Ensure observance of provisions of the *Act* and regulations

2. Promote satisfactory relationships with parents and community

3. Maintain order and discipline

4. Supervise and direct staff

5. Keep and maintain records and submit reports as directed to the MOE (admission and attendance register, log book of daily occurrences at school, leave book, teacher attendance register, inventory and stock book, accounts book, punishment book, visitors' book, copies of inspection reports, timetable, list of textbooks, circulars issued by MOE, records required by school medical officer)

6. Attend meetings of Board of Management (denominational schools), PTA, and/or school committee

7. Report outbreaks of contagious or infectious diseases

8. Report to child welfare authority any child in need of protection

9. Prepare school's operation and maintenance budget for review

10. Submit school financial statements

11. Prepare and implement school development plan

12. Keep parents informed of progress and development of students

13. Ensure instruction is consistent with approved curricula

14. Include cultural heritage traditions and practices in school activities

15. Formulate with staff school aims and objectives

16. Deploy and manage all teaching and non-teaching staff and allocate duties consistent with conditions of employment

17. Ensure the duty of providing cover for absent teachers is shared equally among staff

18. Maintain effective relationships with organizations representing teachers and other persons on staff

19. Organize and implement the curriculum

20. Evaluate standards of teaching and learning and ensure proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained

21. Maintain good order and discipline among students and safeguard their health and safety.

(iii)   The 21 Responsibilities and Day-to-Day Management of a School

This document describes 21 areas of work and competencies for school principals (Appendix I):

1. Monitor/Evaluate/Provide feedback on school curricula, instruction, and assessment

2. Build/Maintain shared culture

3. Articulate visible ideals/beliefs on schooling, teaching, and learning

4. Seek out and keep abreast of knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment

5. Actively help teachers with issues on curriculum, instruction, and assessment

6. Focus on student achievement by establishing concrete goals on student achievement and curriculum, instruction, and assessment and keeping these prominent in day-to-day life of school

7. Maintain order and predictability by establishing procedures and routines

8. Affirm by recognizing and celebrating legitimate successes of individuals within school, school as whole, also recognizing and acknowledging failure when appropriate

9. Intellectually stimulate by fostering knowledge of research and theory of best practices among staff through reading and discussion

10. Communicate by establishing and fostering clear lines of communication to and from staff as well as within staff

11. Establish and foster procedures that ensure staff input into key decisions and policies

12. Attend to and foster personal relationships with staff

13. Provide optimistic view of what school is doing and can accomplish in future

14. Demonstrate flexibility by inviting and honoring varied perspectives on school operations and adapting leadership to the demand of situation

15. Ensure staff have resources, support, and professional development to execute teaching and learning

16. Contingent rewards: expect and recognize superior staff performance

17. Situational awareness: be aware of mechanisms and dynamics that define day-to-day school function and use awareness to forecast potential problems

18. Outreach: be an advocate for school to constituents and ensure school complies with regulations and requirements

19. Be visible to teachers, students, and parents through classroom visits

20. Discipline: protect staff from interruptions and controversies that distract teaching and learning

21. Change agent: challenge status quo school practices and promote the value of working at the edge of one's competence.

Overall, elements of Miklos' (1968) description of the processes and areas of school administration are apparent in frameworks describing principals' duties and responsibilities. Principals' duties and responsibilities emphasize, among others, managing, supervising, directing, coordinating, and budgeting, all areas and processes of work Miklos articulated over 50 years ago. Hence, I argue that key functions of managers articulated in the field of public administration and applied to school administration continue to inform our thinking and practice of educational administrative work, in some places such as in the Global South, still more pronounced than in others. From the indicators and categories outlined in both the *Act* and *21 Responsibilities*, Grenadian principals, not unlike their counterparts elsewhere, are expected to be plan, lead, direct, report, staff, and budget, all while keeping student learning the focus of and for their actions. In particular, the duties outlined in the *Act* are largely managerial/administrative as opposed to being leadership oriented. Processes and procedures such as maintaining order and discipline, supervising staff, maintaining records, reporting to superiors, and preparing budgets and reports require principals to be adept at being a school manager/administrator. These are important areas of work if any school is to run smoothly and efficiently. Given the issues plaguing the education system

in Grenada, it is prudent to avoid exacerbating this context through mismanagement of already scarce and inadequate school resources and processes.

The *21 Responsibilities* document also calls for a number of management dimensions of work similar to those articulated in the *Act* including managing resources and people in schools and maintaining order and discipline. Despite its title, however, the duties outlined in *21 Responsibilities* move beyond management to, in my view, articulate leadership-oriented language, though not as explicit or wordy, and certainly nowhere to the scope and sophistication as in other leadership frameworks governing principals' work in more developed jurisdictions. These include building shared culture; articulating visible ideals and beliefs; intellectually stimulating staff professional knowledge of best practices; creating and advocating concrete goals around teaching and learning; affirming, recognizing, and celebrating individual and organizational success; establishing clear communication and soliciting and incorporating staff input in decision-making; demonstrating flexibility by incorporating multiple perspectives on school operations and adapting leadership to context; expecting, valuing, and recognizing excellence; and, being a change agent by questioning status quo and pushing individuals towards greater competence. It is unknown how, if at all, any or all these leadership actions are enacted in schools, but SPEED II espouses language around teacher quality and principal leadership and emphasizes school administration moving beyond management to embracing leadership capacities in moving schools to achieve higher quality student learning for 21st Century relevance. As far as I have been able to determine, however, this emphasis on leadership is not highlighted in attendant documents or circulars articulating principals' work.

Summary

In this chapter, I situated the overarching geographical and economical constraints impacting education delivery in Grenada. I also examined long-standing historical, political, and cultural arrangements around how education is understood and practiced in this country. The chapter also describes the structure of the education system and student, teacher, and principal demographics. It also examined the formal expectations around school principals' work as outlined in the *Education Act* and a school principal's letter of

appointment. The aim of the chapter was support an empirical gaze into context, by illuminating the regimes, arrangements, and conditions that shape how work is understood and practiced in Grenada.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I articulate the overarching conceptual framework informing the study of school principals' work in Grenada mobilized around a relational lens. The conceptual framework is constitutive of a set of concepts that underpin the three research sub-questions posed in the study. A relational approach, that theorizes the role social relations play in the production of educational work and workers, is applied to better situate principals' contemporary work in the Grenada context. Recall that this study asks: **What is the work of school principals in Grenada?** The study represents the first of its kind in the Grenadian setting and seeks to document not just what work is for those who fulfill it, but how and why incumbents so understand and undertake their work as a school principal, including the challenges in and around work and the strategies principals employ to respond to these challenges. (I argued in the introduction of this thesis that addressing the "how" and "why" are necessary to more meaningfully account for principals' work in Grenada.) Consequently, probing how and why is central to each of the four sub-questions I pose to support the research question:

1. How do they **understand** their work?
2. How do they **spend their time**?
3. What **challenges** do they face in their work?
4. What **strategies** do principals employ in their work?

The overarching concept for the study is, thus, *work*. Four other concepts supporting the study of work are *understanding, how time is spent, challenges*, and *strategies*. These concepts are advanced and discussed in relation to Grenadian school principals. Further, as I examine below, conditions, context, and relations are additional concepts that help to situate the phenomenon of principals' work more fully in Grenada. Here, I expand on the interpretivist nature of this study that facilitated a deep probe into these concepts. I also present and describe the conceptual and theoretical blueprint guiding the hitherto unexamined phenomenon of the work of school principals in Grenada. I begin by situating the study within the interpretivist paradigm. Then, I articulate the key tenets of the relational approach to the study of school principals' work that I am mobilizing in this study, making explicit how I draw on this approach to theorize about this work more

meaningfully and productively. I then expand on each of the other supporting concepts. I end with a summary of how the utilization of the afore-listed concepts to interrogate principals' work in Grenada that were mobilized around the relational approach allowed for the generation of substantive data to advance our empirical understandings of the school principalship.

Interpretivism

Interpretivism, also referred to as the interpretivist paradigm, is a form of social inquiry commonly applied to the study of human action. This paradigm holds that human action is fundamentally meaningful in the sense of human beings being active perceivers and interpreters of knowledge who construct reality through engaging in active, mental processes (Gall et al., 2010). Such thinking is grounded in one's perception of physical and social experiences (Creswell, 2012; Patton, 2002). From an epistemological standpoint, interpretivism broadly attempts to "understand the world as lived by the people in it, by trying to understand the meanings of thinking and behaviour of research participants" (Brooksbank, 2013). Such meaning making constitutes a process of interpreting human action, of therefore achieving 'interpretive understanding' (i.e., *Verstehen*). More specifically, philosophical hermeneutics represents a branch of interpretive understanding that connects to and informs my positionality and methodological approach in this study.

In philosophical hermeneutics, meaning nestles within cultural, historical, and language context, and the human process of achieving *Verstehen* cannot be considered separate from this context; it is constitutive of the process. In this sense, understanding cannot be reduced to a procedural or rule-based undertaking; "understanding is interpretation" (Schwandt, 2000, p. 194). Following Eacott (2015a) and his description of the relational approach, I submit that the understandings school principals hold about their work, and their approach to and undertaking of this work, are embedded and embody their lived experiences. Indeed, notwithstanding universal claims about the school principalship, how incumbents understand, articulate, approach, and undertake their work is influenced by the context in which such work unfolds; even what we

theorize, study, and advance *as* work is context-driven (Dimmock & Walker, 1998; Eacott, 2015a, 2015b, 2020; Owens & Valesky, 2011). In fact, some commonplace notions of principals' work that we take for granted today themselves have sociohistorical and political antecedents based on, in, and against a particular space and time (Tyack & Hansot, 1982). In this study, I was interested in not just delving into the substance of principals' work but gaining a fuller understanding of the interplay of sociohistoric, economic, cultural, and political relations in shaping the/a Grenadian school principal.

Thus, in rejecting claims of objectivity, philosophical hermeneutics locates and centers bias in the study of human phenomena. It demands an engagement of these biases, and some proponents go further to argue that these subjectivities are essential, prejudgment mechanisms we use to make sense of lived experiences (Garrison, 1996; Schwandt, 2000; Taylor, 1991). In conducting this study, I engaged philosophical hermeneutics in a critical and explicit examination of my, and my participants', sociohistorically situated and unreflective biases (Garrison, 1996; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). In this sense, my experiences and those of the principals were "already there, ahead of us, conditioning our interpretations" (Gallagher, 1992, p. 91). These experiences helped us make sense of our lived social and educational realities, shaped our outlook on schooling, notions around work, and terms such as management, administration, and leadership, and influenced both my approach to this research and principals' understanding and undertaking of their work. I drew on Schwandt (2000) to frame the understanding/interpretation generated from such a mobilization of principals' lived experiences as "participative, conversational, and dialogic" (p. 195) as opposed to some abstract entity that was simply being "discovered" or reproduced by me as interpreter/researcher (Gallagher, 1992; Schwandt, 2000).

The Relational Approach

The relational approach privileges the situatedness of meaning and so follows as a suited approach to the study of school principals' work. Though under-mobilized, the relational approach is not new to the field. While I mostly draw on Scott Eacott's scholarship on the relational approach in this study, Eacott himself acknowledged Pierre

Bourdieu's strong influence in his reasonings. In fact, in his 2015 book *Educational Leadership Relationally*, Eacott describes his work on the relational approach as eclectic and, in addition to Bourdieu, informed by renowned thinkers including Thomas Greenfield, Helen Gunter, Mary Uhl-Bien, Richard Bates, Colin Evers, Gabriele Lakomski, and Fenwick English.

My utilization of the relational approach, albeit not to the scope and depth that might do full justice to Eacott's work, evolved over the course of thinking about, undertaking, and analyzing the findings of this study. I was concerned with arriving at a theoretical-conceptual framing that facilitated "describing the conditions in which contemporary action plays out" (Eacott, 2015a, p. 143) relative to principals' work in Grenada. The relational approach, as Eacott makes explicit, shares principles with critical theory. I go further to suggest that, at least in my mobilization of it for the purposes of this study, the relational approach also bears semblance to other theories such as postcolonial theory and sociocultural theory; the former in relation to my discussion of Grenada's historical legacy of colonization and how contemporary institutional structures and norms continue to reflect this legacy, and the latter in terms of how social and cultural relations advance particular understandings and expectations around work in the Grenada context. Notwithstanding, the relational approach is more than (a) theory; it is a methodological undertaking to better understand educational administration and leadership and the relations that shape actions in educational institutions.

Blackmore (2004) sums up aptly my premise for drawing on the relational approach in this study. She writes, "to better understand how leadership is perceived, understood and enacted, one has to have a sense of the broader social, economic and political relationships shaping educational work" (p. 267). Eacott (2015a) problematizes a shortcoming and unfortunate tendency in educational administration and leadership to focus "minimal attention to epistemology and ontology" (p. 141). He continues that this represents:

> a missed opportunity … for scholars to gain a more sophisticated understanding
> of [sic] world through building on, but in new directions, scholarship from the

past but more importantly different research traditions and disciplines to bring them face-to-face with key problems in the here and now. (p. 141)

As Eacott advances, a relational approach facilitates the exploration of "the 'spaces between' people and phenomena in organising education …. whatever is being studied needs to be thought of as a configuration of relations and not individual entities" (p. 110). Rather than a fixation on entities that, as Eacott asserts, is mostly a tautological undertaking that does little to advance our understandings and undertaking of educational administration and leadership, the emphasis is on uncovering and exposing for analysis the conditions in, through, and by which contemporary action plays out in educational settings.

Therefore, given the study's focus of not just what principals do but how and why they come to do it, I mobilized a relational approach to interrogate "the various ways in which the contemporary social conditions have come to be, and importantly, are sustained" in principals' work in Grenada; the emphasis was therefore on "seeking description for the purpose of understanding" the contemporary constitution and determinants of principals' work (Eacott, 2015a, p. 79). Hence, I necessarily documented and described the actions participants performed daily, but I delved deeper into the kinds of sociohistoric, cultural, and economic conditions and relations that embed and embody (participants') work and (the participants as) workers. Riveros (2016) asserts that privileging historical circumstances in and around the administration of education presents "the opportunity to interrogate the discourses and forces that shape the contemporary social condition through administration in a globalizing world" (p. 16). Indeed, "[a]s social institutions, schools are both embedded and embody the unique spatial-temporal conditions in which they exist" (Eacott, 2015a, p. 114). This overarching understanding – of what constitutes work and how people engage in, with, through, and because of work as being driven by a confluence of economic, social, and cultural forces – drove the epistemological, ontological, and epistemological substance of this thesis. In this study, then, I concur with Eacott's fundamental point, that it is important to center research, and more broadly our discussions of educational administration and leadership, in, on, and through *context*.

Situating Context

The conceptualization of work applied in this thesis therefore underscores that the phenomenon does not unfold in a social vacuum. Indeed, context is important, and may change over time (Standing, 2011; Watson, 2008). Broadly speaking, context describes the element(s) of an environment or situation within which a phenomenon occurs. Context can include, but is not limited to, physical and human resources, physical and temporal space, and political and socio-cultural climate both internal and external to the school organization (McMillan, 2012; Ryan, 2006). Within the ambits of this study, context subsumes societal history, culture, customs, and norms across a macro, meso and micro scale. As Grint (2005) writes, "what counts as work cannot be severed from the context within which it exists, and that context necessarily changes through space and time" (p. 11). Examining work through the concepts of *space* and *time* must also include a discussion of the notion of *place*, since "[p]laces are locations with meanings" Cresswell (p. 134). Indeed, Gulson and Symes (2007) see "space and place as theoretically intertwined" (p. 102). It is such a temporal, socio-spatial understanding of the work of school principals in Grenada I attempt to bring to this study. Further, in probing notions of time, space, and place, evocations of *culture* would come to the fore. As Fineman (2012) explains, "our cultures impress meanings onto us, shape our expectations and perceptions. What constitutes work, and its 'opposite', leisure, is culturally loaded. Culture establishes the kinds of work that should be remunerated and what should be freely given." (p. 1). In this study, culture is thus positioned as integral to the generation of any meaningful and substantive account of school principals' work, in that how principals understand, articulate, and enact their work is influenced by the particular cultural context in which such work unfolds (Dimmock & Walker, 1998; Miller, 2013, 2018a; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Pollock & Briscoe, 2020). Indeed, even commonplace notions of principals' work we take for granted today themselves have sociohistorical and political antecedents (Tyack & Hansot, 1982).

What school principals do then, is significant (only) insofar as their actions are situated in context, because for Eacott (2015a), "practice is only given meaning by context" (p. 129). Eacott (2015b) further asserts that rather than a dependence on *a priori*

and other fixed operational definitions of phenomena (the research object, as per Eacott) before conducting the study, "the purpose is the description of the unfolding political work of social groups and institutions in a particular time and space" (p. 182). In applying a relational lens to the findings, that is, probing the sociohistoric and economic relations in the emergence of work in the Grenada context, more specific categories and/or thematic concepts will be formed. Secondly, the centering of time and space (spatial-temporal situatedness, as Eacott (2015a) describes) is important in the relational approach because this positioning of context and the mobilization of spatiality and temporality call out the tendency to view the "local" solely as the context. Instead, context is more than a unit of analysis such as a site, school, individual, group, or locality. "[C]ontext is not synonymous with *local*", concludes Riveros (2016, p. 17, original emphasis).

The implication of Eacott's argument for this study is significant. Drawing on Eacott's mobilization of the relational approach to studying the work of school principals in Grenada necessitated situating the study within the broader context of Grenada's history of colonization and the sociohistoric, economic, and cultural arrangements that shape societal ideology, norms, and values. This is important because as Nicodailou (2008) writes, despite evidence supporting "effective leadership practices" whether in schools deemed struggling and/or successful, school leadership remains 'tightly coupled with cultural and national (often ethnic) values and contexts, there cannot be a recipe that fits all" (p. 215). Grounding my study within context facilitates, in my view, a fuller account of how principals' understandings and practices of their work in this developing country in the Global South, and the challenges they face in such work, have been constituted and sustained.

Defining Work

In the study, work refers to what principals do in their capacity as – depending on jurisdiction – school administrators, school managers, or head teachers. Below, I examine how time is spent as the third concept in the conceptual framework and expand on some of the specific ways principals spend their time undertaking their work. Researchers have

employed terms such as actions, activities, tasks, thinking, decisions, and behaviours to describe this work (for example, see Gaziel, 1995; Horng et al., 2010; Miller, 2013; Mulford et al., 2004; Pollock et al., 2015a; Spillane & Hunt, 2010; Swapp, 2012). I examine how principals spend their time as a reflection of work and focus on their daily actions. Hence, what principals say work is for them is central to my understanding and articulation of what work *is* in the Grenadian context.

I explore the extent to which principals' understandings of work, and the kinds of actions they spend their time undertaking daily in the fulfillment of such work, constitute more than waged labour and/or incessant, abstract actions. I am hoping to capture the multifaceted, overlapping, intersecting, and interdependent dimensions of work that Hall (1975) references in his scholarship. I conceptualize and seek to examine work as a socially constructed phenomenon (Applebaum, 1992; Fineman, 2012; Hall, 1975) that is, as Grint (2005) puts it, "contingent and requires perpetual action by agents for its reproduction" (p. 2). Seen in this way, work is not a static or linear concept. Further, work is purposeful. Myriad economic and/or personal factors drive people's decisions and approach to work. So, too, are school leaders' actions intentional; principals, while driven by legislation, engage in deliberate decisions that are shaped by the particular contexts within which work unfolds and their thinking about what is best for students (Greenfield, 1980; Hodgkinson, 1996; Gronn, 2003; Pollock & Winton, 2016; Winton & Pollock, 2015). Mobilizing a relational approach to the study allows for the exploration of the emergent reality of the work of school principals in Grenada. In sum, work is advanced in this study as a social construct, that is purposeful and complex.

Indeed, it is important to situate all knowledge production within social, cultural, and historical antecedents (Andreotti, 2011; Mbembe, 2008; Tikly, 2001). Principals' work in Grenada is examined applying this same lens; what constitutes work for principals, and the how and why of such work are explored within the framework of sociohistoric and economic relations and principals' socialization and interactions within said relations. As discussed in the previous chapter, institutional structures such as the church and the school play key roles in the socialization and work lives of school principals in Grenada, shaping incumbents' thinking and practices regarding their work.

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More generally, principals' work has been shown to be impacted by contextual realities including national policy agendas, school level and size, school's academic performance, student poverty, religion, professional qualifications and experiences of staff, and parental involvement, among others (Goldring et al., 2008; Miller, 2018; Sebastian et al., 2017; Winton, 2013). These determinants and arrangements constitute the overarching context that must be considered to productively study the phenomenon of principals' work in Grenada. How (this) context shapes, and is shaped by, principals' understandings is another important element of the study.

Understandings of Work

Given the study's conceptualization of work as a socially constructed and moderated phenomenon, the study necessarily examines principals' understandings of what it means to be a school principal. As the relational approach argues and seeks to demonstrate, school principals neither understand nor practice their work in a social vacuum. Understanding is based in foundation, that is, from whence have principals come to understand and undertake work in the ways they do. It therefore becomes important to examine these foundations of principals' understandings and practices of work, and the challenges that surround such work.

By understandings of work, I refer to what principals say work is and what work means to and for them, so their views, interpretations, thoughts, perceptions, and articulations regarding what they understand work to mean as a school principal are privileged (Horng et al., 2010; Pollock et al., 2015a; Spillane & Hunt, 2010; Swapp, 2012). Examining school principals' work in , through, and against this context necessitates grounding such an analysis in interpretivism. Within the interpretivist paradigm, meaning making is central to understanding phenomena. Such meaning making constitutes a process of interpreting human action, of therefore achieving 'interpretive understanding' (i.e., *Verstehen*). Going further, interpretivism holds that human action, and thus understanding, is bound up in and within institutional and cultural norms such that context becomes central to the generation of any meaningful account of phenomena under investigation (Schwandt, 2000).

In this study, I attempt to understand the work of school principals in Grenada by framing such work within the context of the system of meanings that have given rise to principals' thinking about their work's purpose and what drives their actions every day. In short, I am attempting to grasp the meanings principals have ascribed to these norms. According to Schwandt (2000), in the act of interpreting (of taking something as something), sociohistorically inherited bias or prejudice is not regarded as a characteristic or attribute that the researcher or participant must strive to get rid of or manage in order to come to a clear 'understanding'; to believe this is possible is to assume that the traditions, associated prejudgments, values, and norms that shape our efforts to understand are easily under our control and can be set aside at will (p. 194). Indeed, they are not. These antecedents play a coercive role in shaping the substance and scope of work for school principals in Grenada, including how principals think about their work. I therefore seek to expose for examination the ways principals in Grenada think about their work, by highlighting and interrogating their perceptions of the school principalship, the meanings they ascribe their actions on a day-to-day basis, and the foundations of these articulations. Further, I take the position that getting to the foundations of such understandings necessitates an engagement of relations in the context of this study of the broader sociohistoric and economic ideologies, standards, norms, and conditions and the confluence of people, groups, organizations, and institutions in shaping the productive discourse and practice of work.

How Principals Spend Their Time

In examining how principals in Grenada spend their time, I first highlight their day-to-day actions. At the same time, the study probes for how and why they spend their time undertaking the specific kinds of actions they do. Traditionally, principals undertook work utilizing written correspondence and face to face interactions, but as technology advanced, more sophisticated media including the telephone, computers, and smartphones became increasingly common (Gaziel, 1995; Martin & Willower, 1981; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Swapp, 2012; Wolcott, 1973). Today, technological communications have ushered in new ways of engaging in work and principals are accomplishing a lot of their work through wireless means such as emails, text messages,

and newsletters (Horng et al., 2010; Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Swapp, 2012). A major advantage of technology is the efficiency it has ushered in for principals. At the same time, technology also acts as surveillance on principals and can place demands on their time (Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Swapp, 2012). For instance, principals describe feeling more pressured to respond to work that is facilitated by email, that is, coming through by email and/or requiring completion via same medium (Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Swapp, 2012). In this study, I am interested in examining if and how this broader reality of work is constituted in the Grenadian context.

Generally, principals spend their time engaged in a range of work in managing schools. They must budget and allocate resources to meet school needs, supervise staff to ensure student learning and student safety, report to parents and superiors on issues around student learning and operation, and monitoring student learning (Gaziel, 1995; Grissom et al., 2013; Grissom et al., 2015; Horng et al., 2010; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015). More specific actions include school and classroom walkthroughs, meetings with various stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, community, and supervisors, staff professional development, teacher and curricula evaluation, budgeting and buying school materials and equipment, and either directly hiring or participating in the recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff (Swapp, 2012). In accomplishing these actions, principals are often in interaction with others, on the phone, in their office, in classrooms, or away from the school compound (Horng et al., 2010; Swapp, 2012). Principals also undertake some actions alone (Gaziel, 1995; Horng et al., 2010). Further, a lot of these actions are unplanned and/or spontaneous, often interrupting other work in progress while others are planned and can extend for considerable time (Gaziel, 1995; Swapp, 2012). I examine how these and other actions play out with Grenadian school principals.

Therefore, in terms of the easily identifiable actions principals undertake in fulfilling the broad range of duties and responsibilities of their position, the literature abounds. Less common are more nuanced perspectives of underlying or overarching conditions producing these types of action. In this study, I both document the actions principals spend their time undertaking and interrogate the conditions that foster these

kinds of actions in the Grenada context. More specifically, this research sub-question on how time is spent is the first step in attempting to problematize the persistent divide between work that the literature promotes and principals indicate their preference for, and the work they actually accomplish on a day-to-day basis. Recall in the previous chapter I problematized this schism. The third research sub-question on challenges delves deeper into this gap. This persistent gap lends credence to Eacott's (2015a) assertion that studies in educational administration and leadership too often are concerned with affirming the presence or critiquing the absence of pre-set criteria and definitions of educational administration and leadership instead of a "focus on the theoretical problem and its empirical manifestation" (p. 142). In this sense, a fuller understanding of how principals in Grenada spend time cannot be had without articulating and examining the policies and social and political environment(s) that shape work. This second component of investigating how principals spend their time is important, *most* important for Eacott. For, as he would argue, how principals in Grenada spend their time is both the product and producer of, or put another way shaped by and shaping of, social, historical, and economic relations/arrangements and so must be "understood in relation to one another, not as separate" (p. 116). Within this framing, not only can meaningful accounts of principals' actions and their emergence be drawn, but core issues and circumstances that pose a challenge for principals uncovered and problematized.

Challenges Faced in Work

Conditions that test principals' capacities, to the extent that they exacerbate, impede, and/or increase principals' work, are discussed in this thesis as challenges principals face in their work (Gaziel, 1995; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015; Pollock et al., 2015a, 2015b; Swapp, 2012). This is another component in investigating the current phenomenon of principals' work in Grenada that is important to center to probe the schism between espoused/preferred and accomplished work. I argue that how principals spend their time is influenced not just by their understandings of what work means and is in the Grenada context but the conditions and issues that constrain and/or impede their actions.

Relative to the international literature, the school principalship is inundated by new trends, new policies, shifting ideologies, and individuals and groups with different and sometimes competing interests (Ball, 2003, 2011; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015, 2018; Pollock et al., 2015 a, 2015b; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Over the last several decades, shifting and added emphases in dimensions of work have principals scrambling to keep up their myriad roles as managers, visionary and instructional leaders, school accountants, safety officers, legal minds, amateur architects, among other roles. In the last few years, new policies to support student wellbeing, including student safety, mental health and wellbeing, and equity and inclusion, add layers of accountability (and paperwork) to principals' work (Pollock & Winton, 2015). Parents, communities, and organizations have also become more vocal about schooling with added surveillance and accountability for principals (Hauseman et al., 2017; Pollock & Winton, 2016). Teachers' unions have increasingly presented challenges for principals' work (Pollock et al., 2015b; Swapp, 2012). In the Global North, the contemporary school principal therefore juggles multiple responsibilities, maneuvers multiple levels and layers of bureaucracy and accountability, and tries to do more with dwindling resources, oftentimes at the cost to their wellbeing (Hauseman, 2020b, 2018; Pollock, 2016; Pollock et al., 2019; Pollock et al., 2020; Walker, 2020, 2021). These studies demonstrate that while principals have become increasingly savvy in managing work's contemporary sophistication and demands, they can still buckle/falter under the pressure.

In the Caribbean, the school leadership climate is not as high stakes and driven as in more developed parts of the world, however countries do face serious challenges in delivering quality education. More specifically, while principals in Grenada do not experience high volumes of work or stringent accountability measures in the same way their counterparts in North America, Europe, or some other Caribbean countries do, there is some evidence of challenges they face in their work. For instance, Knight (2014) found that in Grenada, principals' faced challenges around religion, socioeconomic status (SES), and poor teacher quality impacting student achievement levels. Previously, I examined the shortcomings the Ministry of Education ascribed the school system and its perception of principal and teacher quality. The scant evidence around schooling in

Grenada paints a troubling picture of fiscal shortages, unacceptable student literacy and numeracy rates, and inadequate and oftentimes outdated infrastructure, pedagogy, and resources. Despite these shortcomings, much is expected from Grenadian school principals. In this study, I expose for analysis these constraints facing principals. My experience as a secondary school teacher in the public education system informs my positionality in this research and herein, I expose for analysis the broader social, historical, and economic umbrella that covers and subsumes principals' work. I take the opportunity in this study to address the lack of documentation, empirical or otherwise, on the full(er) context of work for principals in Grenada by drawing out and interrogating societal ideologies, norms, and expectations around work and, particularly, principals' work. In doing so, I aim to generate a rich and theoretically productive piece of empirical research to advance discussions of the school principalship and more specifically, the work undertaken by school principals.

Strategies Employed in Work

The contemporary literature describes a tense working environment for school principals. To navigate the nature of the school principalship, the contemporary school principal must have wide content knowledge around administration and human resource management (Fullan, 2014; Owens & Valesky, 2011), be technologically savvy (Pollock, 2016; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015, 2018; Swapp, 2012), have sharp political acumen (Ryan & Armstrong, 2016), and demonstrate exceptional emotional intelligence (Hauseman, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2017). Surveillance and accountability regimes are more heightened in some jurisdictions than others and within this increasingly high stakes environment, principals face a daunting task executing their work without serious implications for their health and wellbeing (Pollock et al., 2019b; Pollock et al., 2020; Walker, 2021). In examining strategies that principals in this study employ in responding to the challenges of their work, I am looking to examine any course of action, plan, or policy that incumbents describe implementing specifically related to articulated and/or observed conditions and/or issues in their work. I examine these responses in relation to how they further, mitigate against negative impact on, or facilitate, principals' work.

Summary

In this chapter, I outlined the overarching epistemological and ontological foundations of the study. I situated my thinking in the interpretivist paradigm, exploring how such a lens facilitated a study of the context of the school principalship in Grenada. I then connected this paradigm to a relational agenda, and through a conceptualization of work as a social construct, attempted to show how privileging principals' understandings, actions, and challenges around such work would allow for rich inquiry into the substance of such work.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapter, I outlined the overarching epistemological and ontological tenets of the study, situating my thinking along these lines in the interpretivist paradigm and drawing on a relational methodology. In this chapter, I continue expanding the methodological design of the study by expanding on my use of qualitative inquiry to explore school principals' work in Grenada. I situated the study as an interpretivist social inquiry, so qualitative inquiry followed as an ideally suited approach to explore this phenomenon. Here, I describe the qualitative design of the study and the methods I employed in data collection. I also expand on my use of direct observations and semi-structured interviews to collect data and justify how the study's qualitative design together with an interpretivist lens amplified the generation of meaningful, in-depth accounts of principals' work in the Grenadian context. Next, I outline my procedures in recruiting and selecting research participants and provide a demographic overview of selected participants. Lastly, I detail the cyclical nature of my data collection and analysis procedures.

Qualitative Inquiry

The purpose of this study was to better understand the phenomenon of principals' work in Grenada from the perspectives of practising school principals within the context of overarching sociohistoric, political, and economic relations. Given, firstly, that there were no empirical accounts of principals' work in Grenada at the time of the study and thus no other literature around which to specifically draw from and/or build on, an exploratory study seemed best. The data generated from this study could then potentially inform other inquiry and preliminary discussions around the school principalship in Grenada. Further, my situated epistemology and ontology warranted the privileging of participants' lived experiences and so utilizing direct observations and semi-structured interviews with Grenadian incumbents in the school principalship seemed equally well-suited. In short, a qualitative inquiry was the most appropriate methodology for this study.

Qualitative inquiry provides a way to explore how people "come to understand, account for, take action, and otherwise manage their day-to-day lives" (Punch, 2009, p. 117). Gall et al. (2010) conceive of reality as a negotiation of the "individuals who participate in it" (p. 343) and I drew on this conceptualization in examining how participants' thought about and undertook their work in the broader context of social relations in Grenada. Qualitative inquiry as an approach to social research fits well with the interpretivist paradigm insofar as both share "a general rejection of the blend of scientism, foundationalist epistemology, instrumental reasoning, and the philosophical anthropology of disengagement that has marked 'mainstream' social science" (Schwandt, 2000, p. 190). I did not subscribe to the ontological view of principals' reality as being fixed, nor supported the epistemology that all knowledge claims must be grounded in objective reality (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Instead, a qualitative methodology was ideal for this study because it aimed to uncover the meaning of social phenomena, by studying the actions of participants within social relations (Creswell, 2012, 2014; Gall et al., 2010; Gay et al., 2009; Yin, 2003). The qualitative approach that I adopted in this study was comprised of two research methods for data collection, namely direct observations and semi-structured interviews, which I describe next.

Direct Observations

Observations fall under a distinct type of ethnomethodology that offers a way of understanding the processes and elements of a social setting and the behaviours of people in that setting (Creswell, 2012; Gall et al., 2010; Gay et al., 2009). With regards to research on the school principalship, the assertion is that by studying the actions of principals at work, evidence could be gleaned into the nature and constituents of the job and the production of more accurate, empirical accounts of school principals' work (Gronn, 2003; Owens & Valesky, 2011). A range of educational research has employed direct observations in studying school principals at work (among them, Gaziel, 1995; Gronn, 1982; Horng et al., 2010; Martin & Willower, 1981; Morris et al., 1981; Swapp, 2012; Willis, 1980; Wolcott, 1973). Direct observations thus offered me a unique and potentially informative close-up, 'front row' seat to participants' worlds. However, employing direct observations can be tasking on both the researcher and participants, has

the potential to become unwieldy, and may/can skew obtained data (Creswell, 2002, 2012, 2014), so important considerations were made prior to my use of this method in the field. I expand later in this chapter. The semi-structured interview was the second research method employed in the study to gather data on the phenomenon of school principals' work in Grenada.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The semi-structured interview is an open-ended, qualitative approach to inquiry that allows for flexibility in probing participants' understandings and experiences relating to a particular phenomenon under investigation (Bourke, 2014; Creswell, 2012, 2014; Patton, 2002). In this study, the semi-structured interview as a method of data collection facilitated the exploration of deep and sometimes unanticipated dimensions of Grenadian school principals' understandings and undertaking of work in ways that other methods such as close-ended questionnaires, surveys, and structured interviews would not have. The guided but open-ended questions allowed for broader perspectives of participants' work to shine through, especially around the broader social relations that shaped the production, articulation, and undertaking of work in Grenada, thereby allowing me a wider and more probing lens into their lived experiences as school principals. Supporting Schwandt's (2000) framing above of the human experience as "participative, conversational, and dialogic" (p. 195), the interviews unfolded as conversations and easy dialogues rather than as scripted, question-answer sessions, and several participants expressed how honoured they were by my interest in their work and how much they enjoyed talking about their work to 'a captive audience'.

At the same time, getting meaningful responses from the semi-structured interview depends on the quality and aptness of questions posed to participants (Creswell, 2014; Patton, 2002; Ribbins, 2007). So, when participants sometimes strayed, the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed me to guide them back to the particular topic or area of work being discussed. Thus, the semi-structured interviews afforded me opportunities to both diverge from and expand pre-set questions, by allowing follow-up and clarifying questions as they arose (Patton, 2002; Lichtman, 2013; Yin, 2003). The iterative nature of the overarching methodology also allowed me to frame

questions/probe work in the second interviews based on observational data. This was because I interviewed all participants before I observed them at work, then interviewed them again after observations were completed. I expand on this process later in the chapter.

Selecting Participants

A few criteria informed my selection of principals for the study. I narrowed my selection to principals who worked in the public education system in Grenada. According to the Digest, a little over 90% of school-aged children in Grenada attend public schools (Ministry of Education, 2017). I also wanted to have an equal representation of principals in terms of number and sex from both the primary and secondary school system in the study. I did not set a benchmark regarding years of experience in the position of principal for two main reasons. I was asking each participant to submit to two in-depth interviews and five (5) consecutive days of observations, so I imagined it would be difficult to recruit principals who were willing to commit to what might be described as an intrusion on their time and work. I also wanted to capture as broad a range of experiences of work as possible. Indeed, I thought it would be interesting, and perhaps illuminating, to explore the perspectives of principals who had varying years' experience in the position.

Given the study's timelines and boundaries, I determined that between eight (8) to 10 was an appropriate number of principals with whom to engage in data collection. Creswell (2012) counsels that larger samples for qualitative inquiry run the risk of becoming untenable. He contends that "collecting qualitative data and analyzing it takes considerable time, and the addition of each individual or site only lengthens that time" (p. 209). I initially recruited ten principals, but unfortunately, one principal fell ill and was unable to participate in the study and another became unavailable. A third principal became unable to commit to observations and a second interview. As I detail below, I conducted interviews with eight participants and observed seven participants in their daily work.

I also had to set participant selection within geographical boundaries. I was interested in participants working across the six different parishes across the mainland of

Grenada, excluding the sister islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique. These sister isles are accessible by either ferry or airplane, and given time and financial constraints, it was not feasible to include principals in these two smaller islands in the study. I lament the loss of potentially interesting and different revelations of principals' work in these unique contexts. I was born and raised in the parish of St. Andrew, the largest parish and located on the mainland, had taught in another parish, St. Patrick, for 11 years, and was familiar with the context of education in the different parishes on the mainland. So, despite the absence of the "Kayak" and "PM" perspectives (local names for Carriacou and Petite Martinique), I set out to obtain as rich and diverse a perspective of work on the mainland setting as possible. I sought principals who worked in both 'country' (rural) and 'town' (urban) schools, as per local parlance. This required some travel to access principals in rural settings, and I had to utilize both public and private transportation to get to these schools, but ultimately, I felt confident that I had procured a list of participants whose accounts would generate meaningful data on the phenomenon of principals' work in Grenada. In summary, the principals who participated in the study worked in four out of the six parishes on the mainland.

Recruiting Participants

I followed all research ethics guidelines from Western University at every stage of the study, and descriptions around how I secured confidentiality and informed, written consent are outlined in the letter of information and informed consent (LOI) (Appendices A & D). Given Grenada's small geographical size, as an added layer around anonymity, participants and I agreed to use pseudonyms and I consented to their request to not specify the name of their schools' denominations in reporting the study's results.

I employed purposive sampling (also termed purposeful sampling), snowball sampling, and convenience sampling in recruiting participants (Creswell, 2012). As Gay et al. (2009) assert, "because many potential participants are unwilling to undergo the lengthy demands of participation, sampling in qualitative research is almost always purposive" (p. 135). I set out to intentionally recruit incumbents who I surmised would be able to speak to their understanding and experiences of the position of school principal in

Grenada. I recruited six principals through telephone recruitment. Through my experience as a schoolteacher and an active member of the teachers' union, I was brought into contact with several school principals, and through convenience recruited two other principals for the study. Several principals who agreed to participate in the study referred names of other principals and through such snowballing, I recruited two more principals. Overall, the final eight participants represented those willing and available to be studied, and whom I found most geographically accessible.

In keeping with research protocol approved by Western University, I forwarded all documents pertaining to the study by way of email to the Ministry of Education, Grenada (MOE), and the Grenada Union of Teachers (GUT) before beginning the search for participants (Appendices B & C). I asked the MOE to forward these documents to principals and the letter of information provided my contact information for interested participants. To follow up, I searched the MOE website and the local telephone directory to gather the publicly available telephone numbers for participants. I then contacted potential participants directly, explaining the aim of the study and what was being asked of them. I also asked participants if they would be willing to provide me with an email address so I could forward to them all documents pertaining to the study, including the letter of information and interview questions, so they could read in more detail at their convenience before committing to participation.

In some instances, however, participants' willingness to be in the study was contingent on two conditions: modifications to the duration of data collection; and complete/absolute anonymity and confidentiality. With regards to the first contingency, the letter of information provided for changes to be mutually agreed upon between participants and me, and some participants felt that the initially proposed duration of ten full days of observations was too impinging. Four participants wanted to lessen the length of a proposed day of observation, and two more asked to conduct the second interview in the afternoon on the last day of observations as opposed to extending it to another day. In trying to ensure a stable and common approach to data collection, I applied the modified observations with all participants in the study: I would observe each participant for five consecutive days, beginning on the first day of the week (Monday) and ending on Friday,

as far as possible; there would be three full days of observations on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, beginning a half hour before, and ending a half hour after, the official start of school; there would be two "half" days of observations, on Tuesday from 11 am until a half hour after the official end of the school day and on Friday from a half hour before the official start of the school day until 12 noon; and, to make up for unobserved data from these time frames, principals agreed to fill me in on work accomplished during these times. I recorded these accounts both by audio and in the observation schedule (Appendix F). With regards to the second concern, participants and I agreed, as per the letter of information, to keep their identity anonymous and their data confidential. We also agreed to the use of pseudonyms. Five participants were especially concerned that my presence at their schools, coupled with certain descriptions of their school, qualifications, and/or religious denomination could make them identifiable, and so with all eight participants, I agreed to omit any overly descriptive references and have them first member-check the transcribed data (both observations and interviews) before I began my data analysis.

Demographic Profile of Participants

In Table 5.2 below, I describe participants in broad terms and assign them pseudonyms to help keep their identities anonymous. For ease of understanding, I categorize participants in alphabetical order, beginning with participants working in public primary schools, and including their years of experience in the position of school principal. I then describe their school type, including the main categories of rural and urban, with some schools located in a village community but on the borders of a town, hence the description of rural-urban. I then categorize, based on participants' own accounts and drawing on past data from the CPEA and CXC examinations, these schools' academic performance, a category that influences public regard for a school in Grenada. The socioeconomic status (SES) categorizations of low, average, or high are based on participants' accounts of their student families. Because of its significance in the data reporting and analysis chapters, I include a description of the level of public regard Grenadians hold for these schools; in these categorizations, I draw on participants' own accounts of how their schools are perceived in and by the public and my own lived experiences as a former public schoolteacher in Grenada. A total of eight school

principals participated in this study. Of these, three identified as male, and five as female; one of the principals who became unavailable was male and it proved difficult to secure a fourth male participant. Participants' average years of experience as school principals was four years. Seven participants worked in denominational schools and one, a public school. Participants' academic qualifications were not matched specifically to each participant as another level of ensuring anonymity. I describe these here generally. Seven participants indicated holding at least a first degree (bachelor's degree), in areas such as Education, Science, and Business. Four participants said they held a master's degree, in varying fields/areas, including in Educational Administration. Seven participants were Certified Teachers. One participant did not confirm any training or possession of any advanced degree.

Table 5.1. Demographic details of participants.

Participants & Sex (M/F)	Experience (years)	School Level	School Type	School Performance	Parental SES	Public Regard
Jess (F)	1-3	Primary, Denominational	Rural	Low-Average	Low-Average	Average
Jim (M)	16-18	Primary, Denominational	Urban	Low	Low	Negative
Steph (F)	4-6	Primary, Denominational	Rural-Urban	High	Average-High	Positive
Will (M)	4-6	Primary, Denominational	Rural	Low-Average	Low	Average
Beth (F)	4-6	Secondary, Denominational	Rural	Low	Low	Negative
Bev (F)	4-6	Secondary, Denominational	Urban	Average-High	Average-High	Positive
Meg (F)	4-6	Secondary, Denominational	Rural	Low-Average	Average	Average
Chad (M)	1-3	Secondary, Non-denominational	Rural-Urban	Medium	Average	Average/Positive

At the time of my study, seven participants held leadership positions in their respective churches, as either a pastor, priest, deacon, and/or other leader/elder. Some participants had no administrative experience before they became principal while others served as a head of department or had at least ten years' experience in teaching. Participants who had no formal administrative experience held previous and subsequent leadership positions in their respective churches and they indicated that these experiences played a role in their securing the job as principal. Several participants became principals in the same schools they taught, and many only taught in one school – the school in which they were currently principal. To divulge more specific details on participants, while it may inform context, may compromise anonymity and confidentiality.

Data Collection

I set out to complete two semi-structured interviews and five days of observations with each of the eight participants in the study. However, I was unable to fulfill the proposed data collection schedule. Table 5.3 below outlines data collected from each participant. In one instance, a participant was away from work due to illness and so I could not conduct any observations or the second interview. In another instance, a participant's schedule just did not allow for the second interview. In some instances, I did not complete a full five days of observations due to unforeseen meetings and several schools' annual sports meet.

Table 5.2. Data collected per participant.

Participants	Interview 1	Interview 2	Observations (# of days)
Jess	✓	-	4
Jim	✓	✓	5
Steph	✓	-	-
Will	✓	✓	5
Beth	✓	✓	4
Bev	✓	✓	4
Chad	✓	✓	5
Meg	✓	✓	5
Total	**8**	**6**	**32**

Altogether, I conducted 14 interviews and 32 days of direct observations with principals. The first interviews took place before the start of observations and the second interviews after observations had been completed. At no time did I conduct the first interview on the same day as observations. In two instances, the second interview coincided with the last day of observations, as participants' schedules did not allow otherwise. At the first interview, dates were set for the five days of observations, and on the last day of observations, another date was set for the follow up, second interview. I returned each participant's transcribed interview and observation protocol to them for member checking.

Interviewing Participants

All interviews took place at participants' schools, as per participants' requests. The interview questions are detailed in Appendix E. Interviews took place in participants' offices, and in one instance each, the library, computer lab, and lunchroom. Generally, the first set of interviews lasted about 90-120 minutes and the second, 75-90 minutes. The study's three research questions, the conceptual framework, and the literature around work informed the questions posed to participants. A select number of questions guided

the first set of interviews but ample opportunities for flexibility in/if questioning were built into the interview schedule's design (Patton, 2002; Lichtman, 2013; Yin, 2003). The first round of interviews was designed to capture a broad range of what participants do in their capacity as chief administrator of their schools: their understandings of their work, in terms of the meanings they ascribed their actions, their perceptions around what the work of a school principal was or should be in the Grenada context, and any reasonings or beliefs around why and how they so articulated; how they spend their time on a daily basis, what a typical day looked like, and their interactions and engagements; and the conditions, circumstances or factors that posed a challenge in their work, especially in terms of how and why they so identified these conditions as challenges and what was the quality of impact in their daily work.

I conducted the second interview the day after completing the observations because I wanted to keep both my and the participants' memory of the events of the past week as current as possible. Questions were framed both as a follow up to the first interview, and around the observations. Any leftover questions or probing needed from the first interview were addressed first. Then, I moved to questioning them on synergy and/or disconnect between their understanding of their work, and the tangible ways in which such understanding translated/did not translate into the actions I observed daily, and the kinds of circumstances and conditions which dictated what did and did not get done daily. In some instances, I asked specific questions about an observed behaviour or conversation, asking principals to clarify and/or expand on how that particular interaction or action factored into their overall/broad work. As Merriam (2009) asserts, "qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (p. 5). The biggest challenges in conducting the interviews were high levels of noise and frequent interruptions. Indeed, while qualitative interview affords researchers the opportunity to garner in-depth data, its methods are susceptible to the phenomenon unfolding naturally before them; in my experience, interruptions can be common and disruptive (Swapp, 2012). With six of the participants, the first interviews were interrupted, and with two participants, as many as five times. One interview had to be cut

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short and questions merged with the second, follow-up interview after the observations. There were similar instances of disruptions with the second follow-up interviews with some of the participants.

Observing Participants

This was not my first time utilizing direct observations as a research method to investigate the work of school principals (see Swapp, 2012). In this research (my master's thesis work), I shadowed an Ontario elementary school principal for three weeks and conducted three semi-structured interviews with her about her work. I later also worked with principal investigator Dr. Katina Pollock conducting observations with principals in Ontario schools (in Pollock, 2013; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015; and Pollock et al., 2015b). In all these projects, and with slight modifications in this study, I drew on an observation schedule I created for the 2012 study. In this present study, this protocol consisted of a table created in Microsoft Word on an iPad. The table consists of "open" rows and columns to allow for the input of data. The column headings on this protocol read 'Time', 'Activity', 'Participants', 'Location', and 'Notes' (Appendix F). The rows were left blank to record observations under the various headings. In the first column, I recorded the time participants began participating in an activity and when their involvement ended. In the second, I described what the participants were doing, including descriptions of what the participants said or and did, their body language, facial expression, and tone. The third identified the people with whom participants interacted while engaged in the activity. I included this descriptor only to inform fuller understanding of the activity and limited it to capturing only broad categorizations such as "teacher", "student", "parent", "MOE personnel", and so on. The fourth described where the activity was taking place, such as a participant's office, the school yard, in a classroom, and so on. In the last column, I recorded anything else of interest around the unfolding activity or aspects of observed activities that I wanted to clarify later with participants, either at the second (post-observation) interview, or informally during the observation process or any "de-briefing" times that may come up during the day.

With the device in hand and opened to the protocol in Word, I typed my observations into the protocol as I shadowed the participant. The Microsoft software had

an auto-save feature enabling data to be immediately saved upon being typed, thereby minimizing the chances of losing data. My first consideration was the length/duration of observations. With direct observations there is the potential of the researcher tainting the setting by eliciting contrived behaviours from participants (Gay et al., 2009; Skocpol & Somers, 1980; Yin, 2003). While there is no way to ascertain and/or prevent such behaviours, I was satisfied that at least five consecutive days of observations should be a long enough time for the participants to adapt to my presence and mitigate any possible contrived work behaviours. Also, keeping the days consecutive meant I could be in and out of participants' work lives quickly without breaks in the flow of their work or my observations of them engaged in such work. Recall that I had set out to observe participants for ten consecutive days but principals felt this time period would be too intrusive and so we agreed to five consecutive days of observations instead.

A second consideration was where to station myself during off-times (when I was not actively observing participants). I wanted to remain within visual shot and earshot of the participant, but with enough distance between us to assure privacy and minimize intrusion. In three instances I was afforded a desk and chair just outside the participant's office. In two other schools, I was stationed in the library, situated just adjacent to the participant's office; in one school, I could see through a glass barrier if/when the participant left their office but in the other, there was no way to see the participant, so I had to listen for when they left the office. The structure of the school and office set-up in the remaining three schools did not allow for such facilitation, so I remained in these participants' offices. Overall, my goal was to be friendly but professional. In some instances, however, I believed participants took the opportunity of my presence to "relax from the principalship". A few instances during off-times, some participants engaged me in conversations surrounding social affairs, especially those impacting children, and so not directly related to their work as a principal. In some instances, the topic steered towards politics and socio-cultural and economic conditions impacting Grenadian life and I sometimes asked and received permission to audio record these interactions.

Generally, I followed the participants around, remaining about six feet away. I did not ask participants to engage in any specific actions. I told them to go about their work

and that I would record their actions. I was cordial with people I encountered during my observations with the participant but did not engage them beyond the mere pleasantries. I made brief entries describing participants' actions, concentrating on the quality of the interactions as opposed to trying to capture every detail. I also took note of when an action began and ended, but was not preoccupied with timing, except to get a general sense of an action's duration. Included in these descriptions were brief notes on where the action occurred, with whom, and for how long (approximations of time as opposed to strict time intervals). For instance, if the participant were on the phone, I wrote "took/made phone call", and then I listened for some catch phrases or key words and wrote those down (I sometimes later called upon them in juggling participants' minds so they could remember specific incidents to share with me their nature and purpose in their work). Later, either directly after the phone call, or at some point later in the day or the next day, I asked participants to share what that phone call was about, and how it was related to their work. I noted participants' body language and tone in their interactions and then later asked participants to speak to why they demonstrated the observed mannerisms. I recorded the actions unfolding before me with as little personal contemplation as possible, mindful of Hargreaves' (2010) position, though, that "it is difficult to describe human behaviour without appearing to make judgements on the actors involved" (p. 164). I later asked participants to share the intent or purpose behind observed behaviors and labelled these data according to the conceptual categories that each research question sought to explore. This overall approach in using this method allowed me to garner first-hand accounts of principals at work and seek corroboration and/or context for statements principals articulated about their work during our first interviews.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data generated from both the observations and the interviews was cyclical (Creswell, 2012, 2014; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Gall et al., 2010). In fact, the entire process of collecting and analyzing the data unfolded in an iterative manner (Creswell, 2012). Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed soon after they were conducted. By the time I started my observations of each participant, I had already

transcribed their interview and conducted a preliminary analysis of that data, checking to see what kinds of broad themes were emerging around the four research questions and altogether, what the participant's stories were revealing about what was the work of a school principal in Grenada. During data collection, I scrutinized the data generated from the observations and circled back to the first interview data to identify cohesions and gaps and, with respect to the latter, generate areas for further inquiry as observations continued and/or at the second interview with participants. The research question and sub-questions, review of the literature, and research framework informed how I conducted the interviews and observations and drove my analysis of the data. Altogether, I was focused on identifying catch phrases that spoke to how principals understood their work and spent their time, and the challenges and conditions around how work was practiced and then prioritized gathering thick descriptions of these accounts by seeking clarification during observations and deep probing during the interviews.

Coding the Observation Data

From my preliminary analysis of the pre-observation interviews, it was evident that participants engaged in a lot of administrative, operational, and denomination-based work so I watched for these categories of work during observations and expanded my note taking to include other observed actions that did not, immediately or otherwise, fit into these categories. One clear area of disconnect between the pre-observation interview and the observation data was with instructional work. In their first interviews, participants articulated prioritizing student learning and acknowledged the importance of instructional supervision, even describing their actions facilitating this aspect of work, but I did not observe much evidence of instructional supervision, at least by way of direct teacher observations and classroom interactions or examining teachers' lesson plans or students' notebooks. I also circled back to the specific participant's interview then returned to their observation transcript to memo my thoughts around what I took to be the principal's translated meanings of work, as I saw manifested in work actions and other behaviours. I highlighted these for subsequent discussions with each participant.

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Hence, the initial analysis of both the interview and observation data involved memoing and coding (Creswell, 2012, 2014; Gay et al., 2009; Punch, 2009; Scott & Morrison, 2006). At the end of each day of observations, I ascribed general comments to sections of the observation transcript about my preliminary thinking about the areas of work unfolding and any ambiguous actions for clarification or further observation to get a general understanding of what principals were conveying about their work. I began ascribing labels to chunks of the data from the third day of observations, when some participants' actions became repetitive. In some cases, it was easier to tag sections of the data broadly under each research sub-question, for example, "how time is spent", "challenge faced", or "conditions of or impacting work". (The observation data did not yield clearly overt evidence of participants' understandings of their work; such interpretations were gleaned from participants' explanations of the purpose behind their actions.) In others, it was simplest to attach a verb or noun phrase to the activity and/or in the Comments section of the observation protocol and then, after getting a more detailed explanation from the principal, code these phrases under broader categories that these phrases spoke to, namely "understandings", "how spend time", "challenges", and "strategies". Examples of such tags were "running an errand?", "doing carpentry", "phone call", "paying bills", "texting", and "giving money to student". Particularly ambiguous tags were phrased with a question mark for follow up. For instance, participants running errands could have been for a variety of reasons, facilitated multiple areas of work, and as the findings revealed, posed a challenge in their work. Similarly, a phone call could have served administrative, faith-based, or instructional purposes, or a combination of one or more of them. As researchers have cautioned, it is only by grasping the significance of what is observed and recognizing how the various elements of what is observed relate to each other, can understanding be said to take place (Creswell, 2014; Punch, 2009). It was therefore important to have participants explain the nature and purpose of these actions to best code which areas of work these actions facilitated.

Coding the Interview Data

With respect to the pre- and post-observation interview transcripts, I read each twice for general understanding. From the third reading, I began memoing and coding (Creswell, 2012, 2014; Gay et al., 2009; Punch, 2009; Scott & Morrison, 2006). With the pre-observation interviews, I wrote my initial thoughts about what I perceived were the areas of work that participants were reporting. The research question and sub-questions, review of the literature, and research framework all guided my initial memoing of and generalized comments around the data. These interviews were mostly framed around each research sub-question, thus facilitating my coding chunks of data under the major, *a priori* categories, "understandings", "how time is spent", "challenges", and "strategies". Some examples of initial codes under the broader theme of understanding of work, for example, were "protecting children", "showing kindness", "love for children", "patriotism?", "manual labour", and "Christianity". An interesting revelation during my coding of the data was how participants tended to discuss their understanding of work in the context of a range of roles they performed on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, regarding this research sub-question around how participants understood work, I drew on codes such as those above to create three categories of participants' understanding of work, namely being a guardian, good citizen, and Christian. Regarding how principals spent their time, four major categories of work eventually emerged, namely administrative, operational, instructional, and denomination based. Together, the first and second research sub-questions, around understandings of work and how participants spent their time, proved the most challenging to tease out for analysis. I therefore analyzed and presented the former in the context of several roles that demonstrated how principals enacted the meanings around their work and the latter in terms of the major areas of work participants undertook, and then examined other actions that facilitated these areas of work.

Ahead of conducting them, I had organized the second, post-observation interview as thematically as possible. These varied for participants; in some cases, I continued with questions left over from the first interview, and in others (and this was more often the case) I posed specific questions from my observations, seeking

elaboration and/or clarity on unclear activities and/or activities' intended purpose from participants' perspectives. Examples of questions posed at the second, post-observation interviews are outlined in Appendix E. As I explained above, by day three or four of observations, when some aspects of a participant's actions started to become repetitive, I juxtaposed both the participant's first interview transcript and the ongoing observation data, highlighting parallels and seeming contradiction between espoused and observed work with a view to focus my observations further and probe participants at the second, post-observations interview. The most glaring inconsistency I noted was with instructional work; participants indicated attending to this aspect more frequently than I observed. In a lot of cases, the second, post-observation interview probed this seeming contradiction because I wanted to center participants' explanations, and not my judgements, of this disconnect. Maykut & Morehouse (1994) write that the researcher's position is "perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others – to indwell – and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand" (p. 123). My responsibility as an ethical researcher in this research was to take stock of and rein in/heel my assumptions, analyzing the data thoroughly "so that the data informs [me] about what is going on in the environment, instead of [my] own preconceptions" (Mack, 2010). I then followed through with analyzing the second, post-observation interviews similarly to the first and the observation data, by memoing and later coding aspects of the data that spoke to the different concepts highlighted in each research sub-question.

The overall framework of data analysis employed in this research was thus an experience in "digesting the contents of qualitative data and finding related threads in it" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 50). The data became sensible only through the collective processes of memoing, sorting, categorizing, and merging the different components of the findings (Creswell, 2012). In this way, coherent and comprehensive findings emerged to meaningfully answer the research problems posed at the onset of this investigation.

Summary

This chapter continued expanding on this study's overarching methodological considerations. I justified the use of qualitative inquiry, drawing connections between qualitative research, interpretivism, and the relational approach. I described my use of direct observations and semi-structured interviews to gather data and outlined the processes around recruiting and selecting participants and collecting and analyzing the data.

CHAPTER 6: HOW PRINCIPALS UNDERSTAND THEIR WORK

In this chapter, I present the findings based on the first research sub-question posed in the study: *How do school principals in Grenada understand their work?* Specifically, I present three overarching meanings participants ascribed their work, namely as: a calling/vocation; service; and commitment to student learning. After describing what each of these meanings signify in the context of participants' work as school principals in Grenada, I outline several roles that participants associated with these three meanings of work.

Work as a Calling/Vocation

Generally, participants spoke positively of their decision to be school principals and their beliefs around the purpose of their work. They expressed conviction that their work was a calling or vocation, describing a strong urge toward a career in education and/or believing that they were strongly suited to being a school principal. For instance, Meg shared, "I always knew I wanted to be a teacher…so, being a school principal is like a natural progression". Beth also shared, "I believe I was called to be a school principal, to be a leader in my community, to help build future leadership in this country". This conviction that their work as a school principal was a calling seemed fundamental to participants' thinking. Indeed, for participants, being a school principal meant making a positive difference in the lives of students, school communities, and the country. In articulating their understanding of work as a calling and, more specifically, making a difference, participants identified several roles that they believed were fundamental to the school principalship in Grenada.

Being a Guardian

Participants spoke of themselves as protectors and defenders of students. They believed that as a school principal, they were ultimately responsible for the wellbeing of all the children at their schools. And they approached this understanding from a place of love for students. In fact, all eight participants in the study explicitly spoke of having "love" for students and identifying this as the underlying principle driving their work. For

example, Meg expressed, "I love children. I love their innocence, ready smiles, and trust in us. I want them loved, protected, and looked after. In every way … so that they can grow into their potential. That's what makes me excited to come to work, for that opportunity". At the same time, participants also tied in this principle of love to the more practical and literal meaning of the position of principal. As Beth related,

> I always say you can't be in teaching if you don't love children. And, as principal you "are in charge", so to speak, so that means loving and caring for everyone in the school. But, especially the students, you have been put in charge of students, the students are in your care, and a school principal must ensure not only that they [the students] learn but that their other needs are met.

Other participants echoed Beth's understanding of guardianship in an all-round context. They highlighted student learning as a primary focus in being guardians of students and extended this meaning to include the academic, spiritual, emotional, social, and physical needs of students.

Further, several participants described being a guardian as a legal and moral responsibility. Will, for example, believed that while, legislatively, a principal was responsible for students' welfare while they were at school, it was also a moral duty. "Legislative-wise, you [as principal] are responsible [for students' welfare]. But, morally too, especially when one considers the high incidences of rape, child abuse, violence, and so on in Grenada. You have to protect children from these kinds of harm", he related. Jim also referenced the high rates of poverty and child abuse cases at his school and saw himself as taking on the role of a father figure to many students in his care. He explained,

> Well, I am a/an [names church title] and a/an [names clinical title] so they call me [names church title] and children naturally gravitate to me, confiding in me and such. So, I guess I am "Father" – figuratively – to many. But, outside of my belief that I am fulfilling my calling and serving God in this role [as principal, [clinical title], and [church position], I am committed [to his work] because there are so many horror stories with these children… I tell my staff all the time, they need to

be more empathetic. They [the students] have been entrusted to our care, and we must love, nurture, and shield them from harm and danger.

As Jim explained, he was not suggesting that academic standards or benchmarks be done away with but that teachers show more compassion and care for the students entrusted in their care. However, both he and Will, as did others, concurred that other social ills impacted students' learning that necessitated school principals taking on the role of a guardian to/of students.

During my time observing each participant, I witnessed numerous instances of participants interacting with students, corroborating participants' accounts of the love they hold for and display towards the students in their care. Participants engaged students with respect, consideration, and affection. On several occasions, students interrupted my interviews with participants to come inside of the office to wish their principal a good morning. Participants would take the time to return the greeting, sometimes inquiring about students' parents, and wishing them a good day. Further, as I accompanied participants on walkthroughs throughout their school compound, students oftentimes ran up to participants, hugging and chatting with them, and participants were always polite, inquiring after the students' wellbeing, asking students how they were performing in class, and encouraging students to come see them if they had any issues or needed help with anything. I observed such open and reciprocated affection between students and all eight participants in the study.

Being a Change Agent

The idea of being a change agent was a second role and meaning participants ascribed the work of a school principal in Grenada. Herein, participants referenced the context of their work in Grenada, particularly in terms of what they perceived were socioeconomic, cultural, and educational challenges being experienced in the country. As participants shared, they understood their work as a principal as doing their part to foster change and transform Grenada into their ideals of what a better Grenada looks like. Particularly, Jess referenced "the abject poverty" and "lack of formal education" of many of her students' families; Eve spoke of the "absence of morals" among some students,

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parents, and others in society; and Steph alluded to some in society having "no sense of responsibility" for their actions. Will and Meg also illuminated this context vividly. In the first quote, Will is referencing youth unemployment and in the second, Jill speaks of the consequence of inattention to the problems facing youth in her country:

> I see so many [youth] just loitering on the roadside when I pass [drive by]. We need leadership, in government, the church, home, school… This needs to change… I try to do my part here. Inculcate academics, yes, but also values … hard work, respect, basic humanity.

> I'm a person who, I like my country and I know that in order for us to build a good country we have to have good students -- we have to have good human resources. And if we don't, if somebody doesn't take them in hand and try to straighten them, I told them, I don't like burglar bars on my house but if we don't expend all our energies now, later on, we are going to have to burglar-proof to keep them out.

For the most part, principals seemed to describe the role of a change agent in the context of civic engagement and nation building, similar to how Will and Jill articulated above. And participants believed that being a change agent was an opportunity to contribute to the development of these ideals.

Being a Good Citizen

In articulating their understanding of the school principalship and what it meant to serve in this position in Grenada, several participants referenced "morality", "morals" and notions of "good", "just", and "Christian" behaviour. When pressed, it was evident that participants held particular values around conduct and actions that were "good", as in what participants considered proper and positive. Participants viewed their work as attending to the civic development of the students in their care. They explained that in the enactment of their work, they emphasized honesty, virtuousness, and hard work in themselves and others. Jim explained that he was raised appreciating the value of hard work, and so for him, making this belief practical could be as simple as "giving an honest

day's work for an honest day's pay". Beth and Meg translated this to mean holding teachers and students accountability for their actions, and Chad and Jess saw this as modelling the type of good moral behaviour they deemed desirable. Overall, participants described a good (moral) citizen as one who led by example and inculcated in every child, good (Christian) values and a strong sense of civic duty.

Throughout the interviews, I pressed participants on what it meant to be a good moral citizen and how they went about demonstrating this meaning of their work as a school principal. Several participants described instilling values as one significant way in which they demonstrated being a good moral citizen. "Well, first of all, you have to demonstrate love, love for students and care for others. Then your work needs to be about what is good and uplifting", shared Steph. Will added, "You [a school principal] must engage in behaviours that are ethical, good, and just. Your actions must be of benefit to humankind. You can't be selfish or evil in your intentions". A few participants further clarified what they meant by values, describing same as "good" and/or "Christian" in nature. For instance, Jess described Grenada as "a Christian nation" and expressed her commitment to nurturing "God-fearing men and woman who would make valuable economic and social contributions to the nation". Meg also asserted, "The Bible really is a blueprint for how to live your life as a good citizen". She credited her upbringing in the church for her approach to work as a "Christ-based mission" grounded in "faith". Beth held a similar perspective: "You must have love for God, love for your neighbour, love for country. And you must uphold the dignity of every person. Respect every person". Based on participants' responses, it was evident that notions of what constituted a good moral citizen were subsumed within deeply held faith-based beliefs.

Moreover, participants spoke of devotion to country and the development of responsible, contributing citizens. "We do not only teach academics. There is the social and spiritual. We want active citizens who would contribute to nation building", said Beth. "Students must become responsible, contributing members of society. They must respect and take care of their elders, be kind to and watch out for their neighbours, you know, be good citizens", added Steph. Jim also expressed:

As a principal, I … forge and exploit networks and mobilize actions towards social justice for the needy and disenfranchised. It [being a principal] also gives me an opportunity to learn from these children from different backgrounds; the way they reason, the way they do things, their level of discipline, spirituality, academic, learn who are cared for, who are not cared for. It enables me now to do a little more for these children, and it also enables me to make that small contribution to the community and to the country, that is necessary for nation building. So, I feel a sense of patriotism in exercising my duties.

Recall that participants also referenced social ills in articulating their understanding of work as being a change agent. This alludes to how pervasive and dire are the social, economic, and educational circumstances in Grenada. Here, participants spoke of being socialized to care for others and contribute to the building of a better society.

Being a Christian

Several participants alluded to Christianity as fundamental to their understanding of the work of a school principal. Steph, for example, described the notion of love as foundational to, if not the quintessential tenet of, Christianity. She said, "You can't call yourself a Christian if you do not demonstrate love". Beth also added that "when you [as principal] come from a place of love, of deeply caring for students, you understand your Christian responsibility to nurture the *whole* child, you know, nurture students' holistic development: academic, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual". Further, the way participants spoke, it was as if they regarded students as a member of their own families, even one of their own children. In fact, some participants referred to the students and staff at their school as their family and several utilized the possessive "my" when referring to students. "They are my children. I come here every day with the passion to love them, care for them, make them succeed", stated Steph. Participants described this passion as driven by their obedience to God, the teachings of Jesus Christ, and other principles of the Bible. For instance, Chad declared his work as a school principal "a mandate bigger than [him]self, outside of [him]self, for the glory of God and of Country". Seven of the eight participants in the study held senior positions in their

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respective churches and saw their work as allowing them to practice their Christian beliefs, by being obedient to the Word of God and adhering to core Biblical principles.

It was apparent that participants' socialization and upbringing in the Christian faith shaped their understanding of work. For instance, Meg spoke of being taught "love of God", "love of neighbour", and "respect for elders". Beth explained that she was raised in a religious household and "instilled with Christian values". And Jim spoke of how his work in the church was a "pastoral continuation" at school in terms of the care and service he provided to the students and school community. "Well first, being a principal allows me to exercise my vocation, my skills, my commitment [as a senior church leader and spiritual counsellor]", he stated. As participants saw it, their socialization and upbringing in Christianity uniquely and opportunely positioned them to serve their school communities in their capacities as a school principal. This notion of work as service to others was a second category of understanding participants ascribed their work as a school principal.

Work as Service

Within the context of work as service to others, participants perceived of and engaged in their work as more than a paid job or the performance of set, administrative duties. Instead, participants' interactions with their school communities seemed largely premised on the desire to serve and uplift others as opposed to flexing authoritarian muscle or building or maintaining authoritarian regimes. For instance, Meg shared:

> To be a principal is to have a full appreciation for the work of an educator. We provide a service – education – to young people. That is a serious, moral responsibility. If you are... just concerned with doing the bare minimum, you would be unsuccessful. You are shaping minds, personalities… future generations, and that requires a lot of work. And that requires sacrifice and commitment… Know that you are going to work long hours…. You would not always be liked, respected, or valued, and it can be a thankless, lonely endeavour.

Meg encapsulated participants' understanding of work as service. This understanding translated to them going beyond the formal mandates of their job and harbouring a deep level of empathy, a strong work ethic, an unwavering commitment to the development of others, and gumption. Participants also described two roles that contextualized their understanding of work as a service, namely being a steward/custodian and servant. These two roles were similar but nuanced around their conceptualizations; the former in the context of 'taking care of' the resources and people in the school organization and the latter referring to the notion of 'serving' others.

Being a Steward/Custodian

Participants perceived of themselves as educational stewards, both in the literal sense of being administrators and supervisors of school resources – human and material – and in terms of being a custodian over said resources, as in 'taking care of' these resources, by way of monitoring their use and ensuring they were being used responsibly. For example, Jess shared, "I am the chief building custodian. That means, I am everything to everyone: building inspector, cook, carpenter, delivery man, ambulance, police, friend, confidante. You name it". Meg framed it similarly, "I am custodian in chief. It is my job to ensure things run smoothly, so whatever that requires". Meg and Jess were alluding to how participants described being in the position of principal in Grenadian schools. As they described, being a school principal in Grenada required an understanding that the lack of resources, including manpower, to meet school needs would necessitate principals going beyond formally mandated duties to assume various roles to fill gaps. I expand more in the next chapter.

This notion of 'taking care of' people and resources also included attending to the overall safety of the people in and on the school compound. In this sense, being a steward had a practical focus, especially considering resource scarcity and the need to deploy and maximize utilization of said scarce resources. Steph described of being a steward:

> [T]he work of a school principal is a lot about supervision and management, but it requires you to do your work with love, respect, and understanding. That is not often easy when there is so much need here, not enough supports, and you have so

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many different people and rules and guidelines working with. So, striking that balance… who gets what and how much… and of the people, like the caretakers, too … health and safety … all these variables…. everything that teachers need to perform their jobs; materials as well as any other thing that I need to provide to enable them to do it, and minimizing waste… the PTA, you know, lots of different people on there, multiple personalities and vision, and you have to respect everyone and give everyone room to grow… I have to keep a handle on things, whether to ensure there is no misappropriation of funds, or tensions with parents, scheduling conflicts, or so.

Steph believed her work was about serving others and that she was a steward – a *caretaker* – of the resources and people in/under her care. Other participants echoed this view, understanding the practical focus of work as stewardship as revolving around resource allocation and supervision for maximum utilization while remaining humane managers and supervisors and ensuring the safety of those in their care. Other participants also pointed to economic hardships and lack of financial/resource supports, being accountable to multiple regimes, and working with people who have their own ways of knowing and doing as contextualizing how they understood and approached stewardship.

Further, Steph referenced how the role of being a steward proved to be a balancing act as principal. As participants described, realizing the role of a steward, not unlike other aspects of their work, required juggling multiple moving parts, exacerbated by a lack of resources, limited government funding, and multiple layers of accountability and surveillance. I discuss these more broadly in the next three chapters, around how participants spent their time and the challenges they faced in their work, and then more critically in the discussion chapter. Here, I draw attention to the added layer of stewardship for principals serving in denominational schools, a contextual element of Grenadian school principals' work I also take up in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

Being a Servant

Whereas participants described the role of being a steward/custodian in the context of taking care of and uplifting others, they conceived of being a servant in the

context of *serving* others. Both these roles came from a similar philosophical position in terms of contextualizing how participants understood their work as being about service. Jim articulated,

> I am in service to my church community, my students and staff, the government, even society at large, as a citizen, [names denominational title], and [names clinical title]. As principal, I utilize my array of skills and abilities to lead through example and serve in these different capacities…for the benefit and growth of my church congregation, my students here, my students' families, and society at large.

Jim highlighted the notion of serving, in the sense of principals performing their duties for, or *in service of*, others, namely in their school and church communities, society, and for their employers, namely the government. In a similar quote above on the notion of work as service, Meg also alluded to the notion of being a servant as a selfless undertaking; she specifically recognized that while principals' actions may not always be received positively by everyone, their contributions may not be valued, and they may not be liked as a person, it was important to accept these sacrifices and stay committed to the work. Jim also spoke of being an example of servant leadership, in first demonstrating the qualities of service that persons being placed in a position of pastoral care or supervision over others should possess and display.

Work as Commitment to Student Learning

A third meaning participants ascribed their understanding of work as a school principal was being committed to student learning. They described the position of the school principalship as being placed in charge of an institution of learning and extended this understand to assert that student learning should therefore feature prominently in the incumbent's understandings and approaches to their work. Participants discussed commitment to student learning in relation to supporting classroom instructions and interactions, engaging in goal-driven actions, and building relationships and networks. They also described three sub-roles they undertook in actualizing this understanding of

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work, namely being a supervisor of learning, a resource manager, and a forecaster and planner.

Being a Supervisor of Learning

Participants asserted that student learning should be the quintessential focus of the work of Grenadian school principals. Bev shared, "Being a school principal is all about student learning. You are responsible for ensuring children are equipped with the tools to succeed in school, in life, in every area of their lives". The responsibility for student learning meant undertaking the role of a supervisor of such learning, in the sense of 'being in charge' of/over such learning, by monitoring instruction and student outcomes, procuring and providing resources to support teaching and learning, and ensuring that said resources were maximized towards this end. Participants therefore emphasized paying attention to classroom interactions, teaching aids, curricula, pedagogy, and teachers' professional strengths and needs. For example, Beth described being a supervisor of learning in this way:

> You can't be a principal if you do not understand supervision… it [supervision of student learning] is about asking questions, anticipating needs, being proactive. It [supervision] is about being someone who constantly questions, observes, and evaluates interaction in and out of the classroom, and prepares to step in if necessary.

Three points stand out from Beth's quote above. The first relates to participants' understanding of being a supervisor of learning as a supportive/facilitative role and not one that set out to supersede or undermine the teacher as the primary facilitator of learning in the classroom. In this respect, while participants indicated making room to directly observe teacher and student interactions in the classroom setting – and I recorded several instances of participants undertaking this form of supervision during observations – their emphasis was on ensuring teachers had the tools to support classroom instruction, diagnosing teachers' professional development needs, and planning supports in this respect.

The second point illuminated how participants' understanding of work as monitoring teaching and learning connected to their legislated responsibility to do so. Other participants described a similar perception of their role as being a supervisor of student learning, relating that instructional supervision was one aspect of their work emphasized not only in formal documents coming through from the MOE but in email and face-to-face correspondence between them and the district education officers (DEOs) with whom they more directly work on a day-to-day basis.

The third point of note derived from Beth's quote above revolves around how participants' context informed their understanding and approach to supervision. This distinction was most demonstrable between participants working across varying socioeconomic contexts. For instance, while I observed several instances of participants attending to student learning at their schools, Beth explained that she emphasized supervision of instruction given her school's negative reputation in society as an academically underachieving institution. For instance, every day of my observations of her, Beth observed at least one classroom setting and met with the teacher to discuss her observations, either outside the classroom immediately upon lesson completion or sometime later in her office. Other participants such as Jim and Jill shared a similar working context of negative public perception of their schools including low student achievement, and they described a similar commitment to student learning. That is not to say that other participants who worked in more affluent, well-regarded, and high performing schools (such as Steph) were not committed to improving student outcomes. In this latter case, however, Steph and others working in these more favourable contexts stressed the resource management aspect of their commitment to student learning as opposed to more direct observations of classroom interactions.

Being a Resource Manager

Participants generally framed their understanding of being a resource manager in the context of scarcity of resources, both human and material, and the need to maximize the use of said limited and often expensive- and difficult-to-procure resources. The emphases in being a resource manager, then, were on ensuring teachers and students were

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equipped with the necessary tools to support and maximize the student learning experience and minimizing waste. Jess related:

> The school spends a lot of money and otherwise expends great effort to get these materials to teachers for students' education and we do not get a lot of money from government. We also rely heavily on the charity of others, you know getting people to volunteer time, expertise, and resources at our school. The needs… are so great here. It is an agricultural community and most of our parents are financially constrained…. most of our finances are generated from fundraising, the [names denomination] diaspora, and well-wishers but we still fall short. This is where the benevolence of the public comes in… So, it is important that we curtail waste: waste of time, resources, and talent.

Jess worked in one of the lesser affluent rural primary schools on island that she indicated performed marginally on the secondary school entrance examinations. In the next two chapters, I examine how this status impacted how Jess and other participants working in similar contexts spent their time undertaking work and the broader challenges around this status. Consequently, Jess emphasized both the supervision *and* resource management roles of her commitment to student learning. That is not to say, however, that only participants working in lower socioeconomic settings framed their commitment to student learning in the context of managing resources. In fact, all participants asserted that the socioeconomic challenges prevalent in Grenadian schools necessitated the tight management of school resources, so that this focus was a fundamental sub-layer of what it meant to supervise student learning in Grenadian schools. In less economically stable and/or low performing schools, however, participants like Jess made an especially concerted effort to monitor classroom learning directly and on a more continuous basis, *while* ensuring that teachers and students were provided the resources necessary to facilitate this process.

In ways that participants working in more positively regarded and high performing schools emphasized their roles as resource managers, they did so from a somewhat different perspective than their peers working in lesser regarded schools and/or

schools with higher SES student populations. By this I mean that while all participants described being both supervisors of instruction and resource managers, those working in higher performing schools and/or schools less strained for resources reported concentrating their efforts on the latter role, on procuring and providing teachers with the resources needed to support classroom instruction. For instance, while a lack of adequate resources impacted all participants' work, Chad, Bev, and Steph acknowledged that their situations were not as severe as their peers in other schools. Steph, who worked in a well-regarded and top performing primary school, shared:

> I have colleagues in some pretty terrible situations [at their schools]: no resources, bad relationships with teachers, deplorable building conditions. I always say I am lucky here [at this school]… Our school is well supported by the community, parents, the government, and the church, including the church diaspora, and for the most part, we have what we need to work…. I work well with all my teachers, for the most part. Most of them are seasoned teachers and even the new ones are well-educated, and all are passionate. They know what they are doing so I don't try to get in their way by telling them what to do in their classrooms [with respect to their teaching]… As I said, we have several times placed first in the island [in the national secondary entrance examination] and most times are in the first three or five. Our students go on to their select secondary institutions, become lawyers, doctors, teachers, you know upstanding citizens… So, while I do periodically check in on instruction and such, as I am mandated, I concentrate on making sure teachers and students have what they need to succeed… maintain that standard of excellence… It [classroom supervision] gets done, though, don't get me wrong, because my HODs [heads of departments] are the ones doing most of this kind of monitoring.

Above, Steph illuminated how school context and broader social, cultural, and political capital facilitated her work in resource management, a context that worked to her benefit and the benefit of her school. Her quote also revealed how this understanding of her commitment to student learning was caught up in this lived context, shaping her thinking and approach to work in ways not shared and/or enjoyed by her peers working in lesser

well-regarded contexts. In the next two chapters, I examine these differences in more detail. Chad and Bev came closest to echoing some of Steph's comment above, in the sense that though their schools were not as well-regarded and supported as Steph's, their working conditions and overall context were much better than the other participants' in the study. At the same time, while Chad and Bev somewhat similarly privileged being a resource manager over direct classroom monitoring of instruction, they attributed this to yet another element.

Some participants' understanding of being a resource manager, in the context of being committed to student learning, seemed informed by the dynamic structure of the secondary school system as compared to that of the primary school level. Chad and Bev, who worked in secondary schools, explained that the wide range of subjects offered at the secondary level made it difficult for them to evaluate and inform teachers' instruction in significant scope and/or depth. Chad explained:

> In the secondary school, teachers are experts in only one or two areas, and we [principals] are former teachers. So, principals, as former classroom teachers, were once experts in a limited field or area of study or subject or so. My situation here, my school is very large, we cover a wide range of academic, technical, and vocational subjects, we have over 1000 students and almost 90 teachers here; there is no way I can observe them all, all the time. So, I understand my role as instructional *supervisor* and not instructional *leader* in this regard, so to speak… I depend on my HODs who are "the experts over the other experts", so to speak… and they get back to me with their feedback. I just make sure they [teachers] have what they need to function. I take more direct responsibility for that.

Chad, as a secondary school principal working in a large and relatively well-regarded school with fewer financial challenges than some of the other participants in the study, understood his work as being a supervisor of student learning with more direct responsibility for resource management. On the other hand, Beth and Jill, also secondary school principals, described more targeted and in-depth observations and evaluations of teaching. But they too conceded that there were subject areas that were unfamiliar to

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them and that direct monitoring of instruction often proved challenging due to the size of the school, the number of different subject areas, and other everyday deadlines and events consuming their time. Hence, while participants in both primary and secondary school settings relegated classroom observations to their HODs, those working in the secondary school context did so more widely and concentrated their involvement to procuring, distributing, and otherwise managing resources that supported student learning. But as participants intimated, not only did SES and school level impact how participants understood and approached their commitment to supporting student learning, so too did the pace and volume of their work. Altogether, these contextualities required principals to engage in more politically savvy resource management thinking including around building relationships and networks to support student learning.

Being a Relationship Builder and Networker

Participants espoused that, at school, teachers were the most significant factor in shaping student learning and so a priority for them as the school principal was to try to build positive working relationships with teachers. They viewed this as integral to creating the best learning opportunities for students. Participants also shared that a wide range of people worked in and through other groups, structures, and organizations to support schools, so that a critical layer of understanding work as resource management was forging strong external networks. For example, Jess shared:

> [T]hat is why I try my best to provide everything my teachers ask for to support teaching and learning … I also listen, empathize, and console when necessary because if our teachers are not happy, or are in need, this impacts the children. Understanding that teachers are integral to a school's success, I think, is fundamental… You know, in this job, you need people. So, you must respect people and value their contributions…. [t]he farmers in the community who supply, free of charge, our fruits and vegetables to feed the children; the delivery man from [names stationery store] who drops off our stationery; the bus drivers who transport our teachers and students to and from their homes; our diaspora friends who contribute financially to the school… Not forgetting the people in the different departments within the Ministry of Education all doing their part.

This understanding of building relationships and networks that Jess expanded on above was a prevalent component of participants' approach to resource management in the context of being committed to student learning.

Being a Forecaster/Planner

A third role that participants described as being central to their understanding of work as being committed to student learning was being a forecaster/planner. As participants discussed, while a lot of their schools' needs were stable and they could predict ahead of time the direction of the school in the short to medium term, the acute inadequacy and lack of resources compelled thinking around forecasting/planning ahead. Here, participants described being intentional in setting goals around school vision and how to pursue said vision, advocating for their school communities, and being strategic about what was realistic given the overarching circumstances.

Setting goals. Participants in the study spoke at length about having a vision for their school and communicating a set of goals in pursuit of said vision. This thinking reflected a strong characterization of their perception of forecasting and planning relative to their work as school principals in Grenada. In one way or another, goal thinking revolved around improving student learning, but here too, it was evident that social, cultural, and economic context shaped the substance and scope of this endeavour. For instance, Bev and Beth explained, respectively:

> I am all about elevating our standards here [at the school] even higher. We have carved a name for ourselves both academically and in sports…. through hard work and determination. We have had to be very deliberate… in the areas of academics and sports. If you look at the numbers, we have won football, cricket, and netball, both boys and girls division, and dominated Intercol [inter-secondary sports meet] for many years. Our CXC passes, too. In the last five years we always have a top performing student in the island, a couple times in a specific subject area in the region. So, it's no longer the X [names highly regarded Catholic secondary school for girls in the capital] and the Y [names highly regarded Catholic secondary school for boys in the capital]; we rank among them

in terms of academics and surpass them in sports. I am deliberate in what I think we need to do as a school to get there, we as a staff make the goals explicit, and work towards them.

My needs are so urgent here it is difficult to plan long term. My daily struggle is to keep the organization afloat. My entire vision is student learning, to make this institution a respected and high achieving place of learning. So, it's about vision and transformation. As you know, nobody wanted to come to this school. That perception has changed a lot, but it is still a struggle to get everyone to see the value in this institution. As principal, I… set goals to change perception, change mindset. I think concretely about how do I continue to get students to see their value and exceed their own expectations? Get even more buy-in from parents and teachers, the community? My long-term goal is student learning, but I need to think outside of the box in how I get there. You know, I am not X school [names well-regarded, affluent denominational school] where I have things handed to me; here, we fight for every bit of achievement.

From both these participants' voices, it was clear how the context of and around schooling in Grenada informed their thinking about their work. In engaging in forecasting and planning in the broader context of their understanding of work as commitment to student learning, these two participants conceived of goal setting as a way to create change and also change mindset. In this sense, participants approached students' education by confronting the social, economic, and cultural conditions in and around how this phenomenon was conceived of and practiced in Grenada, particularly relative to the high public regard towards a Catholic education in postcolonial Grenada. As part of this confronting, and as Beth alluded to above, participants oftentimes had to be advocates for their students.

Advocacy. Advocacy was a reverberating theme in participants' understanding of planning in the context of their commitment to student learning. Participants generally described advocacy as thinking about supporting students, championing student learning, forging relationships and leveraging networks to support student learning. Again,

participants' motivation seemed fueled by context, specifically the socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions in and around education in Grenada. For instance, Jim described:

> Make no mistake, I will go all out for my children [students at his school]. I am a strong advocate of their physical, spiritual, and emotional safety and go all out to support their academic development, whether by taking lazy and uncaring teachers to task, bringing abuse cases to the relevant authorities, counselling parents, reaching out to the diaspora and local supporters of the school to solicit resources, or giving off my time and aptitudes to help in whatever small way.

As Jim articulated, being an advocate was central to participants' understanding of their work, especially around supporting student learning. But as Jim continued:

> What is happening in schools is symptomatic of society. From our politicians to our professionals and businessmen and citizens … time and time again we see dishonesty, inability to think critically or be civically engaged, a lack of vision, action. There is a lack of care – or parents, and by extension students, are not informed enough to care – about schooling and valuing and respecting property, each other, self…. We see the difference in X schools [names well-regarded affluent denominational school]: robust PTA, student activism, more well-rounded students, positive contributors to society.

Jim echoed sentiments shared by other participants, around the lack of critical thinking and civic engagement of citizens who, as participants such as Will shared, seemed to act against their own interests. Participants discussed at length their understanding of the importance of a more informed and engaged society for the development of Grenada and believed that student learning was key to this realization. As such, they seemed inspired and motivated to be advocates to support this important and urgent goal. At the same time, participants also recognized that they would also need to be strategic in this commitment to student learning.

Being Strategic. Participants were matter of fact about admitting that there were limits to their positions and abilities as a school principal in Grenada. As they shared, the needs were great and universal across schools and so this meant that resources, including human personnel, were scarce and oftentimes had to be shared among schools. They also explained that they had little to no control over others' benevolence relative to supporting school causes. This meant that participants often thought strategically about how to proceed with their goals around student learning and what (and who) specifically to make the focus of their efforts. Jess, for instance, shared:

> I can't do everything. All schools in Grenada have challenges, some more so than others. Bad as it is, we [names denomination] principals do what we can to support our colleagues in the public and other denominational schools. We help them with teaching supplies, equipment, even lend them some of our people from time to time. But my point is that you [as principal] can only do so much. You have to shut out the noise and distraction and focus. I think about what is urgent and would have serious implications if not attended to. Always, the end goal is student learning, so in one way or another my goal setting is around how do I improve student learning at my school? Then I think about how I proceed, who do I talk to, who are the naysayers, who would be on board, that kind of thing. A lot of the times, it is about who you know, so I am not ashamed to tap into that; I may not know 'people' [with (political) clout or influence] but I know people who know 'people' [laughs].

Here, we see that Jess leveraged her relationships and connections to support student learning at her school. Like other participants, she seemed to understand that, as principal, she had to be deliberate and intentional about the causes she championed, prioritizing those she deemed urgent and most impactful to student learning. Other participants seemed to possess the kind of political savvy Jess alluded to above because they similarly described their understanding of being strategic in their planning and initiatives around student learning.

Summary

In this first of four findings chapter, I examined the first research question: How do school principals in Grenada understand their work? I examined principals' understandings of their work from three dimensions, namely work as a calling/vocation, work as service, and work as commitment to student learning. I described the various roles principals associated with these dimensions of understandings. Principals made sense of their understanding of work as a calling/vocation in being a guardian, change agent, good citizen, and Christian, demonstrating love and pastoral care for their students and broader school communities and advocating for their physical and spiritual wellbeing. Work as service meant being stewards and servants, and this often required principals to make personal sacrifices, including working long hours and undertake manual labour, fundraising, and charity to meet school needs. For principals, work as commitment to student learning meant they were supervisors of learning, resource managers, builders of relationships and networks of support, and visionary planners. Principals further contextualized these understandings against the broader context of fiscal constraints constraining their work in the Grenada context.

CHAPTER 7: HOW PRINCIPALS SPEND THEIR TIME

In this chapter, I present and categorize the findings based on the second research sub-question posed in the study: *How do school principals in Grenada spend their time?* To explore how participants spent their time, I categorize their actions into three major areas of work: faith-based work; work around organizational management; and instructional work. Here too, I discuss these three areas of work in relation to the conceptual framework articulated in chapter four, specifically around how participants' understandings of work, and the broader context around which they undertake work, have framed participants' actions on a day-to-day basis. Major faith-based actions were leading the school's religious programs, providing counselling and resources, and engaging in community outreach. Participants' actions in supporting organization management included record-keeping and reporting, managing schedules and resources, order, discipline, and security, and student and teacher services. Lastly, participants' instructional work largely centered on timetabling, monitoring curriculum delivery, and teacher professional development.

Undertaking Faith-Based Work

As examined in the previous chapter, participants explicitly ascribed Christianity, being spiritual, and/or the notion of work as a moral/religious/Christian imperative as central meanings around being a school principal. Consequently, notwithstanding that seven participants worked in denominational schools and one in a non-denominational setting, all eight demonstrated religious-based actions in their daily work. First, I examine the regulations and norms around faith-based work in Grenada, and then examine participants' actions in the context of supervising religious programs, providing counselling and resources, and engaging in community outreach.

Regulations and Norms Around Faith-Based Mandate

The specific actions participants undertook in fulfilling the religious-based components of their work revolved around both formal and informal practices of the denomination with which the school was affiliated. A few participants described how the

Education Act formally empowered these denominations through their boards of management to work in consultation with the Ministry of Education to facilitate religious education in schools. Specifically, on how affiliation dictated the religious dimensions of their work, Meg and Jess related, respectively:

> There is the faith-based aspect here, in contrast to other schools who might just be reporting to the Ministry of Education. We have to upkeep standards of Church as well as standards of Government or standards of State. So, our decisions must be of a balance in which both parties can find equal satisfaction. So, the activities we have at school are dictated by what Church says as well as what Ministry would approve of. That is one thing … The places we go, the language we speak, everything stems from, responds to standards of both Church and State.

> It [being a denominational school] does factor into our work because we do observe our religious holidays but also Feast Days and things like that. We are governed by a Board which normally organizes activities and also runs things for us, because the Board also takes part of the responsibility in training principals and Heads of Departments … at least once a term. We also have a Manager who is the deacon at present… he comes by every Monday and he meets with us as staff and not everybody partakes but we meet and pray and discuss. So that helps with the spiritual grooming of the teachers.

Though Meg and Jess belonged to different religious denominations, the regulations and norms governing their faith-based work as school principal were analogous. Seven participants in the study belonged to four different religious denominations and they described a similar framework for how the faith-based aspects of their work unfolded: curricula, standards, and devotion were enforced by the school principal but were handed down and overseen by the church through its board of management that in turn was headed by, depending on denomination, a local and/or regional representative such as a priest, pastor, deacon, or other religious head.

Further, even though Chad worked in a non-denominational/government school, Grenada is officially referenced as a Christian society and there is a longstanding

tradition of religious practices in all schools across the island, including at Chad's. Chad is also a religious leader at his own church, and this added a more pronounced focus on the religious norms at his school. He explained:

> It is not a denominational school … but I am a [names senior leadership Church title] by spiritual profession and as a result of that I understand what value can be placed upon spirituality and how it goes along with our students in their future. So as a result of that, I encourage teachers to pray with their students at the registration period in the morning, and from time to time encourage them from the Scripture, and every morning as you would have noticed or witnessed the teachers sing songs and if the teachers are just a bit tardy the Prefects would ensure that the students have their devotion period in the morning, that they clap and they sing because I would have said to them, "I want to hear them clap and sing when I'm walking around the corridor".

Prefects are senior students empowered by school administration to oversee aspects of student conduct on school grounds. Chad's descriptions mirror how morning devotions unfold in Grenadian schools. Specifically, I corroborated many instances of participants undertaking religious-based actions from my observations of them engaged in their daily work. Specific actions included praying with students and teachers, holding meetings and dialogues with various stakeholders about student's spiritual development and evangelizing initiatives in the community, counselling students and sometimes teachers, and observing the delivery of religious activities in their schools. Hence, notwithstanding religious affiliation, practices that are based on the Christian faith are common across Grenadian schools, such as the reciting of The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 9: 9-13 from The Holy Bible), reading from Biblical scriptures, and other prayers at morning devotions and lunch and afternoon recesses. Based on participants' descriptions and my observations of them at work, I highlighted several faith-based categories of work participants undertook, namely supervising the school's religious program, providing counselling and spiritual resources to support students' spiritual wellbeing, and engaging in community outreach and charitable initiatives.

Supervising School's Religious Programs

At the time of their appointment to the position of school principal, seven participants were (and remained) practicing members of the church with which their schools were affiliated. One participant indicated that while they were raised in the faith with which their school was affiliated, they did not consider themselves a devout member. Notwithstanding, all eight participants in the study described leading their respective school's religious program as a normal part of their work. This aspect of work was not based solely on participants' membership in the denomination. Formal expectations from church boards of management also determined participants' faith-based actions. By 'supervising' their school's religious programs, I refer to how participants spent their time securing accountability for the fulfillment of faith-based school goals, working with the managers of their respective boards to develop faith-based curricula and standards, and leading the administration and supervision of said curricula and standards.

Designing Programs. Accounts of participants' actions relative to the design of faith-based programs were generated from the interviews and not my observations of participants at work. Participants explained that for the most part, the overarching faith-based principles and practices governing the faith-based dimensions of their work were already in place when they became principal and so their actions mostly involved making modifications based on changing schedules or emerging trends or adding activities as needed throughout the different terms. In this area of work, and when content and standards needed to be developed and/or evaluated, participants worked with the managers of their denominational boards, their local religious leader, and, in some instances, senior teachers to develop said curricula and standards for school-led faith-based activities. Curricula and standards were developed in keeping with fundamental biblical tenets of each denomination and participants explained that they tried to make these teachings and practices relevant to contemporary social contexts. Of the focus for their faith-based curricula design, Beth shared:

I work with our school manager to develop a curriculum, for religious instruction…. So daily routine, I go out in the morning… I sit in classes. I ensure that the spiritual well-being of the school is catered for. So, morning devotion is extremely important… Every other Thursday we have chapel with the manager. We also look at the values, spiritual aspect of our students with the Manager… the trend that is taking place in Grenada, or trend in the World and so sometimes we tailor religious activities for that as such …. the Manager comes in and we would speak to the students… Additionally, he [the manager] would have put together a sort of curriculum for what we call Bible Class/Class Devotion…. He also supplies booklets for that, things that he believes that the children, would guide the students' spiritual development. This [work] is connected to my Christian beliefs as an individual not just being part of my work as principal.

It was apparent that Beth held strong religious convictions that allowed her to seamlessly lead her school's religious programs. Several other participants described similar religious devotion.

As part of the work of supervising their schools' religious programs, some participants also spoke of setting a particular spiritual tone in their schools. Both Jim and Meg related that, oftentimes, assemblies and specific times of the school year were dedicated to specific themes, and that they invited speakers to address students, teachers, or the entire school on said themes. Jim indicated that during assemblies, the teachers prepared their classes based on a specific theme and included a reading from the Bible and several religious songs. He explained, "There is a schedule there now so the teachers would lead and then once a month the parish [religious head] who is the manager of the school and the [religious leader] in this parish he will take them in for church service". In addition to themed assemblies, weeks, and other periods of the calendar year, Meg also incorporated a faith-based action to daily life at her school. She explained:

Another thing I did too since becoming the principal, well you might have heard the music playing, well I'm playing the patriotic songs now as it's Independence time, but I play gospel music – from seven fifteen in the morning, it begins to

play. Whether or not we are here. The system is dedicated to that. I find it sets a really nice, spiritual tone to the day, and I have had many people, those passing on the road, neighbours, and students and teachers here tell me they find it really inspiring.

Jim and Meg did not belong to the same religious denomination but they both shared a similar perspective on how a program designed around faith could be beneficial to student development. Participants also undertook more targeted actions in leading and supervising the faith-based programs designed for their schools.

Leading and Supervising Programs. Taking charge of, assuming responsibility, and, more broadly, being accountable for their school's religious programs was a major way that participants engaged in the faith-based aspects of their work. As participants described, this aspect of work necessitated several administrative actions, especially in relation to keeping records, reporting, and supervising. For instance, several participants explained that information on the numbers of students who were members of the church and their statuses regarding important rites (depending on denomination) were collected and reported to the church through its management board. Participants also described other ways of fulfilling accountability to the church, by way of the manager and the management board. "I communicate regularly with my manager. Communication could be written or oral. So, by way of telephone calls, emails, face-to-face, this aspect of work gets done", explained Beth. Steph reported that she also liaised regularly with church management about faith-based programs at her school. She added, "This [communication] could include submitting written and verbal reports on the initiatives, instruction, or needs". In a previous quote, Meg indicated that a big focus of her work was on upkeeping the standards of the church as well as the state, and she too, along with other participants, listed similar media of communication between her and the church relative to her school's religious programs. In addition to meetings (written and face-to-face) with boards of management including managers, priests, pastors, and other denominational heads, participants also worked in their schools overseeing weekly school assemblies, leading morning prayers, monitoring religious curricula.

Participants explained that they co-constructed faith-based content with staff, oversaw and directly observed classroom instruction of this content, and/or delegated staff such as HODs to report to them on same. In most cases that I observed, the most consistent and direct actions participants undertook in leading and supervising their schools' religious programs occurred during classroom devotions on mornings and at general school assemblies held for the entire school population. Morning routines were similar and consistent with all eight participants in the study. Meg elaborated on morning routines:

> I get in in the morning, I do my usual greeting, to my secretary, the janitor, and teachers. We have devotions, sometimes I even walk to a class for devotion. We have devotions every morning. Mondays we do general, Tuesdays- staff, Wednesdays we do House meetings, Thursdays the classrooms and Friday mornings we have Chapel. We sing hymns and other gospel-based songs, read scripture, have an inspirational talk based on a biblical doctrine or Bible story

Generally, participants described leading and overseeing daily teachings according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ – love of God and mankind, obedience to God and His Commandments, praying and fasting, and attending Mass and other services to worship the Holy Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit). I recorded all seven participants engaging in various forms of religious work, including meeting with their manager, sending and responding to emails around different aspects of their schools' faith-based programs, and meeting with teachers to create or evaluate teaching content or assembly itineraries. Generally, assemblies were conducted in the school's auditorium, at the church or chapel, or in the open just outside the school and classroom devotions were held in individual classrooms and/or blocks of classes.

For participants who were active members of their church, some aspects of the religious components of their work merged with their lives outside of the school organization. "My life – as minister of the gospel and a principal – is subsumed in a number of roles, whether at church, the school, or in the community I cannot easily separate my identity as principal or [religious leader]", said Chad. Chad described his

work visiting youth and truant students in the community on Sunday evenings after church, a time he was confident that he would find them at home. Steph also described faith-based work conducted on Saturdays when she went to the vegetable market and on Sundays when she went to church. She elaborated:

> Even when I go to church, I'm working … sometimes I make announcements in church that are school related, like registration for new students. I will put it in the bulletin, or I can make a verbal announcement. The students who are preparing for [important milestone/passage sacred to the denomination] are supposed to be attending church so I am taking a mental note. Sometimes I walk with the register to make sure I tick them off, you know, they're at church, or [sacred occasion for this particular denomination], I walk with the register, and I tick them off because these are the, some of the requirements for [important milestone/passage sacred to the denomination]. They should attend and be part of the life of the church.

Chad and Steph indicated that they undertook such work outside of the regular hours of school because they understood their work as not being a regular eight to four job and because they were committed to their faith and the development of moral and God-fearing Grenadian citizens. In fact, most participants did not seem peeved at having to engage in such extended hours of work or having to undertake work on what should otherwise have been their personal time.

Providing Counselling and Resources

Providing counselling and resources to support wellbeing was a second way participants undertook faith-based work. While several participants referenced these services in general, two participants, namely Jim and Beth, went into some depth about the need for these services and how they drew on them to support their school communities. Both participants clarified that these services were not drawn on to support students' spiritual wellbeing only, but their academic, emotional, and physical, as well. Jim explained that his early foray in using counselling and other wellbeing resources was to support students who experienced abuse at home. He elaborated:

I have a few cases well [of child abuse]. I channel significant effort in providing direct help because, as you know, my background is in [identifies specific academic field of therapy and his position as a religious church leader and the biblical expectations around pastoral care]. But I also reached out to regional colleagues, you know, because some of the supports, both human and otherwise, are, you know, a bit lacking.

Jim described this work as "caring for [his] flock" (a reference with Biblical significance) and explained that in generating counselling support and resources for his school, he had to engage in a lot of "prayers, politicking, writing letters, making phone calls, and promising to lend [his] expertise and time to causes". I observed him in one such telephone call speaking with an official in the Ministry of Education about the status of the counselling service he had requested in writing several months before. Bev and Will explained that their school district had counsellors stationed to work with schools and so they availed themselves of those services for their students.

Like Jim, Beth connected her approach to counselling and providing support services to her faith. I observed, but did not sit in due to confidentiality, two meetings between Beth and the school's chaplain and manager (also the religious head of the affiliated church). As Beth related to me after these meetings, she apprised the chaplain about the progress of the school's religious curriculum and solidified plans for the Thursday Chapel visit upcoming. In one of these meetings, Beth also discussed the counselling supports for one of her students that the chaplain was assisting the school with procuring, with commitments made to pray for the individual child and her family and update the chaplain on her progress. In another example, my observations of Beth were interrupted to facilitate a private, face-to-face meeting between Beth and the school counsellor to discuss ongoing counselling services for this student. Hence, while not all participants who provided counselling and other supports to students claimed to do so out of a faith-based imperative, it was apparent that the strong compassion that some participants demonstrated held a Christian ethos. This work supported the all-round development of students, but as cases of Jim and Beth illuminated, fundamental Christian/biblical beliefs shaped some participants' approach to this dimension of work.

Engaging in Community Outreach

While I did not observe participants engaged in any community outreach initiatives, a few participants described such work as another set of actions they undertook in fulfilling faith-based responsibilities as school principal. Beth, Meg, and Chad described leading and/or monitoring school excursions into surrounding villages for various environmental clean-ups and to minister to youth, visit other denominational churches in the community, and execute fundraisers to support school initiatives and other local drives. Meg viewed this work as a form of evangelization. She explained:

> From the church's end again, that's another thing specific to us, we have a Day of Prayer. On that day, sometimes the children even organize a Prayer Walk. They say, "We want to go and pray at the Home". We stop at people's homes and pray and the feedback that has been coming has been positive … When we have our Week of Prayer, we go out to our local church as well as to [names another church of the same denomination in a nearby community] … The whole school, as far as, anyone who wants to come, they come, and the children do the programs at the church… It is an important part of our Christian mandate as a church and as a school.

Beth described similar outreach efforts like Meg's and also viewed evangelism as an important part of her mandate as a Christian and the school's mandate as a religious organization. While Chad's work included community development, it was done on a personal and not a school level. Further, the outreach efforts Chad described, while tied into his faith as a Christian, was not based on any specific doctrines enshrined in his denomination. Instead, he described his efforts as based on basic Christian principles of love for self, God, and neighbor and seeing his community flourish. Along these lines, Chad explained that he served on several boards and organizations within the school community, his own community, and at the national level, lending his expertise as an educator, sportsman, counselor, and religious leader.

Generally, participants described initiatives that were school-wide in the sense of being on the school's calendar and generating participation by a wide cross-section of the

school. In addition, there were some community outreach initiatives that required mostly participants' involvement and were predicated on the participants' position and/or experience as an educator, principal, church leader, parent, sportsman/athlete, or favoured qualities and skills or expertise.

Undertaking Administrative/Management Work

Participants engaged in a range of administrative/management-oriented actions in fulfilling the formal dimensions of their work. Participants' formal duties and responsibilities were laid out in and empowered by the *Education Act* and attendant legislation and directives from the Ministry of Education and its affiliate district offices. (Faith-based components of participants' work, even those that entailed any administrative actions by participants, were broadly presented above and so are not included in this section.) By administrative/management work, participants were focused on deploying, supervising, and evaluating staff, maintaining order and discipline, ensuring and preserving the safety of the school building, and protecting the integrity of the organization as a place of learning. In this section of the chapter, I examine three categories of actions participants undertook to comply with their formal administrative duties, namely keeping records and reporting; managing and supervising schedules and resources; and maintaining order, discipline, and security.

Keeping Records and Reporting

One of the main kinds of actions participants undertook in fulfilling compliance of their formal duties was record-keeping and reporting. Participants undertook these actions in several areas, including finance, student and teacher attendance, student discipline, student achievement, and daily incidents. Common media that participants undertook to record and report data included written statements, emails, phone conversations, and face-to-face meetings.

Maintaining Daily Logbook and Visitors Entry Book. One of the main ways participants kept records was through the upkeep of what was referred to as a daily logbook (commonly called the Log) and a visitors' entry book in both primary and

secondary schools. The visitors' book compiled a list of visitors including government officials, church leaders, parents, and other people who came to the school on official business. Visitors were required to sign in their time of entry and exit and explain their purpose for coming to the school. During our interviews and my observations of them at work, a few participants asked me to sign the visitors' entry book and indicate a general reason for my purpose at the school; in most instances, we agreed on "visit with the principal" as the purpose. Two participants explained that the nature of my visit did not warrant an entry in this book. The visitors' entry book was made available to the district education officer and any other Ministry of Education official for viewing when requested. A few participants also collated this information into a written report in the Log as part of their daily records. Participants kept the logbook and therein recorded eventful incidences that occurred daily such as student illness or acts of violence requiring medical attention, visits by officials from the government, church, or other organizations, or even plumbing or infrastructural issues disrupting instruction and/or compromising safety. As participants described, the logbook was occasionally checked by the district education officer and any other authorized personnel from the Ministry of Education. Below, Jess detailed this aspect of her administrative work, differentiating between her use of the daily logbook and the visitors' entry book:

> Whatever happens on the plant for the day goes in the Logbook. So, it is a summary of daily events… For instance, if I observe that there were two students fighting and to the effect of one damaged the other and has to be brought for medical attention, I would report this in the Log. Because damage is done and then it is something I have to report to the Ministry. Or if, for instance, there is a teacher who is absent, I have to put it in the Log. Absenteeism goes in the Log because reporting attendance is another aspect of my work. If I met with a committee, I put it in the Log. We had X, , Z committee meeting. So, anyone who visits, any ministry official who has access to the Log, who is visiting can get a glimpse of what happened the day before in the school. The Log is for the Ministry Officials, it's for the Board, if any member of the Board comes or if a high official, let's say the Parliamentary Representative visits, they will access the

Log, not to read it but to write in it. Ministry Officials only can read the log. But parliamentary reps or other high officials cannot read the Log. And other visitors would write in the visitors' book.

Other participants described similar uses of their visitors' entry books and daily logbooks. Above, Jess also touched on other areas of responsibility that participants were mandated to record and report on, including school demographics and attendance.

Generating Data on Students and Teachers. Participants described several emphases in their recording and reporting of data on students and teachers. Major areas of focus included student demography, attendance, achievement, teacher demography, attendance, performance, and qualifications, and daily and weekly records and school improvement plans.

Collating Student Demography, Attendance, and Achievement Data. With regards to the student population, data were collected and reported on statistics including sex, age, and parent/guardian information, attendance, class sizes, formative and norm-referenced assessments, co-curricular and extra-curricular records, transfers in and out, truancies, expulsions, pregnancies, deaths, and even incarcerations. Jess described what this aspect of work looked like at the primary level, and Bev, the secondary, respectively:

> The statistics … for daily student attendance, is ongoing every day, you know, teachers take attendance every day. And we have a monthly return form in which we put all this information …. on the 15th of every month, it is due to send to the Ministry… Because they also use that, numbers that are collected, for their own statistics for the Ministry. At the end of the month, we have to do the monthly returns, so that last week or last couple days of the month, that is the time we calculate the teachers' time. They [the teachers] enter it in a book manually and then at the end of the month we have to do that typed, get it typed out. Things like the student [attendance] registers and so I try to check them like within the first three weeks of the school term … I will have ensured that I checked all registers and signed them.

There are quite a few areas we must report on … for both students and teachers, both in terms of total population, sex, attendance, how many grade ones, twos, threes, etc. and how many students in each class; also, subjects offered and how many students sitting each subject, and so on. And especially when the CXC syllabi start, numbers of students sitting the various subjects, and at the fifth form level, numbers writing the subjects for CXC … The teachers send up this information to the office and the school secretary works with me to put that information together for the Ministry.

In this aspect of work, teachers collected this information at the class and form level and passed along/up these details through the principal's office to the principal who then compiled the statistics into a larger spreadsheet and forwarded along to the MOE. It was apparent that participants depended on the input of teachers and their office assistants in fulfilling administrative aspects of their work.

As Bev also alluded to above, collating and reporting specific kinds of data regarding student achievement was another dimension of work that participants undertook as part of broader compliance. Here too, participants depended on their teachers. These included data on school improvement plans, results of assessments including end of year grades, promotion rates, justifications for retentions, and student samples as part of the criteria for the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA) in primary schools and Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate Examinations (CSEC) in secondary schools. For instance, as Bev indicated above, secondary school principals were extremely busy confirming, recording, and reporting CSEC numbers every year. Regarding the primary level experience, Steph shared:

In terms of administration, the areas are providing monthly reports, answering emails from the Ministry of Education … Like CPEA is coming, they sent a checklist of the dates and so, so I print three copies, I give it to each of the teachers and I have my copy, just so we can keep tabs on dates and so on. So,

student projects, grades, and assessments and the like, we have to be on top of things to provide accurate information to the Ministry.

Generally, participants had specific commitments and administrative work around external examinations. These were largely based around CPEA in primary schools, and CSEC in secondary schools. Collating and reporting data on teachers was another aspect of recording keeping and reporting for participants.

Collating Data on Teacher Demography, Attendance, Performance, and Qualifications. As several participants explained, typical data on teachers requested by the MOE were around punctuality and absenteeism, subject areas and grades taught, and sometimes even qualifications and statuses (whether permanent or temporary). Several participants, including Jim and Beth, expressed their exasperation with these latter areas. Jim stated, "Sometimes I don't know what is going on down there [at the MOE]. You should think they employed the teachers so they should have this information." Beth also shared, "There is such a demand from the Ministry for principals to constantly send information, as principal you have to do a lot of writing. They seem to always be losing teachers data … they are always asking for these things". With respect to temporary teachers, there was another layer of reporting that participants had to undergo, as temporary teachers in Grenada are evaluated more periodically. Beth explained her focus:

> I keep personal records, my own records to inform me about what I have done with teachers. That is in addition to the official records I must submit. So, if I go to a class, what I have observed, I keep record of that. All of these are important because at the end of the term I have to submit reports on temporary teachers. You also have the appraisals to submit, too, and this applies to all teachers. I also, there is the weekly focus that you have to do as a principal. Daily focus and weekly focus. I try to put in activities as they are done, you know, accomplished on a daily basis.

Beth alluded to teacher appraisals that several other participants highlighted as another element that they must report on. This focus seemed somewhat more intense at the secondary level, perhaps because there are more untrained teachers in secondary schools

than in primary schools. In one instance, I observed Bev, who worked at a secondary school, collating information on the number of teachers at her school and the subjects that they taught. She had spent approximately one hour on this action when, due to several interruptions, she indicated she would resume that evening after school ended.

Maintaining Daily and Weekly Records and School Improvement Plans. Above, Beth also spoke of the daily and weekly records principals must keep and then summarize for the district education officer overseeing their schools. Other participants, including Steph, described such work. Steph shared:

> Okay, so it [weekly schedule for reporting work] has about four columns: your name, your school and so, and activities. Then, so Monday, Wednesday, days of the week, activities planned, activities actually undertaken, and comments. So, you say what went well, what did not go so well, how to plan on addressing that, observations, little things like that you put in that last column.

As Steph described, these records were broad enough to capture varied aspects of work and issues surrounding work but specific enough to allow her to focus on a particular issue or area, as necessary. She explained that her entries were often instruction-oriented around milestones in teaching and student progress, but also included significant developments and/or issues around teacher interactions, student and teacher discipline, or any concerns involving parents. Beth also said of the school plan:

> Additionally, apart from your weekly focus that you are supposed to do, you still have to do your school improvement plan. It is a development plan. So, these are things you have to keep working on. Since I got here, for these five years I have been working on this because of the academic standing of the students; they are very weak, and literacy has been a big problem here.

Further, both Steph and Beth highlighted the phenomenon of after-hours work that other participants detailed, indicating that, for the most part, she stayed back after school to complete these records because the workday was too busy and she preferred the quiet of the evenings when everyone else had left and she could work alone. Like several

participants, she also took this and other paper-based aspects of administrative work home to complete during the weekends.

School Finances. School Finances constituted a third area of record-keeping and reporting for participants. This work entailed generating budgets around annual and monthly expenditure and shortfalls and receipts for a range of purchases for school needs, such as toilet paper, printing paper, pens, chalk, dusters, and other teaching supplies, teachers' textbooks, costs for lawn services, and a variety of wholesale charges from supermarkets and other businesses. Participants were required to provide monthly financial statements to the Ministry of Education. Participants described actions in two main areas of work, namely budgeting and accounting for funding and paying bills.

Budgeting and Accounting for Funding. As participants articulated, accounting, and more specifically, actions around budgeting, was an important component of school administration. Managing money was an important aspect of this work. "I have to have a realistic picture of income and expenditure if I am to function", said Bev. Jim added, "It's never enough but I have to be clear on what I have and what I can or will get. Then I can plan accordingly". Will offered more detail:

> I make a comprehensive budget towards the end of the school year, based on the previous year's projections, shortfalls, and so on. Before the start of the term, I solidify this budget, because things can change; teachers leave, the school can be vandalized, there may have been oversights or so.

Participants calculated income and expenditure around a wide list, including infrastructure upkeeps, office supplies, teaching and learning materials, utilities, bills, and creditors, sporting equipment, and salaries for some ancillary staff. While principals in Grenada do not have the power to hire or fire teaching staff, some do have latitude with some ancillary staff, as sometimes the salaries for these employees come from the school's coffers. Generally, participants were able to predict annual income and expenditure due to the predictable and stable school calendar.

Participants seemed to appreciate the importance of accounting for funds in their charge by keeping meticulous financial records. I observed four participants at work in their offices preparing financial statements, tallying fundraising totals, signing cheques, and in one instance, meeting with a small committee of teachers to discuss an upcoming fundraiser. I also observed a telephone call between one participant and the Ministry relating to some aspect of a financial report recently submitted in which the Ministry official was seeking clarification. Participants generally expressed agreement with the importance of keeping financial records to inform their operations.

Paying Bills. While it may seem trivial, paying bills was an important financial action that participants undertook in their broader financial duties as chief administrators and managers of their schools. Every participant in the study spoke of the importance of this form of accounting for the sustainability of school operations. "Some bills you can't really owe because they would shut you off. So, electricity and telephones. Now, internet because of new technology", shared Steph. Jim also explained, "I have a large furniture bill at X [names shop]. Thousands of dollars for desks and chairs; the Ministry is supposed to provide them, but I am tired of begging and waiting. Every month I write them a little cheque towards payment". He elaborated that after the school fair coming up in a few weeks, the school's biggest fundraiser, he expected to draw in significant sums, so he hoped to write a final cheque to fully settle this debt. I witnessed participants, who asked to remain anonymous, writing cheques, using cash, and in one instance, even bartering goods and services to meet their financial obligations. With regards to the latter, one participant described an arrangement in which a parent provided the school with fruits and vegetables and the participant waived the school fees for this parent's two children attending the school.

Managing and Supervising Schedules and Resources

Participants described several actions around managing schedules and resources, including timetabling, securing accountability and providing oversight, sourcing, ordering, and allocating resources, and running errands to meet school needs.

Timetabling. A major aspect of administrative work for participants in managing schedules was timetabling staff and operations vital to the organizational functioning of the school. Participants in primary and secondary schools described similar, broad formulas but some contextual variances. For instances, the four participants in primary schools, Jim, Jess, Steph, and Tom described taking more direct responsibility for creating teachers' schedules, placing teachers in grades, and even setting times for some operations functions such as custodians' work schedules, tuck shop prep, and sporting and convocation schedules at set times of the academic year. Particularly, Will transitioned from a secondary school to become principal at his primary school and he described of this new experience:

> Things are more hands-on here. People really expect the principal to take charge of things, even small things that at my former school were easily delegated to staff. I find it interesting … it is like they don't trust, or whatever. They may hesitate to lead things, but if they know it comes from the principal, then they are less hesitant.

As a result of this mindset from his staff, Will explained that he has grown accustomed to taking charge of the timetable, scheduling sporting events during the second term and setting times for any work, activity, or event that must take place at school, especially when these involved people external to the school. Jim also mostly assigned teachers to classes himself, explaining that he sometimes involved his senior team comprising heads of departments (HODs):

> I set the timetable myself. In the past, there has been conflict, with teachers complaining about the grades the management team assigned them. So, I said ok, I will do it. My back is broad; let them voice their displeasure directly to me.

While Jim's reason for assuming the responsibility for timetabling was based on mitigating conflict, the other participants explained that at the primary level, the dynamics of teaching and the operations of the school were such that principals played a more direct role in timetabling and staffing.

Conversely, participants at the secondary level described timetabling as a largely delegated aspect of administrative work. This is perhaps because scheduling is much more challenging in secondary schools due to of school size, the magnitude of course offerings, and the large staff population. Beth shared this view:

> I need help with timetabling. It is very complex. We offer a number of subjects, taught by different teachers, and spread out across many grade levels. So, I do it here like we did at my old secondary school; we create a timetable cohort that includes several HODs, other teachers, one of my Math teachers, and even the IP person, to put the timetable together.

At the same time, Beth, as did the other participants working in secondary schools, explained that they gave final approval to the timetable, even making suggestions occasionally to facilitate teachers on partial study leaves, or even those who may, from time to time, express a wish for modifications and accommodations based on a particular need that participants deemed important.

Participants also described managing schedules outside of timetables and other instructional aspects of organizational life. There were times participants were required to set and coordinate schedules for other types of activities within the life of the school, including co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, building repairs, and special events involving persons external to the school such as political or club meetings or the holding of other social events. Bev, Jim, Steph, and Will explained that their schools were a popular venue for community events, requiring some administrative work in examining school schedules and ensuring there were no conflicts, seeking the necessary approvals from the Ministry of Education for these events, and then communicating final approval to both internal and external groups to utilize the school for these events. Bev shared:

> People often ask to hold events here. We do not generally have a problem if it does not conflict with our own internal activities. So, part of the work is looking at our own internal schedules and so and making sure there will be no such conflict. Often, I ask teachers heading groups, the secretary, or the timetabling team to check and let me know, you know, let me know what they're thinking,

liaise with a committee or HOD overseeing that department or division or what have you, and then communicate either the final decision to me, or let me know the specifics and I make a final decision. Whichever is needed from time to time.

Bev described timetabling and managing other kinds of schedules as an important aspect of administrative work she undertook on a regular basis. Other participants associated this aspect of administrative work as part of their overarching responsibilities of securing accountability and providing supervision.

Securing Accountability and Supervision. Participants also described both broad and specific accountability and oversight actions that constituted part of their broader actions around managing and supervising schedules and resources. Will elaborated:

On any given day, a number of pieces must come together that I have to supervise and be in charge of. Instruction, safety, health and wellbeing, the physical structure, all of these fall within my duties. Yes, there are teachers and other staff with more direct responsibility for a number of these pieces, but ultimately, as principal, you are responsible for everything that takes place at your school.

Will's perspective was also echoed by Beth, who preferred to run her school on a "tight but fair" basis. As Beth explained, everyday operations and routines such as serving lunch, transitioning from one class to the next, and even noise levels during the day, all impacted the quality of teaching and learning, and she maintained a "handle over these things". On her organization management overview in this regard, she elaborated:

A school principal is responsible for every single thing that goes on in a school on a daily basis. The type of food the tuck shop sells, whether there is too much loitering on the corridors, how long are teachers taking to transition from one class to the next, from one building to the next, how rowdy are the students; these all speak to the climate of the school. These areas may seem trivial, but because discipline was a big issue here when I first started, these are the areas I had to work on from day one and I see how much the turnaround has made a difference.

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So yes, I have a handle on everything. Nothing happens here that I do not know about.

The kinds of broad and specific gazes Beth described above were also reflected in other participants' responses when articulating the organizational management aspects of their work. Participants understood their work as administrators and managers of both the human and material resources at their school and they undertook both overarching and more direct actions to secure accountability and engage in oversight of their school organizations. Such oversight included managing the resources at their schools, both personnel and non-personnel.

Procuring, Allocating, and Managing School Resources. In addition to records, reports, financial statements, and timetables among others, another aspect of administrative work that participants undertook was in procuring resources to ensure the smooth operations of their school organizations. The resources that participants described as integral to a school's operations included teaching supplies and technology, office equipment, and staff. Participants described, and I observed, several actions around sourcing, ordering, and allocating these non-personnel and personnel resources to meet school needs. "I have to know what my people want and then find and dispense it", Beth shared. "From my budgets, and from more everyday or weekly lists, I know what the school needs to function", said Steph. Sourcing, ordering, and allocating resources was therefore an ongoing exercise, with some resources procured during and at the start of, or at the end, the school year.

Managing Non-Personnel Resources. Non-personnel resources participants procured as part of their administrative duties included teaching supplies and technology, office equipment. Because data collection unfolded during the sporting term it was not surprising that I observed several instances of participants sourcing and dispensing resources to support sporting activities in their schools. Will ended our observations early one afternoon to procure batons for the school's annual sports meet. During observations, Beth, Jim, and Bev signed cheques so teachers could purchase sporting equipment and prize medals. My observations of Will paused while he went to pick up a teacher in a

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nearby school to serve as a referee for track and field events at his school. In two other instances, participants oversaw the deployment of staff for the school's cross-country event: in one instance, Jim used his private vehicle to drop off teachers at different points along the route; in the other, Bev worked with a team of teachers to compile the job tasks list for the school's annual sports meet. I also observed several conversations between participants and various other persons in which participants were seeking resources to support other needs at their schools. Some resources, such as textbooks, planners, and school calendars are sourced, ordered, and distributed at the start of the school year. Others, such as sporting equipment and money to support athletics are sourced in time for disbursement around the sporting season.

Participants also described a variety of ways they ensured their school had at its disposal needed supplies. "Teachers give their list to my secretary, and I am responsible for ordering the supplies and making sure they are here in time to support teachers' work in the classroom", Jess described of her process in sourcing and allocating material resources. Steph shared similarly:

> I try to have staff submit their needs at the start of the school year so planning can be effective. Throughout the school year supplies run low, obviously, but as much as possible I want my teachers anticipate their needs. Even my tuck shop people; learning cannot take place if children are hungry so I ask my cook to submit her list every Friday evening so that over the weekend I can do the shopping and come to school with the supplies first thing Monday morning. Sometimes, after church on Sunday, or Saturday evening if I can, I would come and drop off the supplies here at school; especially if items have to be refrigerated or so.

Several other participants also reported working on evenings and weekends in procuring supplies for their schools. As previously captured, participants found it was easier and more convenient to undertake this work at these times due to demands during the school day. All eight participants in the study acknowledged that such work was common. I elaborate more below.

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Generally, however, participants who worked in primary schools assumed more direct responsibility for sourcing and dispensing supplies than their peers at the secondary level. For instance, Beth described her process ensuring needed resources were made available to support school needs:

…also ensuring that we have supplies for the tuck shop and ordering anything that we need for the day-to-day running of the school. Well, not ordering actually, but ensuring that we have supplies, whatever teaching aids, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, and so on. Saying, telling the person when we need to order, make sure the financial, taking care of the financial needs of the school and even the official records, bills and so, filing together with the secretary, referring to correspondence, answering mails or reading them, telling the secretary which ones to respond, which ones to print for … our records.

By "the person", Beth was referencing the teachers who sat on various committees at her school and to whom the participant delegated some of the responsibility of procuring resources. Will, who moved from a secondary school experience into a school principalship position at the primary level noted the difference in how resources were expected to be procured between the two schooling levels, "It is interesting. Being a primary school principal is such an intimate, more hands-on job. There is less delegating than at the secondary level. Everybody wants, *expects* [emphasis] the principal to take responsibility for every small thing". Beth, Chad, and Bev, working in the secondary school context, noted that substantial amounts of sourcing and ordering were delegated to other senior teachers or leadership teams. For instance, secondary school participants signed cheques and delegated some of the shopping for textbooks and teaching resources to either a team of teachers or department heads. "I look at their [budgets] yes, but I … just sign the cheques. We have committees in place for that [procuring resources]", Chad explained. However, Beth was more cautious. She explained, "I leave the buying up to them [teachers and/or committees]. But I scrutinize everything. I have to be accountable … It [the spending] has to make sense". As two participants in secondary schools described, there was a finance committee or its equivalent in place at the secondary level and this committee played took more direct responsibility for the sourcing, ordering, and

allocating of material resources between different departments and across various operations within the school.

Managing Personnel Resources. Participants described at lengths how material resources, and their management of them, facilitated teaching and learning and the overall operations of the school. At the same time, they identified the human resource as the most important ingredient in school success. And, while students were an integral aspect of a school's human resource, participants identified staff, inclusive of teachers and ancillary workers, as the cornerstone of a school's operations. Steph said:

> Teaching aids like chalk, pens, and textbooks and technology and telecommunications including computers, printers, and the internet are essential to our work. But we also need high quality human resource. Without teachers to provide the daily instruction, there can be no learning. Even our custodians, cafeteria employees, and the school watchman all play an important role.

Steph explained that due to her school dynamics, her work managing teachers and other staff was mostly cordial. She tried to ensure they were provided with the resources they needed to accomplish their work, and though she often supervised their progress and reprimanded when necessary, she described her school climate as positive and the environment as a pleasant place to work. Other participants described their efforts in both formally and informally supervising staff at work to ensure that objectives were being met and more specifically, high quality learning was taking place.

Maintaining Order, Discipline, and Security

Participants demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of order, discipline, and security in schools. They described broad and specific actions they undertook to ensure order, discipline, and safety that encompassed student discipline, staff/personnel issues, student safety, student and teacher wellbeing, and building maintenance.

Complying with Legal Responsibility for Order, Discipline, and Security. Broadly speaking, school principals are responsible for keeping schools, and those who work and learn in them, safe by ensuring they follow the regulations and protocols that

are laid out in their formal assignments. Consequently, participants spoke of their legal responsibility in making the workplace a safe space for students and teachers and described a range of actions they undertook in achieving this goal. Steph presented a broad overview of this aspect of work:

> There is a lot of administration and supervision as plant manager in terms of making sure that everything on the plant is working well; whether I need to call the plumber, the electrician, all of that … You have safety of both students and health and safety of both students and teachers. So that includes supervision of the caretakers; making sure that the school is always clean and ready, ensuring that it is swept during the holidays and so exterminated from pests and whatever rodents, whatever. Repairs and maintenance, that is my job too, furniture and you know, everything that teachers need to perform their jobs, making sure not just that everything is provided, but that everything is safe and conducive to a protected environment and positive working environment.

Above, Steph captured her actions around student safety, especially in relation to building maintenance. She also highlighted another element, that of creating a positive work environment for teaching and learning. Several participants referred to the *Education Act* when discussing their duty to ensure a safe, positive working environment for students and staff.

Ensuring Building Maintenance. Building maintenance was an important area of securing the physical wellbeing of students and staff in schools. Jim detailed his daily actions in securing the physical compound to support teaching and learning:

> I get here seven in the morning, update my Logbook if I have to, so as soon as 8:30 I move around. So, by the time nine o'clock when these situations that interrupt my day arise, at least I went around the plant. So, when I come, I inspect around and make sure it is clean, all four buildings. I talk to the caretakers; you know, there are health and safety hazards and so forth. Generally, I have to observe, look at the standards the kitchen operates with so if they have any flaws or weaknesses I will point it out because I said to the kitchen, "If public health

shuts you down that means you're out of a job". There are times, sometimes it could be real flowing, things moving, yeah and as fast as situations come, I have to prioritize which requires quick thinking. Say, broken furniture, I have to fix it so students can be comfortable. Leaving it lying around is dangerous because a broken chair leg can be used as a weapon, for instance … you came and saw me working on furniture with my grade six … I guess I'm engaging in things I'm not paid to do, but it's to, it helps student development and students feel appreciated and are safe and comfortable.

As Jim elaborated, managing the physical compound was a foundational step in protecting students as this ensured that students were learning, and teachers were teaching, in a safe and secure building with sound infrastructure and resources to support instruction.

Participants also explained that securing the school compound was another important dimension of ensuring order and safety. Jim, Will, Meg, and Jess experienced break-ins and acts of vandalism perpetuated against their school over the years. During observations, Meg showed me areas where vandals had cut through the fence to gain access to the school, explaining that she ensured she walked the plant every day, checking the fencing around the school property for any signs of damage. In Jim's and Will's case, the burglars destroyed school property including desks and windows and stole computers and office furniture, and so during their walkthroughs, they particularly checked for broken furniture and/or loose windows. At Chad's school, school keys have been an issue over the years. He explained that there were multiple keys circulating in the school and no accountability over their use. Hence, when he became principal, he decided to take personal responsibility for the school keys to help curb the problem. He shared:

Safety is an integral part of managing the institution. School keys factor into such safety. I am responsible for the keys. Just in case on a weekend something happens in a particular room, say a pipe bursts and it needs repairing before Monday, I have a key for every room. But I do not want to put teachers out of their way especially those who are in the technical and vocational aspect of the

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school, so all of them have a key for their various rooms. But I monitor who has access to keys very closely to ensure safety and accountability.

During my observations with Chad, he completed walkthroughs every day, looking to check that doors were properly locked and that teachers had in their possession keys issued to them. He explained that most weekends he came to the school, "just to check up on things", elaborating:

> The principal is supposed to manage the plant, whether it's management over the weekend, you just pass through to browse through, you just pass by, make sure that the securities are doing what they are supposed to be doing. For example, I recognize that on weekends the securities that have children, they would bring their small kids, two, three kids on the plant and I told them that's a no, no, I don't want anything happening to one of the children, they run into a wall or something like that. There is liability there, you understand.

Other participants acknowledged that they, too, visited their schools during the weekends, to check generally on things or to inspect something specific. Participants also described in detail, and I corroborated such acts during observations, the manual labour they undertook in attending to safety in their schools. I take up this pervasive challenge in the next chapter.

Undertaking Instructional Work

Participants in the study undertook actions designed to support teaching and learning at their respective schools. I identified four main categories of instructional actions that participants performed in fulfilling this administrative aspect of their formal duties as principal. These three broad actions were monitoring and supporting classroom instruction, engaging in goal-driven behaviours, timetabling, and building relationships and networks.

Monitoring and Supporting Classroom Instruction

As discussed in the previous chapter, participants believed that student learning was quintessential to a school principal's understanding of work. They further espoused that this understanding necessitated monitoring curriculum delivery and supporting classroom instruction. Participants described being able to accomplish this understanding of their work by putting structures in place to oversee the teaching and learning process and ensure compliance with prescribed curricula, including garnering first-hand experience of the instructional process unfolding daily in classrooms and relying on heads of departments (HODs) to monitor same and report back to them. For instance, Beth believed that supporting student learning necessitated paying keen attention to the quality of teacher and student interactions in her school. In this way, she explained, she was better informed as principal of the kinds of supports that were needed in classrooms. She described how she undertook this work:

> I am going to be popping into your class at any time, please do not be intimidated. I must observe in order to know what kinds of supports, in terms of resources, pedagogical development, learning needs, etcetera, are needed. I am looking for teaching-learning experience. You don't have to stop your lesson. I will not remain or may not stay for the duration of a lesson. Because in addition, you have the HODs who go around and do their supervision, and there are prescribed evaluation forms we fill out when we observe a teacher or a lesson. Just as I must observe a class and report on that each week I have my HODs do the same and I meet with them very often to discuss these evaluations. But when I come to your class I want to see how the children are interacting with what you're giving to them, and I want to see how you are now helping the children to interact with what you are giving to them… I am looking for content, strategies, resources. What are you teaching, how, and with what? What are you using to bring content across? Is it the prescribed curriculum? What strengths am I seeing that we can capitalize on and what are some areas that can be strengthened?

As Beth described, monitoring curriculum delivery entailed examining and evaluating the content, pedagogy, and pace of instruction. Beth was also interested in the overall teaching and learning experience, and she seemed to gauge that from students' reception to the content being presented to and/or shared with them. Other participants described a similar approach to Beth's. Several described their approach as 'killing-two-birds-with-one-stone'. By this I mean that several participants explained that monitoring curriculum delivery was not often a stand-alone undertaking. One aspect of the multimodal nature of principals' work was that participants conducted a significant amount of formal and informal observations during classroom and school-wide walkthroughs. During these walkthroughs, I recorded participants observing classroom teaching and student-teacher interactions, written content on the chalkboards, in students' notebooks, on the walls and corridors outside classrooms, and the general productivity level of teachers as they transitioned from classes or sat in their staffroom undertaking work. Participants described their monitoring of curriculum delivery as formal or structured when they set out with the express purpose of undertaking this task, with teachers sometimes being informed ahead of time. In other instances, their observations were more general (and thus less structured and/or planned), and served several ends, including curriculum, student safety, visibility and accountability, or interactions with students and staff.

Engaging in Goal-Driven Behaviours

Engaging in goal-driven thinking and actions was another way that participants approached aspects of their instructional work. By this I mean that participants were intentional and explicit about objectives they considered important in supporting student learning and undertook concrete steps to pursue and achieve these objectives. For instance, Meg spoke of having clear ideas of where the school needed to go and how to get there. "Being a principal means knowing where you're going and how to get there. You have to be specific about how to improve student achievement and take action to make sure your plans come to fruition", she said. Other participants related similarly, describing goal-driven behaviours in the context of the Grenadian school principalship as necessitating a clear understanding of what supports and actions were needed and explicit steps on how to go about achieving desired results.

When pressed on how they arrived at such determinations around goal-driven actions and/or what influenced their thinking along these lines, several participants referenced the broader school administration literature while others referred to expectations from the MOE regarding instructional leadership and efficient school management. Some participants specifically tied goal-driven behaviours to school vision and student success, with participants espousing different definitions around this notion of success. Several alluded to improving student learning, specifically test scores; a few others emphasized the holistic development of the child; and still others referred to being productive Caribbean and global citizens. In this sense, it appeared that while participants generally tied student learning to quantitative benchmarks, some nevertheless conceived of success more broadly or specifically, depending on their particular school context. And the specific conceptualizations of success that participants espoused appeared to shape their goal-driven behaviours around student learning. Recall, for example, that Beth worked in a school that was historically considered an underachieving school and negatively regarded by the public. She explained that every child should be given an opportunity to learn, and described her goal-driven behaviours in supporting this vision:

> I get up every morning and I am motivated to come because it means changing lives to me. That's what motivates me to come here every day. It means I have an opportunity to create change and because for me the situation is so different from other schools. It means bringing hope to a group of students that everybody saw as no good, not good enough for secondary school: "I don't want to come here, they are dunce children, they cannot learn, they cannot do anything". For me, getting up and come every morning is to bring hope to the children that I have here, helping them to understand that it is never too late to start and that they can achieve, and that they can have retention and they have ability and all they need to do is to harness their ability, their potential and to go for it. That's what motivates me, changes in the lives of children.

Hence, for Beth, work as an opportunity to change students' circumstances and ultimately their lives. She was passionate about students not being stigmatized and providing avenues for student fulfillment. Herein, Beth articulated how she aligned school vision

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and instructional frameworks including practices to support student outcomes. Like Beth, it was clear that the social, cultural, and economic contextualities shaped how participants perceived of, approached, and undertook goal-driven behaviours around the instructional dimensions of their work, inspiring the vision and goals they set to attempt to change the lives of their students.

Timetabling

Generally, timetabling was a primary action that participants undertook to manage schedules and resources as part of their compliance with the broader formal, administrative responsibilities of the position of school principal. I revisit this administrative action here to underscore its importance in participants' supervision of instruction at their various schools. More specifically, as part of planning and setting goals and allocating personnel and non-personnel resources to support instruction, participants had ultimate responsibility for identifying the areas – including grades, classes, subjects, divisions, departments, and so on – where resources were needed and assigning said resources to these areas. Hence, targeting resources to support critical learning needs was a layer of timetabling that participants considered important in fulfilling instructional components of work.

Timetabling, more specifically in this case, participants' action in matching learning resources, subjects, grades, and time intervals with teachers to support the best student learning outcomes, was a critical task for principals. Timetabling required participants to have a thorough and in-depth understanding of learning needs, teacher quality and qualifications, and leadership to push the realization of the school's vision in school practices and approaches. Bev shared:

> Well, timetabling is complex and involves a lot of moving pieces. Before we can finalize our schedules, we have to know what the student learning needs are, who are the teachers who would teach them? What kind of training or support does that teacher have or would need? How many grade ones, two, etc. are we going to have and do we have enough classrooms? Would I need to rotate lab work, for

example? Would I be without a teacher during the term? Can current staff fill any voids to ensure no gaps are left unattended?

Bev spoke to the considerations that were important in assigning teachers and resources to subjects and grade levels in schools. And, while participants working in both primary and secondary schools expressed that timetabling could prove a challenge for principals, a significant variance was evident. Participants working in primary schools played a more direct role in timetabling and described this aspect of work as less of a challenge than their peers at the secondary level. Participants working in secondary schools described creating timetables as complex given the wide range of subject areas offered and the large numbers of teachers having to be matched. They also acknowledged playing less of a direct role in creating timetables; they largely delegated to or shared this responsibility with senior management teams and/or HODS. Notwithstanding school level, however, participants generally agreed that their actions around scheduling were informed by knowledge of learner needs and teacher preparedness and their resolve to keep the focus on what was best for students.

Building Relationships and Networks

Building relationships and networks in the interests of student learning was another component of work that participants strongly advocated. While teachers were the focus of this work, participants included parents and the wider school communities as they saw these latter groups as also playing important roles in supporting student learning. Participants emphasized that, at school, teachers were the most significant factor in shaping student learning. They also acknowledged that their efforts, as principals, in addition to monitoring instruction for accountability and compliance, were best directed at ensuring teachers were equipped with the right tools to teach. For example, Jess indicated that many administrative and other types of clerical and logistic work consumed her time and limited her ability to observe instruction, so she instead tried to ensure resources were provided for classrooms. She reasoned, "I try my best to provide everything my teachers ask for to support teaching and learning … I also listen, empathize, and console when necessary because if our teachers are not happy, or are in

need, this impacts the children". Chad, too, acknowledged the important role teachers play in student learning. He stated, "I need people. The principalship is not a job accomplished solitary. I depend on teachers to do their jobs to the best of their abilities, and I lean heavily on my HODs and committees to keep me informed and to monitor school operations". Bev also agreed that teachers were "integral to a school's success". Indeed, participants were quick to assure that they did not abscond, shirk, or unduly delegate their responsibilities to teachers but all praised their hardworking teachers and admitted that their achievements as school principals were dependent on the teachers in their schools. They also related that build positive working relationships between themselves and the wider school community richly facilitated student learning.

Along these lines, several participants described how building relationships and networks external to the school tied into their understanding of their work as being committed to student learning. For instance, Meg indicated, "We try to work with the community as much as possible. Because this is where we get our children from; you want to encourage the parents to come, to send their children, to this school." Meg was alluding to how these relationships could be mutually beneficial to both school and community. Along these lines, Beth was especially proud of the turnaround in community perception from when she first became principal at her school that was negatively regarded and experienced high rates of academic underachievement. She shared:

> They [the community] see this as their school now. They want to be involved and are involved. They are now proud to call this "their" school". When I first came here, nobody wanted to be associated with this school. They called the students dunce and said the school was a sports school. But after working for the past few years on student learning and morale, we see the perception has changed. The community sees this as "their" school now. It took a lot of knocking on doors, conferences with parents, extra resources, and one-on-one time to support students in literacy and numeracy, tapping into our connections at the church, former colleagues, principal friends, whomever we could find to help us.

Beth credited the relationships and networks she forged with the positive turnaround in student learning at her school. As a former teacher in Grenada, I knew of the unflattering reputation this school held and during my observation with Beth observed firsthand her actions in building and sustaining relationships to support student learning. For instance, I observed her take two telephone calls, one from a private citizen and another from a small business owner, both wanting to sponsor several races at the annual sports meet that was coming up in a few days. I also recorded three meetings between Beth and a parishioner from her church, a literacy coordinator, and a pastor who was also a counsellor. Beth explained that these meetings were to provide direct supports to several students with learning challenges. As she explained, she forged these connections through her outreach and pastoral work in the community and her friendships with other principals and educators in the country.

Forging these kinds of relationships was especially critical for participants given the chronic fiscal shortages schools experience in Grenada. As Jim stated, his school depended on the benevolence of parents, the community, the diaspora, and other well-wishers to support school initiatives, especially in terms of procuring supplies and other resources for instruction. He explained, "The diaspora, including the church diaspora, is an important stakeholder for us. We cannot achieve our work without diaspora support". In addition to diaspora support, Jim credits his relationships with other primary school principals in his parish in yielding positive returns for his school:

> We are a network here. A network of support, resources, and mentorship. As the most [names denomination] senior principal, I am often called on by other principals in the parish for advice or some form of support. I, too, have relied on my colleagues, for supplies or other resources for my school… Ms [names principal in a primary school of another denomination], for example, always helps us out with books for our library and other learning aids. Things are tough all around and we [fellow principals] support each other to support our students.

As Jim went on to explain, his school was not favourably perceived in the public and so he struggled to build connections, particularly with the business community and through

private donations. Instead, he was able to build relationships and networks with other primary school principals in his parish and to an extent the diaspora to support instructional work at his school.

Summary

In this second of four findings chapters, I examined how principals spent their time engaged in their work. Such time was spent performing actions around three overarching areas of work, faith-based, administrative/management, and instructional. In attending to the faith-based aspects of their work, principals, among other actions, supervised their schools' religious programs, providing spiritual counsel, and allocated resources to meet students' physical and spiritual needs. Principals' administrative and management-oriented work was the most prevalent type of work recorded in the study and accounted for much of principals' time. Keeping records, reporting, supervising schedules and resources, maintaining order and discipline, and ensuring a safe school environment were major actions. Principals also undertook some instruction-related work, around monitoring student learning through classroom visits, teacher consultations, and evaluating lesson plans and students' work, timetabling teaching and co-curricular activities, supporting teacher development, and forging connections between schools and colleagues to facilitate student learning.

CHAPTER 8: CHALLENGES PRINCIPALS FACE IN THEIR WORK

In this chapter, I examine some major challenges participants faced in their work. Particularly, the chapter illuminates how socioeconomic and cultural arrangements around education and the work of school principals constrained and exacerbated participants' work. The challenges explored are around limited denominational supports, resource constraints, formal dimensions of work, implicit beliefs and norms around education, implicit expectations of work, relationship with teachers, parental involvement, and community relations.

Limited Denominational Supports

Given that most schools in Grenada are publicly funded religious institutions, exploring supports that schools received from their governing denominations was an important consideration in the study. Along these lines, the seven participants working in these schools conceded that they were dissatisfied with the level of supports that schools received from affiliated religious organizations. As they described, all funding including salaries paid to school staff came from the government. To the extent that denominations supported their affiliated schools, such supports were mostly in the form of resource aid, human and material. Jess related,

> The [names denomination] offers some supports to schools. They [the church] sometimes help out with teaching supplies, assistance with technical or administrative areas, transportation for certain occasions. Mostly, training for principals, so, we don't have to wait on the Ministry for training. Once a term there is a formal training workshop for principals. But in terms of financial, that comes from the government through the Ministry. The church does work mostly around the religious side too, you know, the doctrines, standards, rites of passage, etcetera of the church… It [the supports] could be more but they do much more than my colleagues tell me about their denominations.

Jess was conceding that her denomination could provide better and/or more supports to its affiliate schools. Nevertheless, she was appreciative of what supports the

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denomination did provide her school. She also alluded to the lack of supports other denominations provided their affiliate schools, a situation that other participants acknowledged. Participants shared that limited supports from their church body exacerbated resource shortages, thus constraining their efforts to meet school needs.

Several participants therefore concluded that their respective denominations shared responsibility for the poor state of Grenada's education system. However, only two were willing to go on record. "We can't always wait for the Ministry, the church can do better", shared Will. He and Jim both referenced how a specific denomination – the same denomination to which Jess referred to above – assisted their affiliate schools in teacher and principal development as opposed to the lack of efforts by their own denomination/church. "They [the particular denomination] organize workshops throughout the different terms for their teachers and principals. Some are even regional", Will said. Jim added:

> … my take is that the church is not pulling its weight. I have said so to my superiors. X denomination will ensure, for example, training for their teachers; you do not have to wait on the Ministry to train. I am saying within [our] community or Grenada's in general if the church board, our education central board of management, you know, helps with leadership with principals … They could find people outside of our denomination who would volunteer their time or give them a stipend or honorarium just to do it. The X denomination does that, so they train their people how to do the finances, they train their principals, their teachers… so we need to do more of that.

Jim concurred with Jess that supports from denominations were mostly around teacher and principal training. He believed that such supports were needed and would help address some of the professional development challenges he believed existed among Grenadian educators.

Resource Constraints

While participants lamented the limited nature and scope of denominational supports in schools, they identified the most major challenge facing Grenadian principals as the lack of resources to meet school needs. Several shared that even before Hurricane Ivan, schools faced challenges in having appropriate space and equipment to offer some subjects and other aspects of the curricula. For instance, one participant was a vice principal and the other a new principal just predating the passage of Ivan, and they both shared how they sent their students to other schools and community centers to complete practical courses because of either a lack of or inadequate space and resources to complete these courses at their own schools, and that this practice continued to present day. "My students have been going to the [X denomination] school center for years to do their carpentry and cooking and so on", Jim said. Bev recounted stories dating back two decades of some of her colleagues having to send their students to complete practical projects for their external exams at the laboratories of other schools because of a lack of proper facilities at their own schools for students to complete same. "I can understand this before – even after – Ivan, but still today?" she asked. Altogether, inadequate funding to support school operations, insufficient resources to meet school needs, and outdated or dilapidated physical and organizational structures and facilities are among the major issues impacting schools and the work of principals today.

In fact, several participants still worked in unrepaired structures, damaged since the passage of Hurricane Ivan in 2004. Still others had their previously concrete structures replaced by several ply buildings that were supposed to be temporary; fifteen years after the passage of this hurricane these ply buildings remained and were in disrepair. Bev shared, "We lost most of the roof in our second wing from [Hurricane] Ivan, and as you can see, we still haven't gotten it back… this housed our science labs and tech rooms, so…this really restricts what we can do". Jim also recounted:

> Well as you know, we went completely flat after Ivan. It took …three years to get
> "temporary" [his emphasis] ply buildings. We had to use the church for a long
> time after Ivan, and the church itself sustained a bit of damage. That meant we

could not house all the students at once, so we had to implement a shift system. Teachers were complaining. Parents were in the school every day complaining. I mean, it was bad. The logistics, health and safety, mental health, it was a mess … About two years ago it got really bad … you know, the rain and elements … The ply was … just falling apart. We begged and begged …. We got some ply to board up really bad areas, but as you can see, things are not good".

At the same time, not all participants navigated work in the kinds of circumstances Jim and Bev described above. At the time of the study, Jess was still working out of ply structures and badly damaged concrete structures, but a new school was almost complete. Will's school did not sustain major damage from the hurricane, but the building was very old and concrete slabs were falling off unto the walkways, creating a safety concern. Chad and Steph worked in relatively new schools with minimal disruptions to their work from Hurricane Ivan. However, while not all participants worked in dilapidated buildings, all indicated that inadequate and oftentimes outdated infrastructure and material resources impacted their work, and further, that either they lacked human resource altogether or qualified personnel to support school goals. As Chad clarified, "My issue here isn't the state of buildings but… not the most modern or technologically advanced equipment, compounds, or specimens or so for science labs, or specially designed classrooms for the foreign languages or technical subjects". Below, I further examine resources as a problem for and in participants' work in relation to inadequate and derelict schools, compromises to the curriculum, pedagogy, and student learning, and exacerbations on participants' actions relative to monitoring instruction, disseminating information, and ensuring accountability and student safety.

Inadequate and Derelict Schools

Inadequate and outdated infrastructure seriously impacted teaching and learning and required participants to pivot, navigate, and otherwise get creative and resourceful about certain aspects of their work. As participants described, due to the lack of adequate and safe space, rooms had to serve double duties at times, so in a few instances that I observed, the participant's office was at the back end of a classroom, in the library,

sharing a low wall with the tuck shop, and next to a classroom and separated by a partial screen. "As you see, I share my office with the tuck shop", said Jess. During data collection I observed firsthand how the noise from the tuck shop during recess and constant vehicular and foot traffic a few feet away negatively impacted Jess' work. She oftentimes cut phone calls short, halted conversations with her secretary, visitors, or me, and in once instance, took a laptop to her car to compose and send off some emails relating to work. Jim's office was similarly unsuitable, located in a makeshift library with partially ruined books (attributed to Hurricane Ivan) stacked in piles and a gaping hole about four inches wide in the floor. I observed Jim and a few students skirt that opening several times. This room also served as the remedial reading room and during data collection we often had to leave to afford some privacy to a class whenever in session.

Jim's working conditions were the worst of all eight participants in the study. While observing him, I noticed several other areas of concern. Parts of the roof in several of the ply structures comprising his school had large holes and other parts were caving in, some of the boards on the sides of several ply buildings were very rotted, as were some wooden poles supporting awnings. Further, many students did not have desks and chairs and were either leaning against walls, sitting on the floor, or taking purchase on their classmates' backs to complete classwork. Teachers were utilizing makeshift blackboards and instruction was mostly limited to 'chalk and talk'. He shared, "This is not a safe place for learning, and I shudder at the lawsuits that parents can bring". Will described a similar environment with insufficient furniture and unsafe structures. He indicated that a "new normal" had settled into many schools since Hurricane Ivan. As he described, some schools, including his own, did not have a large enough hall to hold assemblies and so schools resorted to having "block assemblies", meaning by divisions and/or grades. This was also the case at Beth's, Jess', Meg's, and Bev's schools. Further, at Beth's, Jess' and Bev's schools, teachers were sharing classrooms separated by screens, or were holding lessons outside under shady trees, weather permitting. Will expounded:

> It's little wonder most of our schools use outdated, rote methods of learning. I
> mean, believe it or not, we have come a long way and there is some technology
> available that teachers can use to modernize learning and make it fun and

interesting for the children. But it takes money to retrofit schools or even buy and install these aids … I do not think the content and pedagogy teachers are getting out of Teachers College are outdated really, well maybe some are, but really even though they are learning new ways to deliver content to students, when they return to the classroom it is back to the same old, because our schools are not designed for more than blackboard and chalk … what, I hear the island has one smartboard? And, well you know the school that has it.

Will's description of the state of teaching and learning in Grenada was echoed by other participants. Will also alluded to the politics and claims of favouritism that surround school funding in Grenada and how schools that enjoyed more favourable public regard were often better supported by the MOE and the public than lesser regarded schools. I delve into the complexities and contradictions around this issue below when I examine how expectations about what work is in the Grenadian context and public regard impacted participants' understandings and approach to work and the kinds of actions they undertook daily.

Compromises to the Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Student Learning

In another example, Bev described how an ill-equipped school presented in her work. Her school was situated on a hill and continuous flooding over the years – exacerbated by Hurricane Ivan – had eroded the path students took to and from the school farm as part of their field work in their science classes. Bev related, "It is really challenging when we want to go on the farm. Due to landslides after Ivan that entire side of the… hill caved… It is really treacherous for students to pass so they often have to go around, the long way". As she shared, this required changes to the timetable to allow extra time for several science classes, including Agricultural Science, Biology, and Integrated Science, to take place. So, practical sessions for this subject had to be curtailed and several other classes shortened to accommodate this circumstance. Instruction was also hampered in another area of Bev's school. She explained that the school temporarily stopped the practical component of some subject offerings to await repairs to infrastructure or complete said repairs themselves. "We lost our kitchen for Food and

Nutrition/Home Economics [after Ivan] and for a few years we shared space with the tuck shop's facilities. But it grew too cumbersome, and we had to stop … until we got a new kitchen", she explained. Several participants also could not offer some subjects at their schools, either because the Ministry could not find, or did not have the resources to hire, qualified teachers, or the teacher left the profession and the Ministry struggled to find a replacement who could teach specific combinations of subjects – because fiscal constraints meant the MOE could not hire teachers to teach just one subject.

As several participants articulated, the fiscal situation was so dire that even procuring everyday items such as dusters, chalk, and pens sometimes proved difficult. All eight participants indicated that their school was in debt, although for Steph, the figure was smaller compared to the others. However, as I examine below, Steph was principal at one of Grenada's foremost primary schools and she described a great network of supports that mostly ensured school needs were met. Other participants such as Jim, Jess, and Will were not as fortunate. Will, for instance, lamented:

> We have to buy toilet paper, bleach, broom, cleaning agents, these are regular items that can pose a challenge for us to have the money to buy. Even duster and chalk, sometimes it doesn't [we do not] have, you have to buy them, the Bristol boards, the picture aids, the alphabet charts …. all those things that enhance the classes. Sometimes, thank God, we got ourselves a contribution outside of the school, someone contributing to the school, a past student who had a drive to raise funds and …. so we have donation which helps along. The material, the school itself the infrastructure, poses some limitations … At the beginning of every school year, we have to be nailing, putting pieces of wood together for a makeshift table, if you can call them tables. We do not have enough desks and chairs. So, we either buy the materials to make our own or we order furniture. In fact, we ordered, I think it was 30 tables and have to pay for them. By the end of the annual fair which was last September we were able to pay them, so we finished paying them off. We were paying in instalments, we cannot pay all one time [the full amount].

The grave issues around resource shortage and constraints facing Grenadian schools and challenging Grenadian principals' work were illuminated by Will above. Will also referenced the revenue generated from fundraisers, in his instance, an annual fair, another contentious issue that participants faced in their work (examined below). Above, Jim had also described utilizing funds generated from school fundraisers such as annual fairs to pay off school furniture debt. Overall, accounts abounded of the compromises made to instruction, curriculum, and student safety on account of inadequate and dilapidated conditions and inadequate resources at participants' schools in Grenada. Unfortunately, participants outlined more direct impact of these circumstances on their work.

Monitoring Instruction. It was difficult for participants to fulfill their responsibilities around instructional supervision given the severity of infrastructural issues at their schools. Several participants explained that their schools lacked proper printing equipment, computers, and reliable internet connections to facilitate teaching and learning and that there was not enough money to procure them. "I can't criticize my teachers if I'm unable to provide them the proper tools to conduct their work", Jim explained. Steph also shared that some of the needed textbooks were not available on island and so they had to facilitate the printing of photocopies for teachers' use, a dimension of work that was exacerbated for several participants due to lack of funds.

For a few other participants, their challenges were more basic, namely a lack of proper infrastructure for teaching and learning. "If it rains, forget it. I am trapped here. I can't get to any other part of the school", shared Jim. At least parts of all of participants' schools were housed in several board/ply structures. For instance, both Jess' and Jim's schools comprised of several detached ply structures with uncovered, dirt walkways. Hence, they had to walk out into the open to get from one building to the next, and if the ground was wet, then the walkways were muddy and slippery. I observed this firsthand. Further, classrooms inside of these structures were separated by partial screens and so noise was always an issue. At Jim's school, for example, some students were without furniture and would sit atop desks, on the windowsills, or lean against the sides of the classroom. The screened blackboard was loose, and teachers had to hang on to the sides when they were writing on it to reduce wobbling. "As you can see, this is not ideal", Jim

related during one of his school walkthroughs. He explained that because of these circumstances, he "had to cut teachers some slack", as far as teacher observations and formal evaluations were concerned. "I have to go easy on my teachers … these are not ideal circumstances. Some of the criteria … go straight out the window", he reiterated. Jess worked in similar circumstances, though not as severe as Jim's. She shared that she gave her teachers "top marks for resourcefulness" on account of how they were able to navigate the challenges at her school. For example, she described how students made chairs out of turned over buckets, tree stumps, and large rocks, and how teachers drew concepts in the dirt or utilized objects, food, and other resources abundant in the community as learning aids. It was apparent that for several participants, the issue was both outdated *and* inadequate infrastructure impacting their ability to monitor teaching and learning, including conducting fair performance appraisals for teachers. Will described how inadequate and outdated infrastructure presented a challenge in their evaluation of the instructional program at his school:

> I love ICT and always promote its use in the classroom. But … we do not have stable and strong internet. We have one laptop and one projector … Even the open concept of our classrooms, you know the cinder blocks and open spaces for ventilation, is not ideal for showing picture … sounds and lighting are poor. So, it is really frustrating because … I push my staff to go online, read up on pedagogy, diverse ways of reaching learners, you know, read, research, do better. And several are excited. But … then one [teacher] comes to use the laptop and projector in their class and then another one [teacher] wants it the same time. Or there are issues with connectivity, and half the class is wasted. And, when it does work, you can't see or hear properly …. It really frustrates your work… and I feel teachers' frustration, too. And then I have to evaluate them [teachers]. What am I evaluating [with respect to teachers], then? Handwriting?

While Will's parting comment was made sarcastically, he was clearly frustrated with the issue of inadequate and outdated infrastructure at his school. He related how teachers had to schedule time to use the school's scare resources to make learning fun and more current but grew frustrated with what he described as urgent, persistent issues in the basic

physical and organizational structures and facilities needed for the operationalization of schooling. Generally, participants explained that, given the severity of infrastructural issues at their school, monitoring instruction – particularly beyond ensuring approved textbooks were in use, providing teachers with basic resources such as chalk, dusters, and pens, and checking teachers and students' books periodically with the occasional classroom observation thrown in – was either not urgent due to high volumes of other kinds of work or too difficult or impractical to undertake as expected by their superiors given infrastructural and resource constraints faced in schools.

Disseminating Information. I observed firsthand some of the challenges several participants faced in communication mobilization at their schools on account of challenges with infrastructure. Most participants' schools were comprised of multiple buildings, and only two of them had public address (PA) systems. It has been the norm in Grenada that school assemblies, during which time all students and teachers come together, represented the ideal means through which information was shared with the school population. Most schools were able to open their classroom screens into an auditorium of sorts to hold these events. However, the current structure of some schools posed a challenge for participants in the study. After the passage of Hurricane Ivan, principals and staff were housed in wooden buildings, several per school. Spacing became restricted, especially in areas where principals did not have a church or community center nearby to accommodate these events. A few participants described holding assemblies in available yard space in or around the school, but in some cases, spacing was still insufficient to accommodate the entire school population. And inclement weather sometimes made this arrangement impractical. As a result, participants described holding morning assemblies by block and/or division; each class and/or grade level would have their own shortened assemblies. Jess explained:

> As you can see, we are pretty spread out, so it is difficult to get the entire school together for an assembly. So, most times we do it by block. Out in the open in the yard… if it rains, we have to cancel. So, I send my secretary or a teacher or student from class to class passing along relevant information.

During my observations of Jess, I witnessed one such assembly being cut short due to rainfall. A similar scenario played out twice at Jim's school. As a work around this issue, a few participants had a community center and the church nearby to host these assemblies. But, as Jess described, disseminating information in a school that was so spread out and oftentimes only accessible in dry weather conditions could prove challenging. Participants described visiting each block and/or classroom to personally pass along pertinent information or having an intermediary (usually the school secretary but sometimes a teacher or student) do so, verbally or in writing. However, participants' busy schedules often made the former option impractical. I inquired about the use of emails as a way of getting information out to staff, but most participants explained that that trend had not caught on at their schools. However, most participants indicated that there was a WhatsApp group chat that they and staff utilized for communication. A few participants also described challenges they faced hosting parent teachers' association (PTA) meetings due to a lack of a large enough enclosed area to hold the volume of parents. As a result, some participants held these meetings by grade or division, meaning that they were spending added time regurgitating the same information to different sets of parents.

Ensuring Accountability and Student Safety. Above, I outlined challenges that unsafe structures posed to student safety. At the same time, the structural makeup of several participants' schools impeded visibility and access, presenting another layer of challenge for participants in fulfilling their responsibilities around accountability and student safety. While all eight participants' schools comprised of ply structures, partially or in full, these wooden buildings were particularly compacted in the cases of Jim, Beth, and Jess. This restricted their ability to cast a wide gaze on the school from any given vantage point and the ability of others in the school to see them about and around the compound. "Sometimes, I hear a commotion, but I have to literally walk into it to know what it's about", explained Jim. He described that with his buildings being so closely packed together, it was impossible to see what was going on around the school and so he expressed concerned that as principal, this hampered his ability to be fully in the know

about the goings on at his school. Jess described a similar issue, emphasizing the concern for the security of her students. She shared:

> God forbid there is an incident … of violence between students … we can't get there in a timely fashion because we can't isolate the noise. The buildings are so jammed together, it [the noise] could be coming from anywhere. This is a real safety concern.

Twice, once during observations and another the first interview, I experienced such an incident with Jess. We were in her office and heard a commotion coming from the general direction of the ply structures that housed the classrooms for the infants and junior divisions. I followed behind as Jess went to check it out and she had to peer into several buildings before she got to the scene of the disturbance, so congested and chaotic was the scene in these classrooms. I described above how the classrooms were separated by screens with noise being an attendant, debilitating factor in the quality of the teaching and learning experience at Jess' school. The lack of easy access to all different areas of the school was therefore another aspect of challenge that infrastructure and resource inadequacies presented for participants. In another example, a participant (kept anonymous) related that staff and students shared a bathroom, not on account of the passage of any hurricane but because space was limited at the school and the bathroom reserved for boys had grown too derelict and unsafe for use. As the participant explained, the boys were given the girls' washroom and the girls were asked to use the one designed for staff, but the participant was clearly uneasy about the arrangement. These were but some of the compromises made to student safety at participants' schools.

Formal Dimensions of Work

The formal dimensions of participants' work as school principals in Grenada presented challenges for participants. Relative to their formal duties, participants identified grievances with the MOE, interruptions and disruptions to their work, and high volumes of work as major issues.

Grievances with the Ministry of Education

Participants described two main issues relative to their formal duties/undertaking as a school principal in Grenada. Below, I examine shifting standards and initiatives and lack of curricula and professional supports as significant issues impacting participants' work.

Shifting Standards and Initiatives. Participants shared their frustration with their superiors in relation to what several described as changing focus and standards within the MOE. They detailed, for example, how information would be sent from the MOE describing some initiative or expectation for schools, but it seemed no sooner had participants intercepted and communicated same to staff and perhaps even students and parents and begun the process of implementation or compliance that a different set of expectations would come from the MOE, requiring principals to cease all prior work and take up the new directives and directions. Participants described this as a frustration. Jim and Will shared, respectively:

> I think education in Grenada, we need to have a mind of our own in the sense that every few years something new comes in. Somebody comes up with something new they want so we have to try it. So, when you were just wetting your feet on some previous focus something brand new comes through… So, I think the education system, the Ministry of Education must have, must be more strategic and more organized …

> They're not really stable in how they do things. They keep changing what they do and how they do it all the time. You can't settle on one approach, they will tell you another one and you have to shift gears … and not just us but …frustrating for teachers, too. We are the ones teachers take out their frustrations on and it is tough being that go between sometimes.

Both Will and Jim alluded to the frustrations that surfaced in their work because of shifting initiatives and standards and the lack of curriculum supports in schools. They felt that they were often at a standstill or crossroads, with a lack of clarity or coherent vision

of what were Grenada's broad goals relative to education and more concrete steps on moving forward to achieve said goals. Will also alluded to tensions with teachers that several participants described as another challenge in their work. Other participants similarly described their stance and approach to work in the face of shifting standards and initiatives as "being in limbo" (Bev), "always poised to pivot" (Jess), and "filtering out the noise and trying to remain focused on student learning" (Beth). Jim also spoke of not being afraid to express his frustrations and dissatisfaction to his superiors, a stance than oftentimes he was the only one in the study to take so explicitly. As Jim mused, it seemed participants had "grown accustomed, domesticated even, to how things function in government, within the MOE, in schools and in society and so ha[d] no fight left to resist or even ask questions". When participants spoke of the constant interruptions and disruptions to their work, here too there was clear evidence of their frustration, but acceptance of and/or lack of will to confront this issue.

Lack of Curricula and Professional Supports. A lack of curricula and professional supports also frustrated participants' work. While resource shortage was an overarching issue impacting education and all schools in Grenada, some participants reported feeling its impact more sharply and in different ways than some of their principal peers. For instance, relative to a lack of curricula supports, Jim shared:

Yes, the lack of resources is a critical challenge, but the whole management structure needs improvement; even right now they are just filling the curriculum department. They have curriculum officers on holiday all year round so no supports in that area… one officer has to go all over the island for Agricultural Science so he could only pass when he is in the area… I haven't seen a Social Studies person in years… I find they're a bunch of lazy people, but especially for some schools, and then they want to come and run their mouth [complain and speak ill of principals and teachers]. The same officers, teaching aid, and so on they tell you they do not have, other schools [are] getting them. So, yes, all schools face this shortage, but whereas, for instance, I don't see the Social Studies person in years, other schools have seen them maybe once or twice.

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Above, Jim is alluding to inequities in resource allocation for schools in Grenada. He, as did other participants, asserted that while Grenada faced fiscal challenges that impacted the country's ability to provide adequately for all schools, some personnel within the MOE engaged in discriminatory practices that resulted in not all schools experiencing this issue on the same scale. This alleged discrimination also extended to professional enhancement opportunities for Grenadian educators.

I set out in the introduction to this thesis lamenting what I asserted were inadequate qualifications of teachers and principals in/around 2010. While this situation has improved drastically since my exit from the education system, it was clear from some participants that there is still cause for concern. Several participants identified a lack of professional supports as another issue with the MOE. Jim was most vocal about his belief that principals were not trained and lamented the fact that not all primary school principals in Grenada were holders of at least a bachelor's degree. He expressed that the cost of undertaking studies "out of one's own pockets" was prohibitive and that neither the government, teachers' union, nor the church supported teachers and principals enough in "bettering their qualifications". He elaborated:

> I think principals really were not trained. If you don't have an initiative and you go and study on your own, but if the GUT [teachers union] or the Ministry has training outside of that there wasn't anything serious about principals. So, unless you go and study on your own, nothing serious by way of training happens. Rarely, teachers receive a scholarship to pursue a degree or certificate or so, but I believe by now that every principal should have had a first degree.

Jim took initiative to further his qualifications, securing a partial scholarship through an international organization and paying out of pocket to support his studies in both undergraduate and graduate work. As he explained, however, not many principals chose to or had the means to do so. He believed that the lack of supports from the MOE to facilitate professional development, whether by way of full or partial scholarships towards a degree or certificate programs, kept education standards subpar in Grenada.

Seven of the eight participants held bachelors and/or master's degrees. They all confirmed undertaking these studies through their own volition and funding.

Interruptions and Disruptions to Work

Interruptions and disruptions to their work were a third issue participants raised with respect to undertaking their formal duties as school principals. These disruptions and interruptions impacted participants' ability to keep student learning the focus of their work and participants traced these to not only the MOE, but non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other government ministries and interest groups granted permission by the MOE to undertake projects in or through schools. Steph described this challenge:

> There are a number of other entities who would work with the schools with permission from the Ministry of Education. So Postal Cooperation will get permission to do an essay competition, the Rotary club is running a Spelling B, NAWASA (national water authority) wants to do something… all that is via e-mail… So, it is a lot of work on my end, our end, to schedule in these events, resolve conflicts, and try to accommodate everyone. Of course, there is the impact on student learning because most of these activities would require the audience of either the entire school or a grade level or so, and then teachers to supervise … so yes, there is considerable disruption.

Steph related that she tried to be polite and engaged these groups as best and as often as she could, but other participants indicated that they sometimes declined outright to prioritize instruction in their schools. But as Will explained, declining participation was not without consequence. He shared that even though the MOE indicates to principals that they [principals] were free to accept or decline participation, some of his colleagues reported being reprimanded by officials within the MOE for not accepting invitations. Jim also found the level of interruption was too frequent and much too disruptive, so he too often declined a lot of these activities. Incorporating these activities into their school schedules was sometimes an administrative challenge for participants, but several participants explained that their decision to accept or decline invitations to participate in

these activities was weighed, not against the amount of work such participation presented to participants, but the level and scope of disruption to learning.

Participants also described telephone calls and other communications coming from the MOE either directly or through their district officers that disrupt and interrupt their work. Will described of interruptions and disruptions caused by the actions of officers in the MOE:

> I would be observing a class and there is a phone call from the Ministry. I ask to take a message, but they say no, I need to come. So, I have to leave the classroom, walk all the way back to my office only to take the call and it is something that could wait. I can't tell you the number of times this has happened. And then they complain about contact time and principals supervising contact time. Even with all these groups wanting to either use the school or have students participate in their events. It is difficult to do what they want you to do, have that sustained contact time with the children, when they give permission to every group.

Like Steph above, Will mentioned the involvement of groups in the life of the school and the attendant curtailing of instructional time. Like Steph, he described more direct impact on his undertaking of the instructional components of his formal duties. But, as other participants shared, interruptions and disruptions could occur when they were engaged in other areas of work, not just instructional. When presented with interruptions and disruptions to their work, participants seemed to weigh their responses against the benefits or drawbacks relative to student learning and school operations. Oftentimes, however, the high volumes of work that participants described as characteristic to the Grenadian school principalship often left participants with no choice than to decline participation in some events and/or postpone interaction with the MOE on non-urgent matters.

High Volumes of Work

Generally, participants emphasized that prioritizing student learning was the most important aspect of a school principal's work. They also expressed a preference to be

engaged in instructional work, specifically around observing teaching and learning. However, as several participants acknowledged, student learning was not the most urgent aspect of their daily work. Jess, for instance, acknowledged, "I don't get to prioritize it as much as needed, because other priorities and deadlines get in the way, but student learning is the cornerstone of schools". Bev also admitted the same when she said, "The work doesn't always show it, but being a principal is all about student learning." As participants reported, on any given day, other kinds of work consumed their time and monitoring instruction, for example, was pushed back and/or sidelined.

Participants identified administrative work, more specifically dealing with people including students and teachers on discipline and more urgent matters that impact safety and school operations, as taking up most of their time during the workday. Consequently, they also reported staying back after school to complete emails and paperwork including log reports, aspects of budgeting, and financial statements. Much of what contributed to the volume of participants' work were the high amounts of reporting participants had to undertake against the many interruptions during the workday. Participants indicated that it was a norm during their teaching days to stay back after school to accomplish work and that this habit carried over into the principalship. Consequently, they seemed socialized into such a work culture, and several explicitly described such work practices as a normal part of a school principal's work. For example, Beth contextualized her high volumes of work in this way:

> Additionally, the Ministry requires a lot of reporting from principals. So, a lot of writing. That is laborious, it takes a lot of your time. It drains you. The demand that is placed on teachers and principals constantly to send info, you have to do a lot of writing… so much reporting, and the only time I can get in the sustained time to do this kind of work is when it's quiet in the evenings or at home. Additionally, apart from your weekly focus, and daily focus, you still have to do your school development plan. Since I got here, for the five years I've been working on that because of the academic stand of the students, literacy has been a big problem here and I have constantly been in contact with different persons, students, parents, counsellors, literacy experts, the school manager, and so on,

requiring many meetings and research and such, to make this happen … it is a lot of work.

Altogether, participants indicated that their work extended beyond regular school hours, into evenings, weekends, and sometimes holidays. Often during these conversations, they emphasized that they were principals not because of the pay but because of their commitment to serve. Bev summed this up when she said, "Principals are always working late, into the evenings and on weekends. Some part of our holidays is also taken up with work. The pay … is not anything to talk about. Trust me, this [work] is not for the money". Participants indicated that afterhours work was simultaneously feasible and unavoidable. Indeed, participants seemed to acquiesce easily to the high volume of their work and even broader conditions of and expectations around their work. While I found participants to be compassionate administrators who were willing to go the extra mile to support their students' all-round development, I nevertheless also found them to be frustrated and resigned, almost, to what the work of a school principal in the Grenadian context meant to and for them.

Implicit Beliefs and Norms About Education

In addition to legislation around the formal duties of a school principal in Grenada, expectations around schooling and educators' work also posed a challenge for participants in the study. More specifically, implicit beliefs and practices based on notions of success, successful schools, hard work, and (un)free labour in the Grenadian context constrained and otherwise shaped not just how participants understood or approached work but the kinds of actions they undertook.

Notions of Success and Successful Schools

As participants alluded to, there existed a tendency in Grenada to define (educational) success, schooling, and schools along sociohistoric lines. In their responses, participants referenced historic inequities in school funding, student placements, and societal perceptions in Grenada's contemporary school governance system. The difference between schools considered on the high and low ends of success by Grenadian

standards was illuminated most markedly by Steph and Jim below. In the first quote, Steph is describing a positive impact:

> I am extremely blessed to work in this school and under this denomination. I say that often. We get wonderful support from the Ministry, our board, our parents, the community. We are a highly regarded school. Our families are mostly middle class, educated, and value education. We barely have discipline issues or truancy or break ins or so. We top the island almost every year, or at least place in the first 3 positions, in the primary exit exams. So, most of our students secure their preferred choice of secondary schools… My job is really about maintaining this high quality by ensuring teachers and students have the resources to continue to excel.

Here, we see how Steph benefited from being the principal of a school that was highly regarded and considered very successful. Note that a lot of value was placed on student performance in national exams, i.e., test scores. Steph worked in a school whose affiliate denomination has historically been considered as overseeing the top schools on island, indeed throughout the Caribbean region. However, contrast Steph's experience with Jim's.

Jim worked under another denomination and his school is considered among the poorest performing in national exams. His students come from poor, working class, and unemployed families and his school was in a state of neglect. He related:

> I really struggle here to perform as a school principal. I have to cut so many corners, beg so much, credit from supermarkets and other businesses and depend so heavily on the church diaspora … My students are not what we consider strongly academic. We excel somewhat in sports, but not in academics … It doesn't help that most parents do not want to send their children here … we are not considered a good school. And this is not just from the public. The government, the Ministry, due to their lack of regard, lack of support, and their blatant disregard of our needs, reinforce this idea. Look at how they are quick

they are… certain schools. Look at the state of this school: the rot, dilapidation, overall neglect.

Interestingly, while Jim referenced the same denomination to which Steph belonged and worked, he expressed that preference was given to these denominational schools located in the capital, the "town" schools. Steph worked in such a denominational school but not in the capital city, so even though her school is located just outside the town of that particular parish, by Grenadian standards, her school is still considered a "country" school. Hence, notions of success and successful schools were tied to a particular denomination and to a country-town rhetoric, the latter of which I take up next.

What is important to illuminate is that, in their quotes above, Steph and Jim alluded to socio-historic and cultural determinants shaping discourse and norms around school success and successful schools in the Grenadian context. Particularly, Steph shed light on broader issues of classism, privilege, and social capital impacting school choice when she spoke of the socioeconomic status of her school families and her school's favoured societal position. Her response also pointed to how student placement reified inequities and was often political in that, though officially, Grenada zones schools – meaning that students should, as a norm, attend a school within their parish/zoned area – the students who top the primary exit exams secure their first option for secondary placement while the students with the lowest schools are placed in lesser regarded and more poorly funded schools (such as Eve's and Jill's). This discourse facilitated Steph's work. In contrast, Jim illuminated how these same benchmarks worked against him as a school principal in a negatively regarded, underfunded, and academically underperforming school. The families that sent their children to Jim's schools were uneducated and considered poor "country folk" who did not demonstrate value for education in the same ways as did parents in more affluent and well-regarded schools such as Steph's. (Below, Will also hinted at how certain prestigious jobs in Grenada went to graduates of certain educational institutions and the broad assumptions that were tied to the schools that Grenadians attend.) Jim struggled to secure the basics for his school, and he pointed to how better regarded schools continued to be funded disproportionately compared to others.

"Country-Town" Rhetoric

As I discussed in the third chapter, certain schools, colloquially referred to as "town schools", and people who were educated in them, have historically been favoured over "country schools". Given Grenada's volcanic topography and diminutive size, such distinctions seem trivial and are unproductive. Notwithstanding, notions of success and successful schools typically favour town schools. Participants affirmed that people educated in town schools were considered to be of a better social and economic class than their fellow countrymen who attended schools in rural areas. Town schools were often more well regarded and funded. This inequity and implicit assumptions around schooling and success and the country-town dynamic Jim alluded to above continued across and in the secondary school system. In fact, the responses from participants working in both primary and secondary schools illuminated the troubling, cyclical impact of this polarity to school governance and participants' work. For example, illuminating the secondary school context, Beth shared:

> Historically, we get the dregs, what society considers the "dunce" children. Of course, you are familiar; the same schools get the top students every year, and every year these same schools top the CXC results. We have students from one parish going to secondary schools in another parish, because they either performed very well or very poorly. Since becoming principal here, I have been working on morale: student morale, teacher morale, community morale … even how they allocate teachers to schools, too: I know of schools that have their full complement of teachers and needs met. Others not.

Beth highlighted the prevalence of classism and wider issues around social class that I highlighted earlier and which was referenced by several other participants. The irony was not lost on Will, who mused:

> It's amazing and silly, really, because most of the students who attend these so-called superior town schools are from the country. They get their first choice from the entrance exams, so they are placed there.

Here, Will was alluding to citizens who were born and raised in the rural parts of the country but attended schools in the capital. For participants working in Grenada's rural areas, the country-town dynamic was a constant reality in their work. Meg, Bev, and Will, for example, alluded to this inferiority complex, explaining that, as their schools were in what was considered the country parts of the island, their needs and concerns were often trivialized, ignored, or considered secondary to other schools. (In the next chapter, I describe how some participants working in these schools capitalized on this mentality to meet school needs.) This circumstance constrained participants' efforts to secure resources for their schools and otherwise put a damper on school ethos. Consequently, several participants related that a critical component of their work was fostering a sense of pride, identity, and community in students to try to offset the dominant, negative assumptions and implicit beliefs about students who attended country schools.

Ambivalent Legislation and Implicit Expectations

As participants shared, the lines between what was and was not the work of a school principal in Grenada were blurred. Several seemed conflicted about whether the kinds and extent of work that they undertook were outside of the reasonable interpretation of the *Education Act* and other legislation governing their work and so constituted unpaid and/or free or volunteer work. For instance, Jim often reiterated that he believed he was undertaking many aspects of unpaid work. "Half of what I do here is not in my job description. They are not paying me for half of what I do here", he said. Some participants argued that such work exceeded reasonable interpretation; others seemed less sure, acknowledging that the legislation was sufficiently broad and vague to allow for such work to be expected from principals. Specifically, participants drew on two pieces of legislation in the context of ambivalence and implicit expectations around the nature and scope of work. The first was from the *Education Act* 2005, 139 (1:21) which states that school principals were to *maintain good order and discipline among students and safeguard their health and safety*. The second was taken from the formal document provided schools by the MOE titled, *The 21 Responsibilities and Day-to-Day Management of a School* (15) that mandates principals to *ensure staff have resources,*

support, and professional development to execute teaching and learning. Given the vagueness and breadth of legislation governing their work, and the practice of undertaking actions such as manual labour, charitable acts, and fundraising initiatives, several participants believed that there was an implicit expectation and acceptance by their superiors and the public for such work.

As participants described, parents, teachers, and even officials in the Ministry of Education were either unappreciative of their hard work and unfree labour or expected such work from principals. For instance, Jim reported how, upon repeated requests for desks and chairs for his students, an education officer once told him to take some chairs from his church to use in the school. Jim seemed incensed at the cavalier and unprofessional response from the Ministry and the general expectation that principals would, should, and could fend for themselves. In another instance, a participant, on condition of anonymity, shared how the area education officer once commended them for how much money the school earned through a particular fundraiser and then offered suggestions on how the school should spend it. This participant explained, "So, it's like they're telling you that you have to do such work …. They are acknowledging, indirectly, that you are engaging in these kinds of work". Several other participants referenced this implicit acknowledgement by those in charge for delivering education in Grenada.

Further, as participants shared, the public also expected hard work, unfree labour, and sacrifices by teachers and principals. For example, one participant, also on condition of anonymity, explained how sometimes parents came into the school riled up for having to pay school fees, charging the school with "making thousands of dollars" through fundraising and demanding that these fees be waived. The participant explained, "They have no idea the amount of work that goes into these [fundraisers], the personal sacrifices. The school has so many needs, and we do not make nearly as much as they [the public] believe. But they speak so matter-of-factly". Will was frank that principals' work was taken for granted by the government, parents, and even teachers and students. In fact, it appeared that a normalized ethos around school governance included expectations and acknowledgements of copious manual labour, charitable acts, and fundraising initiatives by teachers and principals. Notwithstanding their interpretation of

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the intent (i.e., letter) and spirit of legislation governing their work, participants concurred that these kinds of work were necessary in the Grenadian school principalship. However, they were divided over whether such work should be remunerated tasks.

Lack of Remuneration

Several participants were adamant that their efforts and, particularly, the manual labour, charitable acts, and incessant fundraisers constituted unpaid and unfree work. For instance, though Jim engaged in these types of work, he repeatedly pointed out, "They don't pay me for that". Other participants generally acknowledged that they were undertaking copious and unacceptable amounts of such unfree labour, and while they were adamant that they were generally overextending themselves in their day-to-day work, most were hesitant to go on record pointing to the origins and impetus behind such work. Jim was an exception and he described of such work:

> Half of what I do here is not in my job description or Collective Agreement. I don't get paid for that. I am doctor, counselor, lawyer, carpenter, ambulance or taxi driver, bank teller, machinist, you name it … It is hard to get that respect, demand change, or put your foot down on anything when so much is expected to be given freely. The first thing they tell you is, "So-and-so [principal] is doing it, why can't you?" So, you look like the bad one. It doesn't help that the union has no unified voice. Everybody can be bought in Grenada. Bought or silenced.

Jim further posited that it was "ridiculous" and "totally unacceptable" the kinds of work that Grenadian principals were "meekly going around doing". He was the only principal willing to go on record denouncing these actions as unpaid and unreasonable work. Further, he was adamant that, although he was "raised appreciating the value of hard work" and "giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay" he believed that the government, and sometimes the public, was taking advantage of teachers' and principals' Christian and civic convictions.

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Christian and Civic Imperatives

For instance, Jim related, "Yes, we [principals] go above and beyond, because as Christians and Grenadian citizens we are called to. But don't use that against us, man". From their responses, other participants gave credence to Jim's thinking. For example, when I pressed participants on why they undertook copious manual labour, incessant errands, and innumerable fundraising initiatives, they offered variations of responses around it being a Christian duty (Beth, Jess, Meg, Chad, and Liz) and/or a civic responsibility (all eight participants) to undertake such kinds of work. Several explicitly referenced the Holy Bible. "The Bible tells us our labour is not in vain. God loves a cheerful giver", said Steph, referring to II Corinthians 9:6-7. This scripture speaks to giving of one's service generously and without reluctance as this is the same measure God uses to bless the giver (see, for example, the King James Version of The Holy Bible). Other participants believed it was necessary to undertake these kinds of work for the wellbeing of their school community, by providing a safe and comfortable environment for teachers to teach and students to learn. Several assumed this responsibly themselves after their frustration with the inaction of the government to adequately equip schools. In Chapter Five, I articulated how a Christian imperative and notions of being a good citizen fueled participants' understandings and practices relative to their work as a school principal. Here, I draw on these imperatives, not to judge them problematic in and of themselves, but to expose problematic work practices that seemed associated with them. But being a Christian or good citizen was not the only impetus for these kinds of work. Participants also seemed coerced into undertaking such actions because of a fear of reprisal.

Fear of Victimization

From the evidence, it was clear that participants also undertook unfree labour and generally overly extended themselves in their work because of fear of victimization. This fear was clearly palpable in participants' repeated requests to protect their anonymity and their unwillingness to go on the record when discussing aspects of their work that might be considered sensitive. Participants seemed particularly fearful to expand on some issues

they faced in their work that might put the government or their immediate superiors in the MOE in a negative light. Recall Jim, above, speaking on a lack of remuneration for certain kinds of work and alluding to the fear of victimization that drove Grenadian school principals' work:

> Half of what I do here is not in my job description or Collective Agreement … It is hard to get that respect, demand change, or put your foot down on anything when so much is expected to be given freely. The first thing they tell you is, "So-and-so [principal] is doing it, why can't you?" So, you look like the bad one. It doesn't help that the union has no unified voice. Everybody can be bought in Grenada. Bought or silenced.

I expanded in Chapter Two on Grenada's historical trajectory relative to political intimidation and the fear of social and economic reprisal that have pervaded public service in what is a democratic system of government. As the study illustrated, this fear was very much palpable. As Jim concluded above, principals had "grown accustomed, domesticated even, to how things function in government, within the MOE, in schools and in society and so ha[d] no fight left to resist or even ask questions". But, as I indicated previously, Jim was often the sole participant to explicitly indicate his lack of fear of intimidation in his work as a school principal in Grenada.

Teacher Resistance and Resentment

Teacher resentment was a common theme illuminated by participants. While workplace resentment is common across organizations and can be attributed to myriad factors, participants ascribed the phenomenon in the Grenadian context mainly to teacher qualifications, more specifically, teachers pursuing and holding advanced degrees. Several participants described this resentment as absurd and unfortunate, especially because, in their view, many of the teachers holding such resentment were unwilling to undertake self-directed professional development to upgrade themselves. As I referenced before, seven of the eight participants in the study took the initiative to fund their bachelors and masters' degrees when they were teachers. They described the discouraging remarks and other negative comments their colleagues made during this

time and related that in some cases, their relationships with some teachers deteriorated and grew hostile after they completed their studies and/or were promoted to the principalship. I shared in the introduction to this study how this was my experience, as well. All participants alluded to intimidation, fear, and jealousy keeping educational quality and standards subpar in Grenada. Bev alluded to this unfortunate circumstance:

> It's like they [teachers] are comfortable when all of us are sitting here with the same two A' levels or five O' levels. As soon as you make that sacrifice and push yourself to go further, the resentment and fear come in. They feel insecure and intimidated, and they come across as bitter, some of them.

Bev experienced these feelings of resentment during her teaching days from her teacher colleagues and she indicated experiencing teacher resistance as a principal. As she explained, during her teaching days, the resistance came from other teachers who did not have the level of qualifications she did. As a principal, she described resentment and resistance coming from those on staff with similar level of qualifications who felt resentful that she was in authority over them. As Bev related, teacher resentment and resistance sometimes constrained her actions, although she tried not to let it bother her too much.

Some participants, like Jim, also shared that teacher resentment and resistance impeded their work but that they were used to this challenge. As both Bev and Jim shared, there were other teachers more senior than they on staff when they applied for the position of principal but in Bev's case, she was the most qualified; she paid to fund both her undergraduate and graduate degrees. Jim explained that despite his appeals to teachers to apply for the position of principal [that he was subsequently awarded] and, over the years, to pursue academic advancements, they never did but grew resentful when he, at his own expense, completed undergraduate and graduate degrees. He elaborated:

> I just work with who wants to work with me. It sometimes means more work for me and others [teachers] but I can't be bothered anymore. I am used to that resentment [from teachers] by now. I used to be encouraging teachers to upgrade themselves but not much of them bothered with me because you know there is a

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tendency among these teachers who would have given let's say 28, 29, 30 years of service, how they are 'qualified', that 'they are qualified', but that is something I am not hearing now.

Jim, as did Bev above, alluded to the recent thrust in the last decade of teachers and principals pursuing online bachelor's and master's degrees at local, regional, and international universities. It seemed that teacher resentment and (in)security were now spurring many teachers to upgrade themselves, if only to be on a more equal standing as their peers who had already done so. Indeed, it appeared that "the tide has turned and many [teachers and principals] are now tripping over themselves to get a degree" (Bev) because "gone are the days when people would sit comfortably with their few little subjects and be lord over everybody else" (Chad). Overall, participants seemed frustrated that some teachers were unwilling to upgrade themselves but resented those who did and shunned the opportunity to undertake even small-scale professional development or cooperate with participants on ideas for improving instruction or contributing more positively to school life. In this regard, participants in the study acknowledged that they faced the most resistance from senior teachers. As Jim stated above, teachers who had been in the service for many years tended to believe they had the requisite knowledge and skills and did not need further education and/or a school principal's input or direction. Consequently, and as I introduced above, difficult relationships with teachers sometimes required principals to have the teachers' union intervene, only this largely did not work out in the interest of participants.

Parental Involvement

The quality of parental involvement in student learning was another issue that participants discussed as a challenge to their work. Generally, participants were dissatisfied with the quality of parents' hands-on participation in their children's education. Several explained that Grenadian parents deferred to the school, i.e., teachers and the school principal, relative to their children's academic development and were involved in school life mostly insofar as supporting fundraising initiatives. This was especially the case for participants working in schools with more resource needs. For

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instance, though Will was coming from a rural context of schooling, his quote below generally captured other participants' accounts of parents' approach to school involvement:

> Most of our parents are farmers; this is a farming community. I find they [parents] do not care to be much involved in their children's education, per se. Could be a lack of formal education, deference to those they deem 'educated' to attend to the academic learning of their children … you know, that kind of subservience to authority typical in our local culture among many parents. Whatever the reason, they will say, "Whatever you say we agree. We support your decision".

In addition to Will, Beth, Jess, and Meg also worked in rural communities and described a similar parental approach to education. For instance, all four shared that parents generally worked well with teachers and the school principal in supporting school initiatives. "They [parents] don't have much but if we ask them to bring in an item, $1, or give of their time, I find they are often eager to help and otherwise accommodate us", said Jess. At the same time, participants were dissatisfied with the lack of more direct parental involvement in the academic lives of students. For instance, Meg discussed of parents' involving in the academic lives of their children:

> [T]hat hands-on help with homework, or seeking extra tutoring help, or providing more than the basics, you know, like an electronic device, opportunities to enhance learning like school trips, co-curricular activities … you know, is lacking.

Not surprisingly, the quality of parental involvement in students' academic development seemed analogous to parents' educational achievement and SES (socioeconomic status) levels. Two participants, working in or close to urban centers/towns and whose schools performed well on national and regional benchmarks and enjoyed positive public regard, described parental involvement somewhat differently. They described more direct involvement of parents in student learning, with parents being active in school council, volunteering in co-curricular excursions, and requesting (demanding, even) one-on-one time with teachers and principals to discuss their children's academic development. For

instance, Steph shared, "They [parents] are engaged. They want to know what is happening. What resources we are expending on their children. How is learning going? How can they help?" As Steph identified, many of the parents of students in her school were educated, middle working class, and teachers. The parents at Bev's school were also more involved in their children's learning than at Will's, Beth's, Jess', or Meg's, for instance, and Bev attributed this to their high regard for education. It appeared that the norm for participants working in low performing and negatively regarded schools was absent, uninvolved, and sometimes confrontational parents. Generally, however, participants described situations wherein parents more readily supported school drives than they engaged in hands-on and other active home supports to facilitate their children's learning.

Community Relations

Not unlike other aspects of their work, community relations proved rewarding but ofttimes physically and emotionally draining for participants. As participants explained, Grenada's small geographical size and mostly rural communities positively and negatively impacted their work. For some participants, their efforts in constantly engaging the community, and the public scrutiny associated with being the principal at the local school, or a principal in general, were sometimes physically and emotionally taxing. Will explained that while he was aware that Grenadian society regarded the profession of school principal as a prestigious one and expected high standards from those occupying this position, he was still surprised, coming from a different school level and community, at how hands-on and engaged the community in which his school was situated expected him to be as "their" school principal. "The people in the community really expected their school principal to be accessible, friendly, and approachable … They really look up to the principal", he related. Consequently, Will's approach to his work, including instituting an open-door policy, going out into the community to interact with families and community members, and inviting the community to social events he hosted at his school, worked well in fostering good school-community relations and somewhat improving parental involvement in student learning. But it also required him to expend a lot of energy and personal time in the process. It also came at a loss in other

areas. He shared, "There is a cost: no privacy; little personal time; money if some of these events require you to drive somewhere or transport people somewhere. I get tired. Mostly physically … it is really fatiguing work". Other participants also spoke of the strain of "keeping up appearances" that Will seemed to be alluding to in his quote.

For instance, all eight participants touched on the kinds of community relations work that seemed expected, even necessary, in their day-to-day work as school principals in Grenadian society. In addition to the high volumes of work participants faced daily, other public engagements consumed some of their time and challenged their capacity to perform as expected by the public. For instance, Bev and Steph shared, respectively:

> I am at a funeral like twice this week. Sometimes, I do not even know the person being buried. But there is that expectation from the community … that the principal of 'their' school pays their respects.

> This is a highly regarded school, a prestigious primary institution. A lot is expected of the school's principal … I face a lot of pressure to keep up the excellence. A lot of … community engagements, many church-related. There are funerals, graduations, sport meets, school fairs, [lists two religious milestones of a particular denomination] … it is not just administrative work within the four walls of the school.

As these two participants discussed, community expectations of the school principal sometimes posed a challenge for their work. Bev shared how the principal's presence during community mourning, even when she was not acquainted with the bereaving family, was expected, and she alluded to feeling pressure to comply. Steph described feeling similarly pressured as principal to engage in community relations, a situation that was compounded for her because her spouse was in public office.

Hence, the feeling of being surveilled elicited performative responses from participants. Jess contextualized this performance when she said:

> You have to be present. This is a small community. Sending letters home or making phone calls are all well and good, but the principal must be present …. I

can't tell you how often I have had to smile when I wanted to scream. So much is expected from your bosses, students, teachers, parents, the community. It is important for me to establish relationships with teachers, parents, children, and the community … the school is in a small village, and I am not from here, so I have to get to know and embrace this village community … I have an open-door policy and my office is right next to the public street. They walk right in… It can be exhausting.

Generally, participants described similar, close-knit school-community contexts. They explained that whatever the activity, people expected the principal to show up, as the principal's physical presence demonstrated a sense of togetherness and commitment to whatever event or initiative was being conceived of or undertaken. These performances proved exhausting for participants.

Summary

This chapter presented the third of four chapters of findings. Here, I examined some major challenges impacting principals' work in Grenada. These challenges constrained not just what principals could do but how they were able to do it. Limited supports, from both the government and church denominations plagued the work of school principals in Grenadian schools. Resource constraints and inadequate and outdated infrastructure were therefore grave and typical issues for principals in the study. These resulted in compromises to curricula, pedagogy, and student learning, driving the proliferation of long working hours and the many acts of fundraising, charity, and manual labour examined in the previous chapter. Ambiguous mandates from the MOE posed a challenge for some principals but not as much as did implicit beliefs and norms about education and principals' labour and fear of victimization driving what I examined as unfree labour. Three other challenges related to resistance and resentment from teachers, inadequate parental supports, and expectations around community involvement and relations.

CHAPTER 9: STRATEGIES PRINCIPALS EMPLOY IN THEIR WORK

In this chapter, I examine the ways participants described navigating the challenges around work as school principals in Grenada. I conceptualize strategies in the sense of how principals respond to their work and the challenges associated with that work. I describe these here in the sense of participants' thinking and actions in accomplishing their work broadly and dealing with other specific challenges of the work of a school principal in Grenada. I examine six such strategies in detail below: caring; undertaking self-directed professional development; relying on self-help; advocating; forging collegial supports; and playing politics.

Caring

One approach that seemed to undergird participants' commitment to their work as a school principal in Grenada was arguably the notion of caring. By this I mean that a strong ethic of care seemed woven throughout participants' stories of their day-to-day actions in schools, especially in the face of the challenges they faced in accomplishing their work. Several shared that this spirit of caring made the challenges of work worthwhile while two others described caring as "necessary" to navigate work's reality and challenges. In this latter sense, the act of caring acted as a sort of grounding for participants. For instance, Jess shared, "You have to remind yourself why you are in this job or else you lose your bearings". Thus, Jess and others described approaching work's challenges from a humane perspective, in the sense of remembering that the job was about people, and so showing compassion towards others, respecting the dignity of individuals, and aspiring to work in the best interests of their school communities. Chad expanded:

I love my staff, from the VP to the cleaner to the lady selling candy outside the compound. I care about their wellbeing; not just how they perform on the compound. Are they going through problems that I or the school can assist them with? Is it something requiring a listening ear, time off, or so? Because I understand that the personal and emotional spill into the professional.

This notion of caring was a reverberating principle for participants in their articulation of work as a service and, more particularly, being a steward in and to their school communities. While participants were very vocal about loving students and wanting the best for them, they also expressed care and concern for both the teaching and non-teaching staff in their schools. They seemed to recognize the importance and implications of teachers' (and ancillary staff's) overall wellbeing for school climate and student learning and described concrete ways they attended to said wellbeing. For instance, Chad, Steph, Bev, and Jim related how they often checked up on unwell teachers and teachers and families who were experiencing personal crises. In one instance, my observations with Jim were cut short one afternoon because he had to visit with a bereaved family. In another, I missed a half day of observations with both Bev and Jess who attended funerals of loved ones of students in their schools. In other instances, I observed Chad meeting in private with a custodian and Jim the cook at his school; they both explained that they were supporting these ancillary staff through some personal matters.

Indeed, participants often expressed that it was their responsibility to be stewards to their teachers also, not just students. "Teachers are integral to a school's success", said Will. Jess was especially vocal about supporting her teachers' emotionally. She shared, "I try my best to provide everything my teachers ask for to support teaching and learning … I also listen, empathize, and console when necessary because if our teachers are not happy, or are in need, this impacts the children". Meg also elaborated:

Generally speaking, not just in my work here, I go by a moral and spiritual compass: "Do unto others as you'll have them do unto you". So, I give of my best, and I demand that my staff does the same. Every day. We must be compassionate, kind souls ... and protect the dignity and wellbeing of the next

person. We are about the business of learning, yes, and I keep that the focus, but everyone is going through something; students, teachers, parents, custodians, education officer, everyone …. we must be understanding of that. And with that understanding we can get through anything.

Meg's quote encapsulated several other participants' positions with respect to demonstrating a strong ethic of care in their work, not only in helping them mitigate the challenges they often faced but in setting up a positive and conducive climate for school operations. Indeed, participants seemed to genuinely love their work and the students, teachers, and other people with whom they otherwise interacted in the execution of this work.

Undertaking Self-Directed Professional Development

As several participants asserted, one of the first strategies in navigating the challenges of work as a school principal in Grenada was to undertake self-directed, and oftentimes self-funded, professional development. As I articulated previously, seven of the eight participants in the study were holders of at least a first degree, with several holding master's degrees, as well. Jim held both a bachelor and master's degree, and he explained how and why he undertook self-directed and self-funded professional development:

Job security in Grenada is under serious threat. But like I tell them [teachers], they do not read. They do not educate themselves, academically in terms of training and pursuing a degree or [legally] around their rights and responsibilities… so they always have to cower under them [superiors in the MOE]. Not me. I always keep these documents with me [lifts them up for researcher to see]. This is how you shut them [his superiors] up; by quoting these pieces of legislation and showing them that you know the law and you have your qualifications. I am fortunate to have partially funded my [names advanced degree], you know through non-government scholarship and my own savings. So, I have more than the [minimum] required for this job.

By "these documents" Jim was referencing the *Education* Act, the Grenada Constitution, the Grenada Labour Code, and the Grenada Union of Teachers Collective Agreements. Jim was also alluding to the push by the government in recent years for teachers and principals to upgrade their qualifications beyond the minimum requirements for entry into the teaching profession in Grenada. While some of the other participants acknowledged this as an impetus for their professional development, others shared Jim's take on insecurities and intimidation surrounding their work as school principals in Grenada's current sociopolitical and economic climate. Within this climate, participants described often subtle but occasionally overt pressure to confirm to expectations outside the scope of formal mandates including in undertaking copious amounts of manual labour, charity, and fundraising and engaging in self-help to meet school needs. Arming themselves with knowledge around what was and was not legislated work seemed to reassure some participants while boosting the confidence of others.

Relying on Self Help

A third strategy Grenadian school principals relied on in navigating the challenges of their work was self-help. Indeed, self-help represented the conventional way participants in the study attempted to make ends meet and support student learning in their respective schools. This was the most common strategy participants employed in meeting the challenges of their work as school principals in a fiscally poor country as Grenada. By self-help, I refer to participants employing their own efforts to meet school needs without relying on their superiors and/or affiliate religious organizations or when such supports were not forthcoming. This included undertaking copious amounts of manual labour, fundraising, and charity and running incessant errands.

Undertaking Manual Labour, Hard Work, and (Un)Free Labour

Several participants expressed or inferred that they were faced with either undertaking manual work themselves or waiting on the MOE or the church and not have anything taken care of, or face a slow process in having things accomplished. Consequently, and as I detailed previously, participants described, and I witnessed them, undertaking copious amounts of physical labour and other kinds of work that ideally

should be completed by those in skilled trades. Herein, participants' understanding of work as management and supervision and their dedication to being school principals seemed to have no bounds. Participants seemed prepared to do all in their power to keep their schools running and student learning taking place. For instance, several participants took their understanding of their work in managing schools to assuming direct, hands-on responsibility for physical safety. Jim shared:

> I am tired of the break-ins. This year alone, we have had five. Sometimes I drive all the way from my home, leave my family sleeping in their beds, and come sleep in this school, because we do not have a night watchman. Years I have been begging for one.

Above, Jim alluded to broader societal socioeconomic conditions impacting work at the school level and perceived inequalities in how the government seemed to favour some schools over others. In addition to security work, Jim also undertook construction and carpentry at his school. In fact, all three male participants in the study explained that they directly performed most, if not all, physical repairs needed in their compound because they were "men" (Chad), "the school had no money to pay someone to do it" (Jim), and "the Ministry was not addressing it" (Will). Jim and Will shared that they came to the school some weekends with a few other male teachers to undertake repairs to severely dilapidated parts of the building. Jim described the kinds of hard, manual labour school principals in Grenada were undertaking as part of their [normal] work:

> I can't ask the women [female teachers] to do it. Sometimes one or two male teachers help. I have to pick up my cutlass and cut the grass...my hammer to pound the nail back in the window before it falls and injures a child and I get sued. Look you came yesterday, and you saw me making [constructing] table and chair with my grade six for our grade ones to sit on. Things are that bad …. I don't know what's the function of the ministry [Ministry of Education]. They give $300. What can $300 do? A bale of toilet paper costs more than that. How can I be effective?

And though the female participants did not undertake carpentry and other construction projects themselves, several identified times some male teachers undertook such repairs and even instances when the staff completed physical work on the school. For instance, Jill described a "maroon" undertaken two years previously in which she and others on staff came to the school on weekends over the course of one month to undertake repairs. The male teachers performed the construction and the female teachers cooked and provided meals. Beth and Bev described similar scenarios when staff worked together to undertake projects at their various schools.

Generally, participants believed it was necessary to undertake these kinds of work for the wellbeing of their school community, by providing a safe and comfortable environment for teachers to teach and students to learn. Many assumed this responsibility themselves, frustrated with the inaction of the government to provide adequate schools. For instance, Will seemed saddened but resigned to the reality of Grenadian school principals undertaking manual labour and work that he believed should be performed by skilled workers. He shared:

> It's sad, really, the state of affairs in Grenada. I know things are tough, but the government is not doing enough. If you want anything done, especially in a timely manner, you have to do it yourself. Sometimes that involves money or time; most times, it is your personal time that needs to be taken. And, as you know in schooling, many things can't just wait … so little things like plumbing, carpentry, we try to do those here. Otherwise, if it's, say, an electrical issue, or the sewer, or more structural problems, we get professionals in the community; most times we're asking a favour because we can't pay them.

However, not all participants were on the same page in terms of their willingness to undertake such work. Jim, while he also undertook such work, was frustrated, and lamented the lack of militancy in principals to mobilize change regarding Grenadian principals' prevalence for undertaking manual labour and work he deemed outside the scope of principals' legislated duties. Two participants added another layer to this issue of Grenadian school principals undertaking manual labour and other kinds of work that

would ordinarily be completed by other professionals. They explicitly asked to keep their responses anonymous because they feared victimization 'from authority'. According to these two participants, they called the MOE to put in several requests for their schools but were informed by their superiors that government was undergoing a period of structural adjustment reform as mandated as part of a financial bailout with an international lending organization so their requests could not be fulfilled at the time. They explained that they were told to wait until the mandatory assessment period was over and then the MOE would try to accommodate their requests. Both eventually resorted to self-help due to the urgent nature of their needs. Overall, several participants described undertaking manual labour and other kinds of work as a difficult choice. For others, this was not a choice; they felt they had to act as the alternative was unconscionable. Running errands was a second, taken-for-granted and frequently undertaken task among participants in their efforts to procure needed school resources.

Running Errands

Another way that participants ensured resources were available to meet school needs was to go out and procure same themselves. This strategy may seem straightforward and bizarre to frame as an issue, but it was the extent to which participants undertook this action and the kinds of errands themselves that were noteworthy. Steph shared of running errands:

From time to time there is a number of things the school needs. As I said, sometimes businesses deliver to us but oftentimes either I or a teacher I designate would have to go run errands for our needs. Sometimes, it is just easier to do it that way than to wait on the Ministry or so to get things done. And some of the things for which we run errands are necessary for daily operations and so can't wait, so things like groceries and gas for the tuckshop [cafeteria] so children can eat, ink and paper for printing to support classroom learning. You need them done right away, and if you don't do them, they don't get done.

During our first interviews, several participants shared how they had to personally run errands for their schools. I expected such actions; in fact, it seemed normal that, from

time to time, principals would run errands in the interest of their schools. I remember scores of errands I ran as a former teacher in Grenada. However, it was during my observations that I saw the volume and scope of this aspect of work for school principals. On any given day, participants were away from school on some errand for the direct benefit of the school or students. Sometimes interviews and/or observations started late or ended early and/or had to be rescheduled because participants had to run errands. Several times during our interviews, participants were interrupted by a teacher, student, or ancillary staff to go drop off, pick up, or complete some task or other relating to the operations of their schools. Errands were usually for the purchase of supplies such as stationery or food supplies, gym equipment, trophies during sports season, and in one instance, lumber (carried in the participant's truck) to do repairs to the school's kitchen. But they also included dropping off and picking up documents from the Ministry of Education, clearing school items at Customs, and transporting students to and/or from events such as sporting activities and interschool academic competitions, and, though infrequent, medical centers or hospitals in the event of an emergency. While undertaking such work, participants used their personal vehicles, at their own expense. Every participant in the study described such work and I observed these actions with all seven participants whom I observed. Participants undertook these actions without financial compensation, expressing that they were doing it for "the children" (Jess and Beth), "the love of God" (Steph), and "as a service to God and country" (Chad and Jim). Fundraising was yet a third aspect of work that was central to how participants tried to make ends meet.

Executing Fundraising

As participants made explicit, schools in Grenada operated on and through fundraising. Jill and Beth dryly laughed, both explaining that at a recent regional principal conference held in Grenada, their peers in other Caribbean islands dubbed Grenadian principals "the fundraising principals". All eight participants indicated that the monthly stipend the MOE provided schools was insufficient to meet schools' needs. Participants seemed hesitant to give the exact figure, but Jim indicated it was $300 for primary schools and Bev said it was "around $6000" for secondary schools. Every

principal in the study shared that their school was in debt, and most participants struggled to provide resources for students and teachers. Consequently, fundraising emerged as the response to inadequate government funding. In fact, several participants viewed fundraisers as the most major event on a school's academic calendar in Grenada and a significant component of participants' work.

And participants were very adept at implementing fundraising as a strategy to generate much needed capital to support school needs. They worked with their staff in conceptualizing fundraising events such as annual fairs, dinners, and dances and then, as Jess put it, "strategized, played politics, and navigated Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Education laws and regulations to secure monetary resources" for their schools. Bev also shared,

> Well, as you know, we cannot achieve half of the things we do here without fundraising. We do well with fundraising but not nearly as much as people think. And there are so many places to put the money that oftentimes it is hard to see the results, make all the hard work make sense.

Here, Bev is alluding to the many hours that participants described putting in, together with their staff, to execute fundraisers. This type of work required participants to spend copious amounts of time at their desks writing letters, making telephone calls, developing proposals, also driving considerable distances to pitch ideas to stakeholders and meet with the business community to discuss school needs and initiatives. Fundraisers held in-house, such as annual fairs, sport meets, and dances also required some of these actions, but herein some participants delegated responsibilities but assumed charge over broader decisions. Further, those participants that demonstrated greater prowess and tenacity with respect to fundraising tended to achieve better results. However, as I examined in the previous chapter, denominational supports, public perception of schools, and what several participants described as favoritism by the Ministry of Education, also benefited some schools over others. That participants still engaged in making acts of charity given these challenges is noteworthy.

Undertaking Acts of Charity

By charity work, I describe participants giving of their personal time, finances, resources, and expertise to students and needy causes. While these acts occurred against the context of deep fiscal constraints experienced in schools, several participants indicated that these charitable actions were fueled by a Christian imperative to 'love thy neighbour' and 'give with a cheerful spirit' (both Biblical precepts). Participants indicated that they did not want to be identified, preferring to keep these acts confidential and anonymous; hence I refer to them here in general terms. I observed two participants taking money from their work bags and hand it to students. One participant explained that he sometimes "helped out" the student with bus fare, and the other participant explained that she sometimes paid for lunch for the student in question. In addition to money, three participants explained that they often purchased school supplies including uniforms and meals for students from their personal funds. In one of several instances, I also observed participants allowing teachers and students to make calls using their personal cellular phone. A participant explained, "Yes, it's my cell phone and I have to pay the bill…but I cannot suffer the children" ("suffer the children" is a Biblical reference to Matthew 19:14). This same participant shared how he often frequented a renowned crime-infested community to locate truant students, with no regard for his personal safety or his property [vehicle].

Other examples of charity abounded. One participant described the school as an extension of the home, and for her, by undertaking charitable actions in her work, she was "providing for [her] family". I brought up the issue of compensation, but she seemed taken aback, elaborating, "No, I do not want compensation. What I do, I do for my children, for love of God". Another participant indicated that principals' acts of charity was widespread in Grenada, stating "We're like an orphanage, without the assignation". Yet another participant felt compelled to undertake such acts because, as she stated, "Oh, you have to [give of your personal resources]! For some of these children, there is no one else. Mommy and Daddy aren't doing it – don't have it, whatever – and the government certainly isn't doing it". A participant also described principals as "Good Samaritans"

(reference to Luke 10:33). These acts of charity appeared to be the norm for participants in the study.

Advocating

Given the severe fiscal constraints facing participants in the Grenadian context of schooling, advocating was an important strategy participants employed to cushion the impact on students and student learning. Several described how they tried to educate the public about initiatives that served important ends at their schools and/or in their communities. Beth and Meg, particularly, described advocacy work in redefining success and getting buy-in from first students and teachers, and then parents, the broader community, and even their superiors in the Ministry of Education and the church's board of management. Beth shared:

> It has not been easy to get that support. We are so set in our ways about what success is and what it is not … I had to take the athletic and sporting success our school is known and admired for and build on that. Our students may not yield the seven, eight, or nine CXC passes as some schools, we may not receive top performing students from the primary CPEA into our school, and we may not have much financial worth, but we can achieve success. We can define what that looks like and work towards that goal.

Below, I examine in more detail how principals worked around deeply held beliefs of success and successful schools for the benefit of students and their school. Above, Beth was alluding to the strategic work she put in advocating for reimagined and/or changed views of student success, including many meetings and one-on-one conferences she held with students, teachers, superiors in the MOE, parents and community stakeholders to gain insight into the values these groups held dear, share her own thinking about what was realistic for her school, and arrive at consensus. As she explained, she knew she could not revamp school climate or affect meaningful change in quick fashion or by working alone so she tapped into her community to secure the needed buy-in. Meg, too, acknowledged the important role the community has played in shaping school success in her institution. She explained that the community was very close-knit and that this could

either negatively (as in the case of the former principal of her school) or positively impact collaboration and building relationships between school and community. Building on the lessons from the past, Meg worked to involve the voice of the community more in school goals.

And, as Meg and other participants articulated, advocacy was an important layer of their work because schools had to depend on the benevolence of well-meaning citizens and patrons to contribute of their time, expertise, and money to support school goals. Will, for instance, put Grenadian school principals' advocacy work into perspective:

> Oftentimes schools do not have the resources to support students' development, whether in academics or sports or health-wise, or so. So, as principals we have to reach out to other external partners and make a case for why [their] support can be crucial in improving the circumstances of students.

I observed a visit between Will and a renowned national sportsman in which they discussed the latter's schedule for providing free shot-put training to student athletes at the school. As Will explained, he had a few students with potential, but the school and the Ministry (of Education and Sports) lacked qualified and/or available personnel to provide such training and so he advocated within his community for support, and he was able to secure the renowned athlete and trained professional to volunteer his services.

In other examples, participants shared how they lobbied various NGOs and not-for-profit groups to support school causes. Beth, Bev, Will, Steph, and Chad all described actions around conducting online searches to determine specifications and ascertain availability of resources, writing emails and letters, making telephone calls, and holding scheduled and impromptu meetings with stakeholders, parents, and patrons to solicit donations and/or other resources for their respective schools. Lobbying individuals, groups, and organizations was an important element of advocacy that participants described that allowed them to generate much-needed resources for their schools. Forging networks was another intertwined way advocacy was made more effective.

Forging Collegial Supports

Participants described forging networks and support systems, not only in
advocating in support of students and school needs, but also to support their own
professional, physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. While participants relied on
such collegial supports for resources for their schools, administrative guidance, and tips
on resource management, they emphasized needing such supports to support their overall
wellbeing. In describing these supports and the need for them, participants described the
stress of the school principalship, particularly being in the role of principal in Grenada
with the multiple layers of accountability, scarce resources, and overwhelming feelings of
being unappreciated and disrespected. They admitted that while they tried to brush off the
negativity, the stress of the job could sometimes prove debilitating and so they relied on
the support of their principal colleagues to help them get through their workdays. Beth
shared of such supports:

> You need people in this job… we have a network of [refers to geographical
> location] principals, so schools in this area. We bounce ideas off of each other,
> support each other, share resources, pray with one another. Sometimes one of us
> had a really bad day or week and we confide in each other, meet somewhere to
> breathe and relax. As women, too, this is another layer that makes the job
> challenging, so that support as women is good. Especially too, because we are
> located in the [names geographical location], our needs are not always met or
> acknowledged as [other schools]. So, we have to rely on one another.

Here, Beth was describing how collegial supports attended to her physical, emotional,
and mental wellbeing. While she illuminated on how gender played a role in the impact
of such supports, she nevertheless presented a similar description of how collegial
supports worked as a strategy for other participants working in Grenadian schools. Two
other participants working in the same geographical location as Beth were also members
of this informal support system and offered similar perspectives to Beth. Likewise, Jim,
Chad, and Will described various ways they reached out to other principal colleagues to
provide financial or moral support. For instance, after a tragedy at his school, Chad

described how other principals around the island lent financial, emotional, and spiritual support to him, the students, and the staff, including coming into the school to pray with the school community, offering financial supports to the victim's family, and opening their schools for possible transfer of students closely associated with the tragic events. In other ways, a few participants who worked within the same religious denomination described collegial supports among principals and educators of that denomination. Whatever the level or type of supports, however, participants also described needing to "play politics" to navigate working as a school principal in Grenada.

"Playing Politics"

The notion of playing politics was one that every participant in the study seemed very familiar with and admitted to employing to navigate the complexities and perceived contradictions around being a school principal in Grenada. By "playing politics", I refer to how participants described using situations and relationships to their advantage, acting for personal gain or in the benefit of their school communities, and/or pursuing courses of action that were conducive to their advantage or interest. Four ways participants employed this political strategy were by modifying or ignoring policy, circumventing rules and procedures, "playing the game", and redefining success.

Modifying/Ignoring Policy

While participants were clearly about fulfilling the formal mandates of their work, as manifested in the volume of their work, long working hours, linkages between their actions and formal mandates, and their general acquiescence towards undertaking manual labour and other kinds of (un)free work, several participants nevertheless acknowledged not implementing and/or attending to policies and directives in the ways they believed their superiors intended. Participants admitted reacting in this way because they believed their actions were in the interest of student learning and/or otherwise considered their responses good for their school communities. For instance, Meg related:

> As principal, working under both church and state, there are still elements you
> have to consider before you undertake a course of action, and I am not necessarily

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talking about conflicts between something the state mandates and the church's position on the issue. No, sometimes information is handed down to us and I make the conscious decision if we comply, but really, *how* we comply [her emphasis]. It is not always easy, and you need time being a school principal before you know… the changes you can make or the things you can ignore to achieve the same intent of the mandate.

As Meg went on to explain, she was not referring to disobeying the Ministry or the church outright. She was being general about aspects of policy and/or events that arose from time to time wherein she had to think critically about whether and how implementing or participating in the way these policies and events presented would align with school circumstances, needs, and vision. Her point was that she sometimes did not implement or approach some directives and invitations in the ways presented to her or the school, instead adopting or adapting as needed in the interest of her school. On the other hand, a few other participants indicated ignoring some expectations and invitations outright. For instance, I shared previously how participants weighed invitations against disruptions to student learning, sometimes to the displeasure of their superiors. In deciding on whether to adopt, modify, or ignore policy and directives, participants engaged in the political exercise of filtering out intent and impact and prioritizing school needs, especially around student learning. In circumventing rules and procedures, participants acted similarly.

Circumventing Rules and Procedures

As one participant dryly related, "Sometimes it is easier to ask forgiveness than permission". While this participant preferred to be kept anonymous, they were echoing sentiments expressed by a few other participants in the study. Circumventing rules and procedures was another way that participants actively played politics in their daily work as school principals in Grenada. Will offered up some context:

They would tell you there is a procedure for everything. This and this must happen. It must go through such and such channel. But the truth is, there are different rules and different procedures depending on who you are and who you

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know…. sometimes, rules don't apply at all. This is something we all know living in Grenada. Oftentimes you hear x and x school was successful in getting something when your school was told "No" or to "Follow procedure". So, if I have to, when I have to, I go around them.

This "go around" was a strategy that several participants acknowledged undertaking from time to time in navigating their work. Above, Will alluded to how inequity in terms of access to resources and people with the power and influence to affect outcomes plays out in the Grenada context. As he explained, it was necessary as a school principal to be astute to how things worked in the system and be willing to circumvent rules and procedures for the benefit of one's school.

Several other participants described scenarios wherein other schools were successful in procuring resources and other courses of action that they themselves were requesting to no avail. They described how they went around procedure to meet school needs, including reaching out directly to parliamentary representatives, the superiors of their own superiors, and in an instance, even the media, to secure their interests. While these acts were all part of "playing the game" of politics, there were other examples of how participants played politics to secure their interests.

"Playing the Game"

By "playing the game", I refer to "suck up" or "curry favour" behaviours participants described performing with and around people they deemed of benefit to them or that they believed would serve the interests of their school communities. For instance, in a previous findings' chapter, I discussed how Jess shared, "I can't tell you how often I have to smile when I wanted to scream". She was referring to working in a close-knit, rural community and working to forge school-community ties. Other participants including Beth and Will described how emotionally and physically taxing it could be, working with communities that had set ways and/or expectations that may not align with the objectives of the school, with Will describing his experiences as "putting on a performance". At the same time, as with other ways participants described playing politics, their actions around playing the game were within the formal dimensions of their

work and with their superiors and others with whom participants believed had influence in impacting their work in schools. Jim was very aware of "the game", though he indicated he did not play it. He related:

> I know the game they want me to play: laugh and grin teeth with them, butter them up, and act like their little dog. Just for them to do their jobs. I don't play that game. I see other principals doing it all the time… we are all public servants, placed here to do a job, and I do not have to engage in this kind of dishonest and slave mentality for you to do what you are paid to do.

Here, Jim was describing the politics that school principals often get caught up with in their position and work, explaining that he had knowledge and experience of his colleagues engaging in this type of politics to facilitate their work as a school principal. Several participants either admitted to or described colleagues playing this game of politics in their work, whether to make their job easier, avoid being singled out for retribution or other form of victimization, or because they saw it as acceptable behaviour. And while they did not describe their actions in this regard as a sham, a few were uncomfortable and saw this behaviour as suspect from a moral and/or ethic aspect while others wished things could be done differently.

Another way that participants described playing the game was to get ahead of possible conflict or bad press by being proactive and getting people and support on their side. For instance, Beth and Jim, who both worked in particularly challenging school contexts, described times when they were particularly adamant about getting supports for their school and were being met with resistance from their superiors in the Ministry. Both decided to bring parents in and explain the situation, hoping to get the support from parents before things were presented in a different light "by the other side" (Jim). Jim also shared that he did not discourage parents from drawing media attention to a particular issue at his school and recalled a terse conversation with his immediate superior officer regarding the matter. In both cases, participants recognized their legal responsibility and limits in directly contravening protocol and expectations and so worked around these measures in service of their schools. Participants experienced

blowback, in the sense of resistance and negative consequences, but they were clear about what they believed was needed for their schools and remained steadfast in trying to achieve them. This behaviour, around filtering out noise and distractions while focusing on school needs and goals, was a fourth way that participants described playing politics with respect to their work as school principals in Grenada.

Filtering Out Noise and Distractions

Remaining focused on the work at hand in supporting student learning proved challenging for participants, and several explained how they tried to tune out "noise" and distractions in navigating their work. For instance, Bev spoke of "ignoring the naysayers", Jess stated that she kept her "goal centered on God and what was best for [her] students", and Jim indicated that his work was "not for man but a Christian undertaking". Hence, whether drawing on religious spirituality or other principle, participants found ways to minimize distractions and remain focused on supporting school needs. Beth offered some more depth to filtering out noise and distractions in navigating work:

> There has been a lot of resistance to what I want to do here, especially at the beginning…. negativity comes from so many places: from teachers, students, parents, society, the Ministry. You know, not everyone agrees with the decisions I have had to make here, and I have learnt that that is ok… We can't reach everybody; everybody would not be on board. I ignore a lot, address what I feel I must, and press on with the business at hand… the focus is kept on student learning. Anything else, we just let it go.

Above, Beth described keeping herself and staff focused on school goals. She explained that an important facet of the school principalship that principals should understand clearly was that there would always be resistance and that principals must be prepared to accept that. At the same time, Beth described this mindset as being "easier said than done" but acknowledged that through collegial supports, she learnt to adapt to the climate and context of schooling and the school principalship in Grenada.

Other participants articulated how they drew courage from collegial supports in their quests to filter noise and distractions and keep their focus on students. For instance, Jim and Chad also identified collegial supports as helping them to become more knowledgeable, adept, and comfortable at filtering out noise and distractions. Jim even described collegial supports as a form of "security and protection" for principals in engaging in this political act. He shared of such supports and how they facilitated this political work:

> There is security and protection in numbers… Having the support of other colleagues, so you [as principal] are not alone, are not the only one doing things in this way… it is not a situation of one principal doing one thing, and another principal the other. But that commonality and unity in understanding how things are and can be done.

As Jim related throughout the study, school principals in Grenada were generally timid and compliant and so they relied on any obscurity or protection they believed numbers provided, in this case having consensus among the principal population, or at least significant chunks of it, in courses of action undertaken. This consensus proved important for participants who believed it necessary to redefine definitions of student success and successful schools in Grenadian schools.

Redefining Success

Redefining success was a fifth way that participants described politically navigating their work, especially around narrowly defined notions of student success and successful schools in the Grenada context. The conscious political act of redefining success to better reflect their school context was most prevalent among participants working in rural and some urban schools where student numeracy and literacy rates were low. This was not to say that these participants rejected national benchmarks or test scores as indicators of "success" but that they believed the definition was not nearly nuanced enough given the particular challenges that they faced at their schools. Beth, for instance, explained that every child should be given an opportunity to learn, and considered it her moral duty to ensure that students were not stigmatized. She worked in a

school where community perception of the school was negative, parents were low on the SES scale and had little formal education, and students were considered underachievers as per national standards. She consciously worked to orient her students and staff towards a different emphasis of success:

> We are what you call a "sports school"; our students perform well in sports but not academics. My goal is, it may not necessarily be academic, but they will succeed in whatever area. Therefore, we need to put that effort and give them a chance to achieve their fullest potential. Our students excel in sports, and for me that's achievement, that's success. And I face an uphill task getting students, staff, parents, and even the Ministry, to recognize and reward this form of success. And so, I build on that in trying to secure academic success. As it relates to academic success, I am satisfied when learning takes place. And for me, learning takes place when we're able to move a child from point A, where s/he couldn't read or write in Form I, to point B, where s/he can successfully sit two, or even three, subjects at CXC. Or, even for someone who does not pass any subjects, but is able to graduate at the end of four, five years saying, "I can read". These are the students we have here, and so my definition of achievement must necessarily shift to accommodate this reality.

As Beth explained, the vision for her school and focus of her work was student learning, and the particular context in which she worked further inspired her to approach this priority in the way she articulated above. And she described getting supports from her informal principal collegial group in her thinking, as several of them operated in a similar academic context. For instance, this context was similar in other participants' schools, particularly Meg's and Jim's and they both related challenges they faced not meeting the government's and society's expectations and definitions of success. They also both acknowledged defining student success outside of institutionalized definitions. They also acknowledged pushbacks, but saw their thinking and actions as just given their school's particular circumstances and needs.

Summary

The final findings chapter presented the different ways principals navigated their work. As previously captured in the preceding three chapters, how principals understood and undertook their work was influenced by broader socioeconomic conditions around such work and shrouded but unmistakable historical and cultural norms and expectations around this work. Considering this reality of work, principals kept grounded through caring, reminding themselves that it was the love for children and their Christian and civic convictions that inspired them to do their work. It seemed that this ethic of care made principals' innumerable acts of self-help – another strategy they employed to accomplish their work – more palatable. Principals also described knowledge acquisition, forging collegial supports, and playing politics as other strategies they employed to navigate the challenges of their work. Through knowledge acquisition, including learning about the laws, regulations, and politics of their work, and getting the support of other principals, principals described gaining confidence in their own decision-making. This confidence seemed to serve them well given the micropolitical nature of their work, and herein, principals modified and/or ignored policy, circumventing rules, tuned out distractions, and redefined school goals and notions of success, all in their attempts to "play the game" in their work.

CHAPTER 10: DISCUSSION

The interpretivist, relational nature of this social research was premised on the assumption of interconnections between Grenadian school principals' understandings of their work, how principals spend their time, challenges principals face, the strategies principals employ in navigating and/or responding to these challenges, and the conditions in and around which principals' work unfolded. The findings supported this assumption, offering empirical evidence that the school principalship is not instituted, and nor does the work of its incumbents unfold, in a social vacuum but a confluence of arrangements. In this chapter, I return to the literature, conceptual framework, and research question to examine the study's main findings and implications. Overall, I discuss how work for school principals in Grenada is service beyond the call of duty, legislation, or policy expectations. Substantially, the standards that Grenadian school principals draw upon for their work are moral standards stemming from their civic convictions and Christian faith. This is different from the professional standards developed in many other jurisdictions – especially in the Global North – and worth noting in my analysis as a particular contextual influence on the work of Grenadian school principals.

Nature of Work

Notwithstanding the contextualities describing how and why school principals in Grenada undertake work, the study's results point to similarities in the kinds of actions Grenadian school principals take and their peers elsewhere. Strikingly similar was the preponderance of administrative- and management-oriented types of actions around the operationalization of schools. Overall, the work is similarly fast-paced, hectic, voluminous, and intense, with clear disconnect between what principals would have preferred to prioritize and what the everyday nature of their work compelled them to do. I examine these two findings in the context of work intensification and expected versus accomplished work.

Intensification of Work

As the study uncovered, high volumes of work intensify the school principalship in Grenada, a finding typical to the school principalship in many jurisdictions. Another finding from the study that is typical to the school principalship elsewhere was the prevalence of administrative-/management-oriented kinds of work. Notably, research from the 1960s onwards points to the intensification of work over the decades, including not only the volume and scope of administrative/management actions but increasingly, the proliferation of leadership and accountability driven policies in and around school principals' work (for e.g., Horng et al., 2010; Martin & Willower, 1981; Pollock et al., 2015a; Pollock et al., 2015b; Sayles, 1964; Swapp, 2012; Willis, 1980; Wolcott, 1973). In this thesis, I examine the intensification of principals' work in the context of workload and work demands (see Pollock et al., 2019a; Walker, 2021; Wang, 2020). And, similar to how principals elsewhere describe this phenomenon, principals in the study reported feeling pressure to undertake and deliver work within constrained times, and work long hours at an unrelenting pace, with little downtime, to keep up with being compliant to burgeoning accountability-based mandates. They described myriad actions around reporting, budgeting, resource management, and, among others, fulfilling last minute requests from their superiors. Hence, very much like their peers in many other parts of the globe, they are swamped with emergencies, deadlines, and interactions during the workday and resort to fulfill the "paper" aspects and other administrative kinds of work beyond the official hours of school, into the evenings and on weekends. For these reasons, Pollock et al. (2015b) conclude that an elevated pace of change and heightened regulations, policies, and expectations characterize principals' contemporary work. And while their research was based on the North American context, principals' work in Grenada bore resemblance to this characterization. Further, researchers including Miller (2018b), Pollock et al. (2015b), Pollock et al. (2019a), and Swapp (2012) have shown in our own studies with school principals that, to comply with all these expectations, principals report having to work longer hours and concur that a lot of these deadlines and other administrative work left over from during the day are ideally undertaken during the quiet, uninterrupted evenings and/or at their homes.

At the same time, it must be made clear that principals in the study are not experiencing the kinds of heightened and sometimes punitive work-related stress as their peers in the Global North (for instance, see Darmody & Smyth, 2016). Neither is there a clear and/or written framework specifically aligned to pushing a 'principal leadership' agenda in Grenada. For instance, while in many jurisdictions principals' work is guided by set leadership standards, frameworks, and leadership institutes, for example the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISSLC) in the US, the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) in Ontario, and the National College For Educational Leadership (NCEL) in Jamaica, there is no such structure in place around the Grenadian school principalship. Further, the kinds of punitive sanctions that are meted out to "failing" schools and principals in the US, for example, or the clear expectations articulated in Ontario, Canada for schools and principals who receive public funding, are not currently being experienced in Grenada. Given growing criticism of the commodification and instrumentalization of principals' labour (Eacott, 2015a; Riveros et al., 2016), scrutiny on these accountability and surveillance systems and their deleterious impact on school principals' physical and mental wellbeing (Darling-Hammond, 2009; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015; Pollock et al., 2019a; Pollock et al., 2019b; Walker, 2020, 2021), and the challenges Grenadian principals are already facing daily, it is perhaps a relief that these principals do not have this type added type of strain and intensity on their work.

Expected Versus Accomplished Work

Principals' inability to attend to instructional work to the degree formally expected, or that they would prefer and/or feel is needed, is an area of persistent unease for me as a researcher in the field. Recall my examination of this schism in previous chapters. Very much like their counterparts on a global scale, principals in Grenada, despite wanting to, find it difficult to carve out meaningful, consistent, and/or sustained time to attend to instructional work, or for that matter, undertake or even consciously conceive of leadership-oriented work (for a recap, see Brauckmann & Schwaarz, 2015; Riveros et al., 2016; Swapp, 2012). Also like their peers elsewhere, they report that monitoring student learning is an important dimension of their work that, nevertheless,

oftentimes gets sidelined for other more pressing issues that consistently come up on a typical school day. Instead, principals in many jurisdictions report attending in less direct ways to support such learning, for instance in budgeting and allocating resources to ensure teachers and students have the right and adequate learning tools, building relationships and drawing on their networks of human resources to support classroom learning, and prioritizing professional development to develop instructional capacity in teachers who play the primary role in student learning in school (Brauckmann & Schwaarz, 2015; Grissom et al., 2013; Horng et al., 2010; Swapp, 2012). Maximizing resources for the greatest educational gains is an important element in supporting student learning (Faubert, 2019; Grissom et al., 2015; Horng et al., 2010) and this focus seems more aligned with the day-to-day reality of Grenadian school principals' work. Indeed, as managers of resources, principals must identify, prioritize, and fill school needs and they are often trying to do so with inadequate resources.

This dissonance between work that is expected, whether by way of the literature, formal legislation, cultural norms, or principals' own preferences, and work that school principals accomplish in their day-to-day, has been long apparent, though insufficiently contextualized, in the school administration literature. While there have been increases to public education funding in some jurisdictions, principals around the world are generally having to do more with less, and/or face constraints or set guidelines on how to allocate resources to meet school needs (Faubert, 2019; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Pollock et al., 2015a). And, at the micro or meso level, myriad dynamics such as teacher quality, experience, and motivation, political, economic, and social instability, and school demographics, location, public perception, or test scores, shape school climate and culture and determine the approaches principals have at their disposal to execute their work (Owens & Valesky, 2011). In other words, these dynamics influence not only the kinds of tasks that principals (can) undertake daily, but, more broadly, how principals think about and engage in their work. Despite these contextualities shaping what kinds of work principals can reasonably accomplish, there are growing demands and standardization around principals' work in many jurisdictions, resulting in wider, persistent gaps between expected and accomplished work.

This gap between expected and/or preferred and accomplished work is important to problematize. Evidence from decades of empirical research into the school principalship has traced the hectic, fast-paced, and complex nature of school principals' work and daily actions in fulfilling this work. The unique nature of the school principalship requires incumbents to "stay liquid" to handle the emergencies, deadlines, and 'people' aspects of the position, with paperwork and other administrivia being relegated to evenings and/or rare, quiet moments during the school day (Brauckmann, & Schwaarz, 2015; Swapp, 2012). The findings of the study corroborate my position that the school principalship significantly requires the undertaking of administrative/management related actions. These actions take up all, or significant portions of, principals' time, to the extent that principals report having no downtime (Pollock & Hauseman, 2015; Pollock et al., 2015a; Pollock et al., 2020; Walker, 2020, 2021). Over the decades, while technological sophistication has enhanced and changed how work is carried out and through what media and actions, it is still largely the case that the work of a school principal revolves around organizational management and the myriad tasks that so fulfill it. Different emphases, new policies, and shifting orientations towards school leadership, student learning, and school success for the most part have added on, not taken away, responsibilities. This is important to address not just in problematizing the gap between expected and accomplished work but in examining principals' work intensification. We do a disservice to principals to continue to clamour for more focus on instructional leadership, or other types of leadership for that matter when the evidence is overwhelming that most of principals' days are consumed with other types of (mostly administrative/management and people-oriented) work and, for that matter, principals oftentimes have little control over how their working days play out (Brauckmann & Schwaarz, 2015; Eacott, 2011, 2020; Flessa, 2009; Owings & Kaplan, 2012; Owens & Valesky, 2011). Further, continuing to position the incumbent of the school principalship as the unitary entity to turn around schools when the evidence suggests that student learning, indeed school reform, is a collective enterprise seems futile (Faubert, 2012; Fullan, 2014; Owings & Kaplan, 2012; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Riveros et al., 2016). It is unrealistic to place so many expectations on principals,

particularly espousing leadership frameworks or ideals that belie the very real, complex, contextual, and administrative nature of the school principalship.

I do not call attention to the persistent gap between espoused/preferred and actual work to denounce leadership frameworks or standards for principals' work. My point is that the evidence indicates that the nature of many principals' work lends itself readily to certain actions that, on the face of it, may not directly relate to instructional leadership (i.e., student learning) or check off any leadership checklist. This was corroborated in this study, wherein myriad factors such as poverty, lack of resources, problematic ideologies and practices around work, and the absence of parental involvement foster the production of reactive Grenadian school principals who are preoccupied with the daily work of "putting out fires". For principals working under such conditions, time is a luxury they can ill afford. Given this evidence, it seems futile and counterproductive to push an agenda that is antithesis to this reality of work. Rather than what are sometimes flawed, ahistoric, and decontextualized determinations of what school principals should be doing, the focus should shift to examine the conditions that foster and reify certain types of work among incumbents of the school principalship. By peeling away these layers, we expose a more accurate picture of not just what this work is but the confluence of arrangements that give form to this work, positioning us scholars, researchers, and practitioners to better study, describe, and prepare future principals for, this work. Standards, discourse, and practices should then *reflect* and *respond to*, not circumvent, or ignore, this context of, and approach to studying, the school principalship. In applying such a relational lens to examine the school principalship in Grenada, the notion of work as service was the most profound finding of the study.

Work as Service

It was clearly apparent that, just as Applebaum (1992) and Hall (1975) assert, work constituted more than paid labour or the execution of set, administrative tasks for principals in Grenada. Principals in the study saw themselves as servants and stewards and within this understanding articulated a strong civic duty and an ethic of care as fueling their commitment and actions. Principals also understood work as service in the

context of it being a Christian imperative. I contextualize this understanding by evaluating Christianity as status quo in Grenada and illuminating how this understanding translated to work being a toilsome labour of love for principals. Implicit expectations around what the work of school principals was or should be also factored into principals' conceptualization of work as service and herein I examine notions of hard work, (un)free labour, and ambivalent legislation in how principals thought about and undertook work daily. Undergirding this discussion of work as service is an engagement of overarching sociohistoric, economic, and cultural arrangements and conditions within and against which work unfolded for Grenadian school principals.

Principals as Stewards and Servants

A most palpable understanding of work that school principals in the study espoused was around the notion of being a steward, custodian, or servant. In this sense, work for principals was about service, in the sense of taking charge and taking care of and over their school compound and those within and utilizing their skills and expertise in the interests and to the benefit of their school communities and country. This mindset, approach, and practice can be examined in the context of stewardship and/or servant leadership, with both terms denoting a similar inclination towards pastoral care and charge over others (see Greenleaf, 1970; Nsiah & Walker, 2013). In fact, Fry (2003), Dantley (2010), and Walker (2021), in their own studies of Christianity and spirituality among Black school leaders, found that these leaders drew on these ideals in the broader contexts of love, altruism, and vision building with the overall aim of empowering, building organizational commitment, and increasing productivity. Within this perspective, school leaders considered their work a calling and themselves servants of the people with whom they work. The actions of servant leaders revolve around the wellbeing of those in their care, and among other qualities, these leaders demonstrate empathy, stewardship, and commitment to the development of others (Spears, 2005). Below, I examine the notion of Grenadian school principals as stewards and servants in the context of servant leadership, a civic duty, and an ethic of care.

Stewardship and Servant Leadership. The findings' chapters illustrate how Grenadian principals' understandings about the value of hard labour and what it means to be a Christian and good citizen shaped their thinking and approach to work in a fiscally poor, developing country in the Global South. It is within this discussion of values, meanings, and norms relative to participants' understandings and approaches to work that I frame theoretical discussions of stewardship and servant leadership. As the findings showed, school principals' lived experiences and inculcated beliefs as Grenadian citizens in an underdeveloped small island in the Caribbean influenced their altruistic interactions with their school community, aligning with what Spears (2005) describes as a fundamental tenet of servant leadership, namely the desire to serve and uplift others and not a preoccupation with building or sustaining authoritarian regimes. This meaning that principals ascribed work in the Grenadian context translated into similar practices that Smith (2012) found in his study of school leaders, namely principals going beyond the formal mandates of their job to harbour a deep level of empathy, a strong work ethic, ethic of care, custodial responsibility, and sense of civic duty, and an unwavering commitment to the development of students, teachers, and others in their school communities.

In their systematic review, Parris and Peachey (2012) draw associations between servant leadership theory and discussions on ethics, virtues, and morality and found that the theory has been applied in a range of studies and fields. In education, servant leadership is advanced as a way to understand school leaders' engagement with work and promote positive and sustainable principal leadership (Holmes, 2020; Nsiah & Walker, 2013; Parris & Peachey, 2012). I utilize the former mobilization in illuminating principals' work in the context of Grenada. Greenleaf is credited with academia's surging interest in servant leadership beginning in the 1970s. According to Greenleaf (1970), servant leadership theory is concerned with the idea of work as service and emphasizes leaders' interactions with their subordinates as one premised on the desire to serve and uplift others. This was clearly the case for school principals in Grenada.

And by its very nature, the work of a school principal has historically required administration and supervision of physical and human resources (Horng et al., 2010;

Martin & Willower, 1981; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Sayles, 1964; Willis, 1980; Wolcott, 1973). Therefore, it is not surprising that Grenadian school principals perceived of themselves as stewards, both in the literal sense of administration and supervision of school resources – human and material – and in terms of taking care of these resources, by ensuring they are used responsibly and attending to the overall safety of the people in and on the school compound. What compounded their attendant actions around this belief was widespread socioeconomic neglect that characterized contemporary Grenadian society.

Civic Duty. Another way that principals in the study demonstrate qualities of stewardship and servant leadership is in their characterization of work as a civic duty. By this I mean that principals in the study expressed devotion to country and the development of responsible, contributing citizens, with several referencing crimes perpetuated by youth, mass youth unemployment, and societal poverty as primary reasons for contextualizing their understanding of work in this way. Principals drawing on social ills to help explain the focus for their work helps situate and explain the intersections of society, schools, and educational work (Miller, 2013; Rousmaniere, 2013; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Indeed, schools are microcosms of society; they respond to, shape, and are shaped by, external forces (Eacott, 2015a; Rousmaniere, 2013).

A conceptualization of work as a social construct in this study thus sheds light on the dynamics of broader social life and the work of educators in schools. Herein, principals speak of being socialized to care for others and contribute to the building of a better society. As some scholars have noted, these notions of what constitutes "a better society" are heavily based, as demonstrated below, on Christianity and Biblical teachings around what is "good" and "just" (Dantley, 2010; Fry, 2003; Smith et al., 2015). Smith et al. (2015) examine school leaders' Christian beliefs in the broader context of transformational leadership, arguing that school leaders perceive of such spirituality as fundamental to educational improvement, nation building, and economic development. But these notions, as articulated by school principals in the study, are also based on culture and sociohistoric legacies stemming from Grenada's colonial past and are related to the role of the Church (religious denominations, but especially Catholicism) in running

schools and the attendant implications. It was evident that these principals' socialization and overall upbringing were shaped by the principles and practices of Christianity and long held beliefs around the value of hard work and "giving freely", especially given the severe socioeconomic constraints facing schools. Such sociohistoric, cultural, and economic antecedents clearly shape thinking and practices relative to work in a given society (Applebaum, 1992; Fudge & Strauss, 2014; Gulson & Symes, 2007; Grint, 2005; Hall, 1975; Kalleberg, 2009, 2011; Pietrykowski, 2019).

Grenada is only 47 years old as an independent nation state and many of the people who are around today were witness to Grenada's birth as a nation and/or the formative years after the country's independence. In fact, many of the teachers and principals currently in Grenada's schooling system – including those who participated in this study – or who are on the cusp of retirement, grew up during, or were inculcated in the spirit of, the Revolution era from the 1970s to the mid-1980s. Between 1979 and 1983, in particular, Grenada's socialist-leaning government instituted structural changes to education governance and a nationalist ideology that promoted adult literacy, teacher pedagogy, patriotism and self-sufficiency, and this spurred the citizenry into action (Brizan, 1998; Hickling-Hudson, 1988; Mocombe, 2005; Spencer, 1998; Steele, 2003; Zakula, 2012). Researchers have chronicled these changes that reached the old and the young in local spheres, the region, and the diaspora (Hickling-Hudson, 1988, 2000a, 2014; Mocombe, 2005; Spencer, 1998; Zakula, 2012). During this period, educators were passionate about inculcating new, socialist leanings to the next generation and many of these young children are today teachers and principals in Grenada's education system (Hickling-Hudson, 1988, 2000a, 2014; Steele, 2003). As Hickling-Hudson's (1988, 2000a, 2014) and Jules' (2013) scholarships describe, this period was a time during which Grenadians took pride in labour, whether by way of paid employment or volunteerism; notions of being altruistic, good citizens and neighbours, and each, his brother's keeper were reflected in national discourse and work was a cultural ideal, undertaken not for money but to build each other and country. This commitment was demonstrated not only through servant leadership and civic duty but a strong ethic of care.

Principals' Ethic of Care. By "ethic" I refer to the valued understandings and moral principles that guide principals' actions and behaviours in their work. In the context of the study, these values and moral principals have been shaped by, within, and through principals' lived experiences and interactions in Grenadian society – a society plagued by economic hardships with deeply entrenched ideologies around labour, servitude, and Christian notions of "being a Good Samaritan" – not easily separated in their working lives. Indeed, ethics and moral behaviours are fundamental to educational work (Bogdan, 2003, 2014; Greenfield, 1980; Griffiths, 2013; Harris & Jones, 2018; Hodgkinson, 1996; Richmon, 2008; Riveros, 2015a). The notion of principals' work as moral ethical practice embedded and embodied in context (Dantley & Tillman, 2006; Pollock & Winton, 2016) is thus an important finding in the study. As my colleagues and I argue elsewhere, "[w]hen practicing and enforcing rules, regulations, and policies, [principals'] decisions are informed by their professional, organizational, or political alignment, and/or their family and community backgrounds" (Pollock et al., 2015a, p. 20). As examined in the findings, several principals referenced love for humanity and country, upbringing in the church, positions as senior church leaders, and faith and obedience to God as integral to their understanding of the school principalship and the focus of and for their work. This illustrates how principals' thinking is often informed by personal and professional experiences and contextualized based on school needs (Pollock et al., 2019). The findings of the study thus allude to the interconnectedness of principals' experiences; the values and norms that inform how principals live as citizens within a Christian nation also shape how they think about and practice their work as school principals. Moreover, it is in this sense that Applebaum (1992) asserts that private and professional identities intersect; neither are a part of our existence easily removed from the rest our lives.

Indeed, the notion of work as an ethical practice is very apparent in the meanings that principals ascribe their work. Strong moral principles governed Grenadian school principals' daily actions, influencing their strong work ethic, commitment to their students, and willingness to go above and beyond the formal mandates of their work. Importantly, ethics and moral behaviours are substantive of what school principals do and

how school principals think (Dantley & Tillman, 2006; Greenfield, 1980; Hodgkinson, 1996; Richmon, 2008; Riveros, 2015a). In fact, Pollock & Winton (2016) assert that some of principals' work "is driven by legislation, other aspects by moral purpose" (p. 323). Compassion, love, and care are key emotional and psychological constituents framing Grenadian school principals' moral thinking and behaviours. The findings depicted the numerous acts of principals driven by their valued convictions. In this sense, it is as Larsen (2017) asserts, that "emotional responses are not simply a limited catalyst through which learning and transformation transpires but constitutes forms of understanding in and of themselves" (p. 279). Principals must, obviously, work withing the parameters of the duties and responsibilities regulating their work and their overarching actions reflect their commitment to complying with the formal mandates of their position, but their behaviours – in terms of their thinking and approach to decision-making and problem-solving – seem driven by their concern and commitment to do what is best for their school communities.

But while my emphasis on values and morals in school principals as servant leaders is significant in the study, I do not mean to suggest that all of principals' work, but especially faith-based work, is grounded only in understandings of servant leadership. It is my position that all principals, irrespective of jurisdiction, hold valued meanings of their work and that not all aspects of work invoke analysis through servant leadership. I invoke servant leadership in the Grenada context because all, but one, principals in the study drew on Christianity in articulating and translating core meanings around work, and that further, the ways they go about making these values practical align with qualities of servant leaders that are advanced in the literature. Altogether, childhood experiences, mental models, passions, motivations, professional convictions, and a range of social, cultural, and economic influences serve as antecedents to and determinants of the identity formation of educators (Larsen, 2011; Mindzak, 2016; Pollock et al., 2019) and these variously propel these dedicated persons towards the authentic practice of servant leadership in their work.

Christian Imperative

I discussed in the introduction to this study, and in the review of the literature, that Grenada inherited Christianity as a former European colony and that this legacy is very much still evident in Grenadian ideology, institutions, and norms. In addition to societal structures and institutions reflecting this legacy, such as overt Christian practices such as prayers and singing of Christian hymns in formal spaces such as at school and in the sitting of the Houses of Parliament, so too do Grenadian school principals' understandings of and approaches to work. Just as Applebaum (1992) asserted, participants' personal and professional lives intersected in their lived experiences as citizens, educators, and principals.

As I present in the findings' chapters, strong Christian beliefs interweave principals' understandings and attendant actions relative to their work. Fundamental to principals' understanding of work as a Christian imperative is the notion of being a good moral citizen and instilling what principals consider good, Christian values. As examined previously, the Caribbean's relationship with Christianity – namely the Catholic, Anglican, and other Bible-based denominations – dates to European colonization (Brizan, 1998; Grenade, 2005; Smith, et al., 2015; Walker, 2021; Zakula, 2012). Consequently, Grenada identifies as a Christian nation, with overt references to God in national emblems, official government business, and societal norms. Irrespective of religious affiliation, several daily practices in Grenadian schools are borne out of and sustained by the country's religious legacy of Christianity, including the reciting of The Lord's Prayer (as Jesus Christ is depicted as establishing in the Book of Matthew 9: 9-13 according to Christian biblical scripture), reading from other scriptures in the Holy Bible, and other prayers and worship activities at morning devotions and lunch and afternoon recesses. Indeed, religion and churchgoing enjoy twinned, favoured status in Grenada. The concepts love, morality, and spirituality are thus strongly entwined in Caribbean culture (Smith et al., 2015; Walker, 2021) and were clearly manifested in Grenadian principals' thinking and actions. Below, I discuss a Christian imperative in Grenadian school principals' work in the context of Christianity as status quo and the practice (i.e., manifestation) of Christianity as a toilsome labour of love.

Christianity as Status Quo. Max Weber (1930) asserts that religious beliefs have deeply shaped contemporary ways of knowing and doing in human society. In fact, he asserts that so coercive and ingrained on our consciousness are religious beliefs that they constitute taken for granted assumptions of organizational life. I do not invoke religion, or in this context Christianity, to condemn the practice but to establish and discuss its complex relations in practice, especially in the sense of, whether intentional or otherwise, attendant actions that the practice seems to engender relative to the Grenadian school principalship. In Grenada, there is an almost unquestionable acceptance of religiosity, and Christianity as the religion of choice, in citizens' ways of knowing, being, and doing. It is this unquestioning acceptance and attendant implications that I problematize and interrogate. As Kalberg (2001), writing on Max Weber's (1930) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, asserts, throughout the last few centuries "work… acquired a religious value" (p. xxxv). This status quo is apparent in the Grenada context, in that while only one principal in the study did not work in a denominational school, his Christian upbringing compelled him to lead through a Christian spirituality. And while one other principal self-identified as a non-practitioner of Christianity, she nevertheless professed belief in God and the principles of the Bible, explaining that she drew on the values and moral codes of conduct inculcated in her by her parents and grandparents – namely, being honest, working hard, and helping others – and not consciously on any Biblical/Christian teachings. At the same time, the principal was astute enough to recognize that so embedded and embodied were Christian beliefs and norms in Grenadian tradition that, over time, these undeniably influenced the very set of values and moral codes of conduct she espoused today. This unquestioned, ready acceptance and obedience to the principles of Christianity played out in the depth and scope of denominational work in Grenadian schools and principals' acquiescence to other types of work and actions beyond what might be considered the purview of the formal mandates of the job.

Furthermore, Christianity, as understood and translated by the principals in the study, had specific, restricted scope. It is this status quo that I challenge in the thesis. To illustrate, religious education, or at least the faith-based work of denominational schools, has responded to the social justice imperative of rooting out margination and oppression

and so is designed in many jurisdictions today to oversee the work of instilling important values of a democratic society through the processes and practices that govern their faith but also in the context of those who benefit from public funding, government legislations, and policies (Dantley, 2010; Dantley & Tillman, 2006; Pollock & Winton, 2016; Nthontho, 2020). In other words, contemporary denominational education in a democratic society should do more than prescribe its own doctrines. Such faith-based work, Nthontho (2020) points out, also imparts "moral values in the teaching of and learning about religions and other value systems" (p. 77). Dantley & Tillman (2006) situate social justice and moral transformative leadership as pivotal to this work while Dantley (2010) sees this aim as a fundamental aim of Faith-based school leadership. In this way, learners grow up to do more than recite Scripture or view the world through a single religious lens. Unfortunately, this was not a focus among Grenadian school principals in their denomination-based emphases and actions. None articulated engaging in faith-based work to develop students' knowledge, appreciation, respect, and understanding around other religious beliefs and practices outside of Christianity and/or the specific denomination to which schools belong. None spoke of equity in the context of gender, sexuality, ableism, or religion – marginalizing concepts in a conservative Global South society such as Grenada – and how their faith-based work and/or their denomination can respond to these urgent human rights issues. As I examine in a previous chapter, authentic moral leadership supports equity, inclusion, and social justice (Fullan, 2003, 2014; Griffiths, 2013; Harris & Jones, 2018). And if/whether Christianity serves as a lynchpin for such a focus in Grenada, the focus must necessarily move beyond any preoccupation with preservation of a particular religion's tenets to a more diverse and democratic approach. As it stands in Grenada, such work revolves around being a toilsome labour of love.

Toilsome Labour of Love. It was clear from the findings of the study that principals consider the work of a school principal in Grenada to be fundamentally about love. Principals invoked the term often when discussing work in the context of a calling/vocation. This notion of love in the work of school principals seems borne out of and sustained through deep faith in Jesus Christ and life's attendant purpose of 'doing

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good' by following the teachings of Jesus Christ as laid out in the Holy Bible. This fundamental focus was universal with school principals across denominations in Grenada, notwithstanding other elements that differentiate membership in these various affiliations. But it is hardly surprising that principals in the study understand their work as a calling or vocation. All principals in the study started their careers in education as a classroom teacher and they all express it was their love for students, their desire to make a positive difference, and what they view as a natural proclivity towards education that drove their decisions to be in this field. Interestingly, Larsen (2011) found the same in her study of schoolteachers in the Victorian age. Principals' work serves important professional, economic, social, and educational ends, schools are where the next generation of workers, leaders, and citizens are nurtured. Principals are and do see themselves as key players supporting this learning (Leithwood & Seashore Louis, 2012). It is not surprising, then, that for Grenadian school principals, their work goes beyond the need for a paycheck. As Pietrykowski (2019) asserts, work is more than paid employment; work carries an emotional investment. In fact, Larsen (2017) situates emotions as "forms of understanding in and of themselves" (p. 279). For principals in Grenada, work was love and love was work; separating the two concepts was difficult. They lit up whenever they mentioned their students and expressed that, notwithstanding the challenges of the work, the students were the reason they were motivated to come to work every day. It is the lack of expansion of such passion to include social justice imperatives other than socioeconomic hardships that I find problematic.

But it is indeed commendable that Grenadian students are served by educators who love them, care about their physical and academic wellbeing, and are passionate about and committed to their work. In these ways, Grenadian principals are not alone. Not only do principals generally understand their work as a labour of love, but they also describe authentic care for students' academic and overall wellbeing, oftentimes making sacrifices and/or giving of their personal resources to support students in need (Bass, 2009; van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). The latter is particularly pervasive in poor, developing countries where many families struggle to send their children adequately prepared for school every day (Knight, 2014; Miller, 2013; Verret, 2017). As the study

illuminated, in Grenada, high rates of societal poverty and underfunding by government contextualize the more tangible ways principals demonstrate notions of love and care towards students.

All seven principals in the study who self-identified as a (practicing) Christian and an active member of their different churches understood and engaged in their work through tangible manifestations of love, fueled by a Christian imperative, and contextualized around socioeconomic hardships. As active members of society, these school administrators' understandings of what it meant to be a school principal were infused with their personal identities as educators, Christians, and Grenadian citizens. This underscores Greenfield's (1977, 1980) caution of the futility of studying principals as abstract entities divested of personal emotion or forethought. Principals are living and breathing beings who come into the principalship with valued understandings and ways of knowing who, both consciously and unconsciously, draw on these knowledges to inform thinking and practice. Nsiah and Walker (2013) describe some Catholic principals' faith-based work, particularly, as deeply grounded in such familial upbringing, extracurricular experiences, and religious convictions and practices as priests. A number of principals in Catholic and Anglican schools in Grenada are members of the clergy. It is indeed as Applebaum (1992) writes, that in the context of work, private and professional lived are blurred and not easily distinguishable. This reality of principals' work – of personal and professional lives intersecting, and inevitably, (personal, moral, and/or) religious beliefs shaping thought and action – must necessarily be acknowledged and probed if we are to more meaningfully study, inform, understand, and support this work. And, as I examine next, a Christian imperative, contextualized around socioeconomic hardships, also worked to secure compliance and control of the work of school principals in Grenada.

Compliance and Control

In the educational administration and leadership literature, notions of compliance and control are mobilized to describe systems and arrangements in place to direct and monitor school principals' work and help explain how school principals go about

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adhering and/or responding to these regimes. Further, in the contemporary context of educational work, scholars such as Carnoy and Rhoten (2002) situate compliance and control in the marketization of education amid growing admiration for neoliberal policies. In the Global North, the principles of New Managerialism (NM) – that educational scholars position as neoliberalism's manifestation in school administration – are dominant in discourse around productivity and accountability, spurring the proliferation of leadership frameworks, educational standards, and surveillance to measure educators' output (see Ball, 2003, 2011; Miller, 2018b; Lynch, 2014; Owens & Valesky, 2011). And as Lynch (2014) asserts, manifestations of NM in education include the shift from government/state responsibility for education to the individual, a focus on educational products and outputs over processes and inputs, and a data driven, often competitive accountability regime with attendant surveillance and self-monitoring systems to exercise control over work and workers.

The findings indicate that some of these conditions are evident in the Grenadian school principalship. The funds that public schools in Grenada receive from the government do not adequately meet needs, yet the Ministry of Education (MOE) expects increasingly more returns from teachers and principals and has blamed a "lack of student achievement" in the country on "limited teacher and principal training and preparation" (SPEED II, 2006, p. x). I see this as an admission of guilt more than an indictment on the quality and preparedness of Grenadian educators; at a minimum, a government must assume responsibility for the quality of its education system. At the same time, principals in the study described favouritism by this same ministry in how students are placed from primary into secondary schools and even in funding schools. They also reported heightened accountability and surveillance in their work and described their own self-monitoring regulations to ensure work is accomplished. At the same time, while not discounting globalization's reach in (even or albeit) an underdeveloped country such as Grenada, the findings of the study point to other (pre-existing and endemic) systems and arrangements, not directly or most palpably of neoliberalism's doing, shaping work in the Grenada context.

Put another way, though the evidence clearly points to compliance and control in the work of school principals in Grenada, it was not strictly in the sense of New Managerialism. Instead, I argue that the substance and scope of Grenadian school principals' work have always been intense, altruistic, and political given the particular history of the country. Mobilizing the relational approach in this study helps situate and explain compliance and control in the Grenadian school principalship by illuminating how principals, as individuals in society, are socialized in and by this environment. Hence, as I examine in this chapter, the specific power dynamics fueling compliance and control in the Grenadian context seemed sustained and secured by, through, and due to other sociocultural and socioeconomic regimes, including widespread poverty, religious beliefs, historical ideologies around hard work and labour, and a culture of fear and victimization.

Technology & Surveillance

Technological advancements have reconfigured what contemporary school principals do in complying with their duties and responsibilities and how they go about such compliance (Pollock, 2016; Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Pollock et al., 2015b). At the same time, the unequal distribution of wealth and resources across countries in the Global North and the Global South results in disparities in the state, use, and impact of technology across jurisdictions. For instance, principals in the United States and Canada are tech-savvy individuals who demonstrate expertise navigating the world of data, information processing, and information sharing through advanced communication media (for instance, see Horng et al., 2010; Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Pollock et al., 2015b; Swapp, 2012); these principals utilize technology in all dimensions of their work, from liaising with students, teachers, parents, and their superiors through blogs, tweets, and texts to preparing mandatory reports, budget statements, and school improvements initiatives using sophisticated management learning systems. The results of the study revealed that in Grenada, the government struggles to adequately fund education and absent are significant investments to technology, communications, and infrastructure, or training for competence in same. Hence, the influence of technology in and on school principals' work is largely limited to email and text correspondence. Principals in the

study still utilized paper correspondence such as post mail letters, but most written correspondence are now typically accomplished via emails, texts, and other exchanges on smart devices. They also reported receiving much of their everyday instructions and information pertinent to schools from the MOE and its designated district offices through emails that come through over computers, tablets, and cellular phones. Worth exposing for analysis was how technology created a sense of urgency and fostered a sense of self-monitoring surveillance in Grenadian school principals' work.

Like their peers elsewhere, Grenadian principals described the introduction of smart devices in their work as a double-edged sword. They concur that technology, especially the internet and smartphones for accomplishing work, has improved communication, efficiency, and overall school management, but they also cite demands on their time to address work more urgently, sometimes beyond and outside of working hours (revisit Pollock & Hauseman, 2018; Pollock et al., 2015b; Swapp, 2012). Principals feeling compelled to immediately respond to work coming through their devices is not uncommon. In my own previous empirical study (Swapp, 2012), an Ontario elementary school principal, whose smartphone was issued by the school board, described feeling especially obliged to respond promptly to work coming through this device, often responding to emails and other work during the dawn or late at nights and even sometimes on weekends. She also described the negative impact this propensity to always respond to work and always being engaged in some aspect of work had on her family life, but she continued the practice, partly because the device was issued by her employer; she felt compelled to respond. Interestingly, Grenadian principals are not issued government smartphones but utilize their own devices – and pay all fees associated with this cost – in undertaking work. Yet, they described a similar compulsion to respond to work coming through their devices.

This compulsion to respond urgently, and above and beyond the call of duty, to emails and other work-related correspondence coming through their own devices seemed borne out of Grenadian school principals' own internalization of work's hierarchical, bureaucratic, and accountability-driven structure. According to Foucault (1982-1983), government/state control and regulation are effective because they are internalized and

operationalized at the individual level. Lynch (2014) situates this propensity for school leaders to self-monitor within the NM discourse, arguing that surveillance and monitoring systems are set up to measure worker productivity and thus control their output. At the same time, she and others argue that so insidious have been the rhetoric and the accountability regimes that accompany educational work that direct surveillance of workers is no longer the only option to ensure compliance and control; instead, workers self-monitor and self-regulate their own actions towards compliance (Clarke et al., 2000; Lynch, 2014). Grenadian school principals' urgency in responding to work, even well beyond what could be considered the average workday, is a manifestation of how much these principals have imbibed surveillance and scrutiny in and of their labour.

Expectations Around Work

Expectations around work, both explicit and implicit, constitute another interrelated dimension of Grenadian school principals' work that I examine here in the context of compliance and control. Altogether, within a strongly Christian and civic society plagued by grave historical and economic hardships, these expectations around work not only secured compliance and control but, as examined previously, promulgated the normalization of long work hours and copious amounts of manual, unfree labour by principals and contributed to an overall intensification of principals' work. I unpack these expectations in the context of ambivalent legislation, ideological understandings of work as duty, and fear of victimization.

There is no legislation – outside of broad language in the *Education Act* around Grenadian school principals being responsible for ensuring school safety, smooth operations of the school, and distributing needed resources to staff – compelling principals to work so laboriously or to undertake what I have characterized as (un)free labour. My characterization of such work as unfree labour is to denote the ambivalence of legislation outlining principals' formal duties in Grenada, ambivalence that works to the benefit of the MOE/government (the employer) and not the principal (employee), the lack of paid remuneration for these specific kinds of work, and, as the findings revealed, the implicit expectations that principals perform them (not to mention the pervasive fear of victimization that also seem to spur the prevalence of these types of work).

With respect to the wider literature around this context, social, political, and economic instability in many world systems shifts ideology and purpose around education, and constrained government budgets force school systems throughout the world to do more with less. Hence, the mantra of "doing more with less" is not uncommon across educational jurisdictions. At the same time, and undeniably, a neoliberal agenda, that is preoccupied with markets, competition, and performativity, has inserted itself into both public and private governance, including in school administration (Ball, 2009; Blackmore & Sachs, 2007; Lynch, 2014). However, as I have argued earlier, a strong neoliberal agenda was not shown to be the most overt influence shaping school principals' work in Grenada. The government is stressing Grenada's vulnerability to global markets and the country's need to become more competitive in these arenas (Government of Grenada, 2020). Further, the principals in the study reported increased demands for performance by the MOE. As I examined, these demands have increased the volume and intensification of their work and contributed to longer workdays. And, while these measures at the governmental level are undoubtedly related to globalization and Grenada's relationships with international organizations including lending agencies, the evidence from the study points to more direct and palpable influences behind principals' work in schools.

Instead, in the Grenada context, while principals' actions were fueled and exacerbated by a constrained economy and chronic and acute lack of resources in schools, an insidious ideology around what work is, and labour that is expected to be freely given, is at play. I concur that this ideology represents a form of worker and work precarity, in the broader sense of the normalization of unfree labour and unpaid work, and longer working hours for educators (Mindzak, 2016; Pollock, 2008), despite the murkiness of this argument when examined in the context of school principals as salaried workers. This is so because given the unique nature of the school principalship, it is difficult to cleanly categorize incumbents' labour into paid-unpaid and/or free-unfree categories. After all, the position of school principal does require flexibility and a complexity of tasks, and extended working hours are often unavoidable. It is within this blurriness and (expansive) operationalization of the role, however, that inequity and

exploitation can take root. Foucault's (1982-1983) work on governmentality illuminates how compliance and control has been able to flourish in political, social, cultural, and economic spaces through workers' own internalization of discourses of productivity and performance. For Rose (1989), who draws on Foucault (1982-1983), governmentality works in, by, and through people in micro settings who have bought into the ideals of productivity, output, and efficiency and so act as their own self-regulating agents of compliance and control. Hence, what is problematic is not just that Grenadian principals perform unfree labour, work long hours, or that such work is expected by the public or the government, but the volume and frequency of such kinds of work and, more to Foucault's analysis, the role principals seem to play in normalizing the nature and scope of such work. This expectation of unfree work among Grenadian school principals must therefore be interrogated within and against the broader sociological debate of worker agency and structures around labour relations, power, precarity, and worker subjectivity (Kalleberg, 2009; Rose, 1989; Standing, 2011). Overall, the relational lens applied to the findings of this study illuminate that, overtime, certain conditions have given rise to the proliferation of certain kinds of work in Grenadian society.

And, while most principals acknowledged that resource shortage within broader economic constraints impels such work, and that such work is undertaken often and to significant scope, they are inarticulate about whether this should constitute acceptable, "normal" work. From a relational perspective, Pierre Bourdieu's (2000) notion of misrecognition is applicable here in drawing attention to how structural socioeconomic inequity, that is defined and works within social (including professional and labour-related) fields, is reproduced in schools. According to Bourdieu (1998, 2000), mechanisms of inequity and exploitation work to subdue critical thinking and activism among the exploited and oppressed. And while the principals in the study seemed to exercise significant agency in their work, it could also be argued that they understood and operationalized their work from a position of exploitation and oppression. I discuss misrecognition as a "form of forgetting that social agents are caught up in and produced by" inequitable and coercive forces rooted in inequity and oppression, in that "[w]hen we feel comfortable within our roles within the social world they seem to us like second

nature and we forget how we have actually been produced as particular kinds of people" (Webb et al., 2002). For the most part, school principals in Grenada seem proud of their hard work and their civic convictions, Christian values, and love for children driving such work. They are preoccupied with the socioeconomic challenges of running their schools and their time is spent responding, almost mechanically, to these challenges so much so that they seem to fail to consider the broader regimes and guises of compliance and control that reify inequitable and exploitative work arrangements and work contexts. As English (2012) asserts, by misrecognizing these regimes around worker productivity and performativity, workers fail to realize how discourse, standards, and expectations can be "promulgated as an agenda to control and dominate" (p. 155) them and their labour. This seems to be the case for school principals in Grenada.

My discussion, framing even, of some aspects of Grenadian school principals' work as *unfree labour* is not to diminish, pigeonhole, or bound the nature of the school principalship or the scope of school principals' work that may be contextually driven in different jurisdictions. Indeed, notwithstanding commonalities in the school principalship and education governance across a global scale, the experiences of Grenadian school principals around the notion of hard work and (un)free labour underscore that *context matters*. These findings illuminate that local conditions and macro and meso socio-historic, political, and economic circumstances can and do shape understandings and practices of work in a given jurisdiction. I therefore draw on participants' accounts in the study to expose for interrogation the propensity, volume, and regularity of such kinds of actions in the Grenadian school principalship and to uncover for analysis the kinds of social arrangements and circumstances that have contributed to the proliferation of such work. Given the overarching circumstances surrounding the Grenadian school principalship, it is hardly surprising that incumbents engaged in micropolitics in navigating their work.

Micropolitics in Work

As Ryan and Armstrong (2016) articulate, what happens in schools reflects broader societal influences. Examining the school principalship from and with such an

understanding will expose for interrogation the complexities around principals' choices, in terms of what they prioritize, how and why, and other compromises they often make in fulfilling what they see as the purpose of their work. At the same time, it is important to preface my analysis of the micropolitical nature of Grenadian school principals' work to say that, as this study has corroborated, school principals do attend to the formal mandates of their job. This is an ethical aspect of principals' micropolitical work that is important to situate (Tuters & Armstrong, 2016). In fact, as this study further confirms, principals spend inordinate amounts of time fulfilling these responsibilities. However, as the findings of this study also revealed, it is school principals' moral compass that guides their conscious decision making, political acumen that helps them navigate the complexities, contradictions, and inequities surrounding their work, and gumption that keeps intimidation at bay and influences *how* principals go about their work. Below, I examine three dimensions of micropolitics at play in Grenadian school principals' work, namely knowledge acquisition, modifying or circumventing policy, and filtering out "noise" and distractions.

Knowledge Acquisition

Ryan and Armstrong (2016) examine school principals' knowledge acquisition in the context of *strategizing*, that is, "developing a politically-oriented identity that includes a sophisticated understanding of the various institutions and actors" (p. xv). Principals in the study engaged in self-directed professional development to increase their confidence in their roles and as perceived leverage against their superiors. Several also described how knowing the legal and informal workings of the system helped them navigate their work, specifically around unspoken educational protocol, channels, actors, and supports to realize their goals. Greenfield and Hunter (2016) describe this type of knowledge acquisition as craft knowledge, gained not from formal and/or academic programs, but from *doing* the school principalship (p. 76). This type of experience seemed invaluable to principals in the study, especially around helping them navigate and leverage friendships and collegial networks to secure financial and other material supports for their schools and for students.

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Through their exploratory study with school principals, Greenfield and Hunter also illuminate the formal and unspoken systems and relations at play in the exercise of the school principalship, drawing attention to how principals draw on craft learning to balance their espoused (and preferred) beliefs with actions they feel compelled to take in their daily work. Ryan (2010) has explored this form of political acumen in investigating school principals at their work, asserting that the depth and range of incumbents' experiences in the principalship relate to their ability to develop, harness, and leverage this important strategy. In knowledge acquisition around the politics of their work, principals also draw expertise, inspiration, and confidence from their colleagues (Greenfield & Hunter, 2016). As the findings showed, several principals forged and relied on collegial supports when navigating the politics of their work. This type of support also served principals well in another aspect of political activity, namely their deliberate acts in modifying and/or circumventing policies and mandates handed down in their work.

Modifying or Circumventing Policy

Grenadian school principals described modifying, ignoring, or circumventing policies and procedures because they considered doing so to be in the best interests of their school communities. Here too, as researchers have asserted, those principals with more experience on the job tended to engage in this behaviour more skillfully (Ryan, 2010; Tuters & Armstrong, 2016). While most principals in the study did not speak of this strategy in the sense of blatant disobedience to a directive or policy, evidence indicates that their colleagues in other jurisdictions have ignored and/or feigned acceptance of policy and mandates when they believed doing so served the interests of their students. Saldivia and Anderson (2016) situate school principals' work as unfolding in an environment of growing social disparity, with equity-minded school principals acting as mediators to skillfully interpret the intent and consequences of policies handed down in their work. Consequently, merging incoming policy with existing school frameworks, accepting – or giving the appearance of accepting – new policies, or ignoring or defying them, are all political acts that principals undertake in doing what they determine to be best for students and for their schools (Day, 2014; Day & Gu, 2018;

Greenfield & Hunter, 2016; Ryan, 2010; Saldivia & Anderson, 2016; Tuters & Armstrong, 2016). Grenadian school principals also acted strategically to prioritize those mandates and directives they believed yielded the most gains in student outcomes and circumvented, modified, or ignored those that they did not consider did so. In their study, Greenfield and Hunter (2016) found that school principals acted similarly. According to these researchers, principals filtered and modified programs into existing frameworks that best supported students, consulted with their colleagues for support, and then asked for forgiveness where necessary. Similarly, principals in the study also deliberately undertook certain actions they believed would be considered controversial or unacceptable, following through with them despite this pushback because they believed their actions served their school communities, with one principal explicitly stating that sometimes it was necessary to ask for forgiveness rather than permission.

Filtering Out "Noise" and Distractions

A third micropolitical activity that principals in the study employed was filtering out perspectives, actions, and thinking that stood in the way of the goals that principals were attempting to fulfill in their school organizations. Instead, principals described being goal-driven in their thinking and actions and prioritizing those perspectives, actions, and thinking that aligned with, or did not get in the way of, supporting learning outcomes for all students. Here too, participants drew on craft knowledge and collegial supports in undertaking this deliberate, political act. But, as Ryan and Armstrong (2016) demonstrate, while this micropolitics was an important skill and activity that school principals harnessed in their quest to fulfill accountability while staying true to personal ethics and social justice mindsets, it was not an easy or linear undertaking. In fact, principals' difficulties in satisfying multiple, sometimes conflicting, accountability systems have received significant attention in the educational administration literature, especially given the contemporary, market-driven nature of school administration (Day, 2014; Day & Gu, 2018; Hauseman, 2020b; Pollock & Winton, 2016; Ryan, 2010; Saldivia & Anderson, 2016; Swapp, 2012, 2020). Whether from a formal or personal perspective, principals' attempts to account in their work through their thinking and decisions face impediments. As Ryan and Armstrong (2016) assert, educators "work

within the confines of a system – an institution or sets of institutions that display persistent patterns of practices, policies and cultures" (p. xv). It is therefore difficult to not just pierce through, but effect change in, this oftentimes rigid structure, notwithstanding the values and fervour principals bring to the job.

Ryan and Armstrong's (2016) description above of principals' work as executed "within the confines of a system" illuminates the importance of engaging in critical analyses of space, place, and relations when studying the school principalship and the work of incumbents who hold this office. Such an inquiry brings to the fore not just the nature and scope of actions needed or executed to achieve social justice, "make ends meet", or simply "survive" in the principalship but the complexities around navigating the work of the school principalship in any given space and place. It also contextualizes principals' political actions around filtering out noise and distractions as these are constituted in and through the particular space, place, and set of relations that frame the principalship in a given jurisdiction. Situating principals' work as executed within the confines of a system also underscores Cresswell's (2008) encouragement to researchers "to think about what place means and how this influences our understanding of contemporary social and cultural issues" (p. 133). I apply Cresswell's thinking to the Grenadian school principalship and the work of incumbents, in examining how school principals' actions are caught up in and produced by, within, and against a range of relations and structures both internal and external to school organizations. For instance, within this discussion, I draw attention to and situate systemic and societal inequities in Grenada and several principals' deliberate, political act to redefine student success and disrupt notions of what constituted a successful school. The study thus exposed wider disparity in schools deemed low performing and/or considered rural schools than more affluent, well-regarded schools, many of which were in the capital of Grenada, hence the moniker, "town schools". Principals working in the former of these schools consciously reframed definitions of success, aligning new thinking and benchmarks based on their internal school context and the resources at their disposal, and consciously worked with their school communities, including students, teachers, and parents, to actively reconstruct and assume this definition. For these school principals, filtering out noise and

distraction around hurtful and debilitating distractions was crucial to their work. These principals worked to disrupt deficit thinking and low self-esteem, ignored negativity surrounding their school's status as a "sports school" and a "dunce school", and as far as they were able, resisted pressures to conform to Grenadian standards of success and a successful school.

Summary

In this chapter, I returned to the overarching research question posed in the study, drawing on the study's research framework to explore several key findings in the context of the wider literature. Along these lines, I examined the nature of work in the broader context of work intensification and the dissonance between expected versus accomplished work for school principals. I then problematized the notion of work as service and principals' perceptions of themselves as stewards and servants, centering the relational approach to examine how sociohistoric and cultural regimes around Christianity, hard work, and civic duty engendered altruistic though exploitative work for Grenadian school principals. I also examined compliance and control against broader understandings of this dynamics in the educational administration literature but contextualized for how this unfolded in the Grenada context. Rather than a clear and pervasive neoliberal agenda driving compliance and control, the afore mentioned sociohistoric, economic, and cultural regimes and circumstances seemed to have conditioned principals into compliance. At the same time, principals were not merely passive workers in Grenada's education system. They demonstrated significant agency in employing micropolitics to navigate their work and address specific challenges they faced on a day-to-day basis, including modifying and circumventing rules and procedures, filtering out distractions to their purpose, and redefining notions of school success to better reflect the context within their schools.

CHAPTER 11: CONCLUSION

This study explored school principals' work in the small Caribbean island of Grenada. As the first empirical investigation of its kind, and given the issues highlighted in the study, the study sought to uncover and better understand the day-to-day work of administrators who must manage public primary and secondary schools. To do so, the study focused on school principals in their capacity as chief administrators/managers and asked, how do principals understand their work, how do they spend their time, what challenges do they face in their work, and what strategies do they employ in responding to these challenges and their overall work. A conceptual framework around work, weaved throughout by a relational approach, drove the study. I utilized a qualitative research design framed around an interpretivist lens to guide the formulation of the research sub-questions and the data collection processes. More specifically, I employed direct observations and semi-structured interviews with eight public school principals in Grenada, four each from primary and secondary schools. In this chapter, I revisit the conceptualization of work as a social construct as debunked in the study and encapsulate the considerations for such a framing in the context of the Grenadian school principalship. I recap the major findings and implications from the study, articulate some future research directions, and, lastly, discuss the study's contributions to the field and how we theorize, practice, and create policy relative to educational administration and leadership and the work of principals in schools.

Work as a Social Construct

The conceptualization of work as a purposeful and complex social construct was an important foundation of this study. I posited that what constitutes work for school principals in Grenada, and how and why they engage in such work, is influenced by the meanings principals have developed within Grenada's social, cultural, and economic context. That is to say, [principals'] work did not exist in a social vacuum, but was shaped by, enabled through, and bounded within societal norms and traditions and the active engagement of citizens in constructing work's values and meanings (Applebaum, 1992; Fineman, 2012). Such meanings and purpose principals ascribed work in the

Grenadian context were at the heart of the study. Acknowledging Grenada's colonial legacy and the inscriptions of European institutions and norms in contemporary society was thus inevitable and fitting, as these are foundational to principals' lived experiences. Citizens' understandings and practices around religion, culture, and politics, for instance, are borne from this legacy. Further, the economic fallout from colonization and current development challenges also contextualize and muddle this context. I therefore asserted that the roots of Grenadian principals' thinking about and approaches to their work were a confluence of socio-historic, normative, political, cultural, and economic conditions. In this way, the relational approach I drew from to analyze this study was concerned with not only bringing to the fore the specific areas and actions of work but describing the conditions in which such actions have played out (Eacott, 2015a) in the Grenada context.

Hence, the concepts, understandings, actions, challenges, and conditions constituted the interconnected assemblages of the work of school principals in Grenada. As I drew on scholars such as Applebaum (1992), Fineman (2012), Hall (1986), and Eacott (2015a) to argue, these assemblages were interconnected in that one shaped, and was shaped by, the other. I also posited that framing them as cohesive yet distinct would allow for the nuances around what work was, how it was undertaken, and what drove its characteristics and scope, to shine through in the study. Concomittantly, the three overarching meanings that principals in Grenada ascribed their work, namely work as a calling, work as service, and work as a commitment to student learning, reflected these considerations. Principals drew on Christianity and more specifically notions of love, charity, and being their neighbours' keeper in their daily actions, emphasized their civic duty to help build their country through their educational labour and pastoral care, worked within but sometimes at the edges of the legislation and expectations around how they were to spend their time, and acknowledged the importance of instructional supervision in their work.

Consequently, how principals in the study spent their time significantly reflected the understandings they held about their work, albeit not without some contradictions and tensions. While on the one hand principals seemed to welcome hard work and other sacrifices, because they saw it as their Christian and civic duty, they nevertheless

complained that this was an implicit expectation fueling such work; for some principals, fear of victimization further compelled them into undertaking these kinds of work. These tensions around being active agents choosing how and why to engage in their work and compliant civil servants emerged and were reified around the socioeconomic conditions and sociocultural relations around which work unfolded in the Grenada context. Hence, these conditions and relations played out in the kinds of challenges principals articulated around their work and the attendant strategies principals employed considering these challenges. Mobilizing a relational understanding of this work facilitated a rich probe of the phenomenon in a Global South setting such as Grenada. As Eacott (2015a) asserts of the relational approach, "the interplay of the macro and micro-level nature of administration, policy and temporality is needed to conceptualise administrative labour" because it allows us to "see actors as being thrown into situations of radical uncertainty and ambiguity with which they try to cope" (p. 57). This assertion held true in this study of the work of school principals in Grenada.

Revisiting the Study's Findings

As the study's results illuminated, work for school principals meant service beyond the call of duty, legislation, or policy expectations. Grenadian school principals drew on moral standards stemming from their Christian faith in their work. These standards were further contextualized around widespread fiscal constraints and poverty. Stemming from these convictions and this fiscal environment, work constituted long days, and high volumes of manual labour, fundraising, and charity. In other words, to the extent that the work of school principals in Grenada "looks like" such work elsewhere, especially when analyzed in the context of New Managerialism and systems of surveillance, accountability, work intensification, and control, it does so not because of any recent neoliberal reforms in the education system of Grenada but because of longer, historical trajectories.

This is not to say that a discussion around the ways work converged is not relevant or useful. As the findings illuminated, there were several common areas of work between school principals in Grenada and other jurisdictions. Comparable too, were some

of the actions Grenadian school principals undertook in fulfilling these areas of work. The main areas in which work for Grenadian school principals and their peers elsewhere converged were some aspects of religious work, and administrative/managerial and instructional duties, including preparing budgets, completing reports and other paperwork, ensuring safety and discipline, reporting to their superiors, denominational boards of management, and other supervising bodies, engaging with the community, meeting with parents, donors, and other stakeholders to support student learning and other school causes, supporting teachers' professional and academic development, and, when time permitted, observing instruction. These are common aspects and actions of the school principalship across jurisdictions (to revisit, see Brauckmann & Schwaarz, 2015; Gaziel, 1995; Horng et al., 2010; Miller, 2013, 2016; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015; Pollock et al., 2015a; Pollock et al., 2015b; Sebastian et al., 2018; Spillane & Hunt, 2010; Van vooren, 2018). That many of Grenadian school principals' actions were heavily skewed towards administration/management is not surprising given educational administration and leadership's historical origins in the business sciences (revisit Gulson & Symes, 2007; Bush et al., 2010; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008; Owens & Valesky, 2011). Indeed, school principals are also referred to as school administrators and school managers and thus the inherent work of the position is to *administer/manage.*

The study also offered substantiating evidence of the disconnect between espoused and accomplished actions, especially around instructional work (Brauckmann & Schwaarz, 2015; Sebastian et al., 2018; Swapp, 2012). Like their peers elsewhere, Grenadian school principals are compelled into administrative and human resource actions, often by schedules and spontaneity beyond their control, and find insufficient time to directly monitor classroom instruction or engage in other instructional leadership behaviours. Overall, the major differences between principals' work in Grenada and other parts of the more developed world could be summed up to the level of sophistication in fulfilling work, the scale and force of accountability and surveillance, the substance of micropolitics actions that educational climates spur across local contexts, and the overall state of infrastructure and resources that compel certain types of actions.

While there is an expectation that school principals fulfill a range of duties and responsibilities as a condition of employment in a given jurisdiction, exploring – through a relational lens – how such work unfolds and is produced and embedded helps unearth and expose for critical probe the substance and arrangements that both constitute and spur not just what principals do in fulfilling expectations around their work but how and why they so act. In particular, the prevalence of manual labour, charity, and other unfree actions by Grenadian school principals was interrogated within and against the broader sociological debate of worker agency and structures around labour relations, power, precarity, and worker subjectivity (Kalleberg, 2009; Rose, 1989; Standing, 2011). This analysis illuminated how, in the Grenada context, a fearful political climate, government oversight, societal expectations around free labour, and public sentiments around school success dictated not just principals' propensity to engage in self-surveillance, hard labour, long working hours, and free work, but spurred principals to harness micropolitical savvy in navigating the challenges of being a school principal in Grenada. These principals modified, ignored, or circumvented policy and expectations that they believed did not best serve students or their schools and redefined measures and definitions of student success based on their local circumstances.

Altogether, the Grenada context thus generated a proliferation of charity, fundraising, and incessant errands by principals. This reality was exacerbated for principals who served poorer, often rural communities in which negative public perception further constrained principals' efforts to generate resources for their schools. Hence, it was important to discuss this reality of Grenadian school principals' work through a critical lens in the broader context of competition, exploitation, and unfree labour (Bourdieu, 1999; Gulson & Symes, 2007; Kalleberg, 2011). Principals working in well regarded schools reported less occurrences of manual labour and their fundraisers were more well supported than principals working in lesser regarded schools, who report feeling especially overworked, underappreciated, devalued, and frustrated. Winton (2018) argues that fundraising, particularly, while an important and oftentimes necessary tool for many principals, promotes and perpetuates inequities in school systems. Further, engaging these particular forms of inequity and oppression through critical lens around

inequity underscores, for Kalleberg (2009, 2011), the necessity of drawing on social and economic relations to more fully account for the impact of both cultural and structural dynamics in shaping both workers and work.

Future Research Directions

While this study provided an important and a timely gaze into the work of school principals in Grenada, it was based on the perspectives of eight school principals working in the public education system. As there are 77 such school principals, one each in the 56 primary and 21 secondary schools in the state, there is a wide range of still uncaptured experiences. A wider sample would allow for a more comprehensive account of the constitution, scope, and challenges of the Grenadian school principalship as well as more deeply illuminate the conditions shaping work's constitution and practice. I believe that with modest funding it is realistic to target all 77 school principals in Grenada's school system. There might also be other interesting and important nuances around principals' work, and the ideologies driving thinking and practices around such work, within the public and private systems, and even between schooling and the principalship on the mainland and on the sister isles of Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Further, this study teased at the dynamics of work for principals who work in certain parishes, considered rural or urban, and whose schools receive varying levels of public regard. Interesting and eye-opening perspectives of work across the different parishes, or even within them, are potentially waiting to be uncovered, thereby adding informative and nuanced layers to discussion around school needs and principal training and preparation in Grenada.

While the scope of research into the school principalship could be expanded, the focus could also shift inward. Research inquiry of the school principalship that focuses attention in a more thorough and nuanced manner to the prevalence of administrative tasks, unfree labour, and incongruence between accomplished versus lauded and/or preferred tasks among school principals, in Grenada and elsewhere, continues to be a fruitful direction for future research. We know that principals struggle with high volumes of work (Ball, 2011; Barnett et al., 2012; Bezzina et al, 2018; Darmody & Smyth, 2016; Grissom et al., 2013; Grissom et al., 2015; Hauseman, 2018, 2020b; Hauseman et al.,

2017; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015; Pollock, 2016; Pollock & Hauseman, 2015; Pollock et al., 2015b; Van Vooren, 2018; Wang et al., 2018) that exacerbate their ability to engage in instructional supervision (Bezzina et al, 2018; Darmody & Smyth, 2016; Grissom et al., 2013; Grissom et al., 2015; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015; Walker, 2009). There is also evidence that they struggle to consciously infuse the various leadership handles and descriptors tied to their work (Alvoid & Black Jr, 2014; Gronn, 2003; Riveros et al., 2016; Swapp, 2012). Pollock et al. (2015b), Pollock et al. (202) and Walker (2021) have touched on a lack of downtime as contributing to principals' work intensification and wellbeing issues. Others, as also have I in this study, argued that the inherently administrative/managerial nature of the principalship helps explain the prevalence of such types of actions in principals' daily work. Increasing demands to be instructional leaders fly in the face of this glaring reality and belie the already brimming work life of principals in many jurisdictions. Drawing on a relational or similar critical lens in examining the tensions around such schisms would bring to fore, and therefore invite interrogation of, work's embedded and embodied nature, stripping away for scholarly gaze the kinds of political, economic, social, and historic arrangements that shape the persistent qualities and conditions around work's constitution. Such foci will more meaningfully inform our understanding of and preparation of aspiring principals for, such work.

A relational agenda becomes an important lens for studying and informing our discussions of principals' labour because how work and the circumstances around work are interpreted shape the definition of work itself (Grint, 2005; Pietrykowski, 2019). While themes of contradictory, exploitative, precarious, and unfree/unpaid labour have been taken up in situating and interrogating the teaching profession (for e.g., Mindzak, 2016; Pearce, 2012; Pollock, 2008) it has been less so the case in the context of the school principalship. In the Grenada context, the normalization of what I assert were untenable areas of work and actions would continue to reify troubling issues facing education and the work of principals in Grenada. If, as Hall (1975) asserts, work is what we define it to be, Grenada needs to urgently embark on a different and more sustainable narrative around this phenomenon. This research is especially urgent given the

coronavirus pandemic that has shaken world systems, including already vulnerable countries in the Caribbean and Global South that were struggling to deliver a high quality of education pre pandemic. Lastly, and given the issues the pandemic has wrought, principals' occupational wellbeing is another area that would benefit from empirical probe, in Grenada and other jurisdictions. This study shed some light on principals' physical and mental wellbeing, especially regarding work intensification, the prevalence of unfree labour, and feelings of fear of victimization spurring such work. More empirical gaze, that utilizes the kinds of critical gaze as the relational approach facilitated in this study, would draw more attention to these and other issues facing principals.

Research Contributions

The relational approach as advanced in this study was concerned with bringing to the fore the actions of school principals in Grenada and the relations around which such actions unfolded and were sustained. This is an important contribution for the field of educational administration and leadership wherein preoccupations with the tangible manifestations of educational phenomena sometimes generate tautological and limiting conclusions around educational labour. The relational approach invites a re-evaluation and (re)conceptualization of the research object in empirical research away from a fixation with an entity perspective that entices notions of a universal understanding of educational leadership to one that centers relations in understanding the worlds of principals' work (Eacott, 2015a). In this way, our collective thinking around educational research, including discussions in the field around theory, policy, and practice, is (re)framed to center relations as central to the school principalship. With such a reframing, principals' work is studied in relation to context, i.e., historic, social, political, and economic circumstances within and around which such work unfolds. As Eacott makes clear, "actions are given their significance through locating them in temporality and socio-spatial terms" (p. 129). And the knowledge gleaned from such scholarship, while it can provide insight into future trajectory of work, serves as a heuristic point of transnational inquiry, and informs inquiry into the school principalship in other sites, though must still be (understood as) contained to/within a particular time and space. As

researchers, the findings we generate are thus bounded, and it is for this reason that Eacott asserts that our mandate is an ongoing one.

This study also illuminated the notion of work as a moral imperative. In the Grenadian context, Christianity and notions of citizenship spurred the moral imperative of work, to the extent that principals were willing to undertake copious amounts of manual labour and charity, viewing same as their religious and civic duty. While the notion of work as a moral imperative is not new – scholars have advanced the notion to describe how school leaders support equity, inclusion, and social justice for all students (Fullan, 2003, 2014; Griffiths, 2013; Harris & Jones, 2018) – its manifestation in the Grenadian context was particularly problematic. In the previous chapter, I interrogated issues of domination, fear of intimidation, and unfree labour spurring the prevalence of, even nonchalance towards, such actions among and by principals. Research focusing on principals and their labour from a critical perspective, such as those that explore the phenomenon in the context of worker precarity, symbolic violence, work intensification and unfree/unpaid labour would potentially advance our scholarly understanding of the contemporary nature of the school principalship across local sites, especially in the Global South. This study underscores the need to expand our collective understandings of the work of school principals by including perspectives in, from, and for the Global South. This expansion of evidence would spur us to rethink what work is and what it means to undertake educational work in different jurisdictions of the world, and particularly privilege exploring the nuances around boundaries of educational work and work that uplifts, not violates, the dignity of school principals as workers.

Critical studies of work in which context is privileged would also more clearly illuminate the interconnectedness of the phenomenon with historic, social, economic, and political antecedents (Brown, 2016; Grint, 2005; Hall, 1975). When applied in the context of the school principalship, this elevates our scholarly understandings and discussions in the field. As this study revealed, contextualities around what work was, and work that was expected to be freely given, vividly played out in principals' work lives. Firstly, more impactful evidence can be gleaned from empirical investigations that attend to the feelings and experiences of incumbents and the conditions within and around which

incumbents' actions unfold and are sustained. In turn, more meaningful inroads can be made in our quest to better understand principals' work and thus support principals and articulate policy to inform their practice. Secondly, there are undoubtedly other useful and relevant frameworks for engaging critically with principals' labour (in fact, Scott Eacott (2015a) makes no claims that the relational approach he advances is the sole or best method). An important focus for critical, empirical scholarship remains interrogating the school principalship in the Western world as heavily skewed towards administrative/managerial actions and problematizing. In this way, the persistent gap between standards and expectations advanced in the educational administration and leadership literature for principals' work, work that principals say they would prefer to be engaged in, and work that actually gets accomplished daily would receive meaningful attention. If there is little time during a principal's workday to make conscious, concerted efforts in the areas of instructional supervision or other leadership descriptors, then as scholars and practitioners in the field, we must rethink our expectations of principals and their labour and/or engage in critical inquiry to acknowledge and address this gap in our own expectations of principals' work.

This study thus explored the work of school principals in Grenada by examining principals' understandings of work, how they spend their time, and the challenges they face in their work. The findings speak to how ideology, expectations, and practices regarding what it means to be a school principal, what the work of the principal should be, and how principals should spend their time shape work in the Grenadian context. The study should therefore be of interest to a wide range of people who are interested in and impacted by the work of school principals in this country, including teachers, especially those aspiring to be school principals, other school principals, parents and community organizations, government policy makers including officers of the Ministry of Education responsible for education delivery, and other stakeholders involved in education.

As I alluded to in the introduction to this thesis, a grave issue facing the school principalship in Grenada is the lack of data on school principals' work, empirical or otherwise. The Ministry of Education sets broad duties and responsibilities for principals, the public hypothesize about what the work of the school principal is and even voice

certain demands in this regard, and those who work in schools get a glimpse of some of the observable components of principals' work (but even those may be inadequately interpreted, understood, and/or represented). But, unless principals overtly share the mental (emotive and cognitive) and ethical dimensions of their work, those go largely unnoticed. There has hitherto not been an empirical investigation of this nature that consolidates the perspectives of several of Grenada's school principals on their work. This is therefore a ground-breaking piece of empirical investigation that can lay the foundation for supporting principals in their work and for further empirical inquiry. Hence, the study could serve as a useful aid for teachers, especially principal aspirants, in providing insight into the substance, scope, and complexities of a school principal's work in Grenada. Gleaning fragments of work from incumbents' actions while being preoccupied with their own teaching duties does not adequately inform teachers of what the work of the principal is nor prepares them to better understand and support principals and work along with them to foster student learning. Evidence suggests that teachers and school principals are better able to work together in support of student learning if both groups have an-depth understanding of, and respect for, each other's individual and collective responsibilities (Ban Al-Ani & Bligh, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2009; Leithwood et al., 2017; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Spillane, 2006). In schools, where some cultural norms and expectations around work are either unwritten (not legislated or formalized) or ignored, disagreements on interpretations of discipline, duties, and accountability can erupt between principals and staff. Teachers' clearer understanding and appreciation for principals' work can foster better working relationships between them and principals, to the benefit of the school organization.

Similarly, the study can inform principal preparation. Those involved in the development and delivery of formal principal training and preparation programs across colleges, universities, the Ministry of Education, the teachers' union, and other organizations in Grenada and the Caribbean region can engage this study's findings to have more informed discussions and analyses of principals' work, dissecting and analyzing the range of principals' actions in the undertaking of their work while paying attention to the relations and antecedents caught up in how such work is produced and

sustained. More specifically, the Ministry of Education in Grenada has acknowledged shortcomings in principal training and preparation for their work, and the hitherto lack of data would impede any worthwhile plans for improvement in the sense that such plans would not be founded on empirical evidence of such work. Any meaningful and sustainable plan for school improvement must be grounded in evidence and, in the case of principals' work, data on the kinds of actions principals undertake and the challenges principals face in their work can better prepare the Ministry to diagnose needs and develop initiatives to support principals in their work.

The study should also resonate with school principals in Grenada. Research into and knowledge mobilization around principals' work demonstrates to principals that there is interest and appreciation for the work they do. Principals can also gain wider perspectives from learning with and from their peers about their work and harness requisite knowledge and skills in improving their own practices. This better prepares them for the position by offering detail about the work involved in managing schools, and insight into its complexities and challenges. New principals, particularly, may find such accounts useful in informing their own thinking and actions. Investigations into principals' work may also stave off feelings of isolation in principals and instead instill a sense of community in which principals feel assured that they are not alone in their work. In the absence of these kinds of data, principals may feel isolation, despair, and lack of support, with attendant, negative repercussions on their ability to supervise their schools (Walker, 2021). Moreover, lack of knowledge of the expectations and reality of principals' work creates uncertainly, so teachers and others may not aspire to the position, and this then creates a void that may remain unfilled or result in ill-qualified and/or ill-equipped persons taking up this important role.

The study can also be mobilized in the local, regional, and international community to build awareness around and use its results to address real problems principals face in their work. Indeed, knowledge mobilization is an important aspect of research in bridging the gap between research and practice, thereby moving knowledge into active use (Campbell, et al., 2017). To this end, the study can be used to make connections, draw references, and otherwise juxtapose and interrogate work across

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various work contexts in Grenada, and between and across work throughout the Caribbean and in international jurisdictions. This generates more cross-cultural and in-depth literature on principals' work to inform theory, policy, and practice across micro, meso, and macro scales. Moreover, in the absence of homegrown educational data, governments in developing countries rely on, or acquiesce to, policy frameworks and evidence of work from other jurisdictions, often in the Global North (Jules, 2011; Melville, 2002; Menashy, 2007; Moutsios, 2009). A localized body of research around Grenada's educational context not only places this country and the wider Caribbean region in the global research literature but is also helps the Grenadian government better articulate the country's education needs at regional and international symposia.

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Appendix A: Research Ethics Approval

Western Research

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: 108687
Study Title: School Principals' Work in Grenada

NMREB Initial Approval Date: December 14, 2016
NMREB Expiry Date: December 14, 2017

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Western University Protocol	Received November 28, 2016	
Instruments	Interview Schedule - Received November 2, 2016	
Data Collection Form/Case Report Form	Observation Protocol - Received November 2, 2016	
Letter of Information & Consent		2016/12/13
Other	Email to Ministry of Education	2016/12/13
Other	Email to Grenada Union of Teachers	2016/12/13
Recruitment Items	Email to Ministry of Education - Received November 2, 2016	
Recruitment Items	Email to Grenada Union of Teachers - Received November 2, 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 ___

Appendix B: Letter to the Ministry of Education, Grenada

Letter to the Ministry of Education, Grenada

Western

The Chief Education Officer (Ag.)

Ministry of Education

Botanical Gardens, St. George's

Grenada

December 19, 2016

Dear ███████

Pursuant to our conversation by telephone, I am sending you this email with regards to my doctoral study, titled "School Principals' Work in Grenada". More specifically, this email is to formally request permission to conduct said study with practising school principals in Grenada. I have attached the following documents:

1. The Letter of Information and Consent. This describes the study, its purpose, what is expected from participants, how participants' confidentiality and anonymity would be protected, the voluntary nature of the study, and contact information for interested participants to reach me, the researcher, or the Office of Research Ethics and my supervisor, Dr. Katina Pollock, at Western University. This letter will be signed by me and the participants who agree to participate in the study. I will retain a copy. Participants will receive a copy for their records.
2. The Interview Schedule. This outlines the questions that I, the researcher, will be asking of principals who agree to participate in the study.
3. The Email Recruitment Letter. This letter invites principals to participate in the study. It explains what participants will be asked to do, the time commitment, and the voluntary nature of the study. It also explains that full details of the study can be found in the Letter of Information and Consent. My contact information is also contained therein for interested participants to reach me.

As we discussed, I would like you to forward these documents to principals in Grenada. Interested principals can then contact me directly by way of telephone or email if they are interested in participating in this study.

Please let me know you have any questions or require clarification on any aspect of this correspondence.

Thank you kindly for your support in this matter.

Donna H. Swapp

Researcher

Faculty of Education, Western University

Contact information:

Phone: ███████ (Canada)   ███████ (Grenada)   Email: ███████

Appendix C: Letter to the Grenada Union of Teachers, Grenada

Letter to the Grenada Union of Teachers, Grenada

Western 🛡️

The President of the Grenada Union of Teachers

Marine Villa

St. George's

Grenada

December 19, 2016

Dear ████████

Pursuant to our conversations, I am sending you this email with regards to my doctoral study, titled "School Principals' Work in Grenada". More specifically, this email is to formally invite practising school principals in Grenada to participate in this study. I have attached the following documents:

1. The Letter of Information and Consent. This describes the study, its purpose, what is expected from participants, how participants' confidentiality and anonymity would be protected, the voluntary nature of the study, and contact information for interested participants to reach me, the researcher, or the Office of Research Ethics and my supervisor, Dr. Katina Pollock, at Western University. This letter will be signed by me and the participants who agree to participate in the study. I will retain a copy. Participants will receive a copy for their records.
2. The Interview Schedule. This outlines the questions that I, the researcher, will be asking of principals who agree to participate in the study.
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As we discussed, I would like you to forward these documents to principals in Grenada. Interested principals can then contact me directly by way of telephone or email if they are interested in participating in this study.

Please let me know you have any questions or require clarification on any aspect of this correspondence.

Thank you kindly for your support in this matter.

Donna H. Swapp

Researcher

Faculty of Education, Western University

Contact information:

Phone: ████████ (Canada) ████████ (Grenada)   Email: ████████

Appendix D: Letter of Information and Informed Consent

Western Education

Letter of Information and Consent

School Principals' Work in Grenada

Letter of Information and Consent – The Principal

Principal Investigator (PI)

Dr. Katina Pollock, PhD, Faculty of Education

Western University, ████████████████████████

Invitation to Participate

My name is Donna Hazel Swapp and I am a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Western University. As partial fulfillment of the Doctoral degree in Educational Studies, I am currently conducting a study into school principals' work in Grenada. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a practicing school principal in Grenada and have at least five years' experience in this position.

Purpose of the Study

This study is being done to better understand what principals in primary and secondary schools in Grenada do on a daily basis, in relation to the understandings principals hold about their work, the contexts in which they work, the tasks they perform, and the influences and challenges surrounding their work.

Duration of the Study

It is expected that you would be in this study for ten days of observations, and approximately two hours of interviews. I will be observing you as you go about your work for ten days, and will conduct two semi-structured interviews with you; one before the start of observations, and the other after observations have been completed.

Study Procedures

If you agree to participate, I will meet with you to discuss the study in more details, answer any questions you may have, and sign the consent forms. At this preliminary meeting, you and I will also settle on a pseudonym by which to refer to you throughout the study. I will conduct two face-to-face interviews with you and observe you for ten days as you go about your daily work. The first interview will be conducted on a day before observations begin and will last for approximately one hour. The second interview will take place on a day after observations have been concluded for about 45 minutes. Both interviews can be conducted at your place of work or another mutually convenient location. In the first interview, I will ask you questions relating to your understanding of your work, the context in which you work, the elements of your work, and the influences and challenges of your work. In the second interview, I will pose follow up questions to clarify any points discussed in the first interview, and probe how your actions I observed over

the ten days relate to the overall picture of your work as a school principal. A copy of the interview questions is attached to this invitation package. You are not expected or being asked to do anything in preparation for these interviews. The two interviews will be audio-taped, and this is a mandatory component of the study. The interviews will also be transcribed into written form, printed off and returned to you for verification checking at the end of the data collection process. I will be using direct unidentified quotes in the dissemination of the findings. The audio-recording and transcribing of the interviews help ensure accuracy in conveying your perspectives and also facilitate the data analysis process. I will deliver a hard copy of these transcribed interviews, in person, to you at a mutually agreed upon time and place and return within 48 hours to collect them directly from you. Specifically, the hard copy constitutes a printed (paper) copy of the transcriptions and will be placed in a sealed envelope, marked confidential, and addressed to you.

I hope to begin observations on the first day of the week (Monday) for ten consecutive days and end on a Friday, as far as possible. You and I can mutually renegotiate these details regarding interview and observation time frames and durations. Two time intervals will guide my observations. On each of the ten days, I will begin observations a half hour before, and end a half hour after, the official hours of school. This is to allow me to capture any work you perform outside of the regular hours of school. On day one, I will observe you for three straight hours, with a half hour break to follow, then resume for another three straight hours or up to a half hour after the school day ends (Time Interval A). On day two, I will observe you for two straight hours, followed by a half hour break, then another two straight hours followed by a half hour break, and then another two straight hours or up to a half hour after the school day ends (Time Interval B). On the third day, rotation of the two time intervals will begin with A, and then B on the fourth day, and then back to A on the fifth day, and so on, until the ten days of observations are completed. This strategy would allow me to observe you during all hours of your workdays. At the end of the observations, the data will be printed off and I will return, in person, a hard copy to you for verification checking. As with the interviews, the hard copy will be placed in a sealed envelope, marked confidential and addressed to you. You will have up to 48 hours to perform verification checking, after which time I will return, in person, to pick up the observation data directly from you.

You will not be required to do anything out of the ordinary during the ten days that I observe you. You will simply go about your daily work. During the times I observe you, I will be walking a bit behind (about 6 feet) and to your side, so as to provide a measure of respectable space and privacy while still having a clear visual and auditory lens by which to observe you engage in your work. If I perceive any sensitive matter is unfolding before me, I will distance myself from the scene, take note of it in my protocol, and then ask you to explain in the second, follow up interview what the particular incident was about, in relation to how it fits in the broader context of your work. Specifically, I will note details of what you are doing, where, and if alone or with others, and how long it lasted. I will not be recording any behaviours other than yours. I will not interrupt an activity in progress or speak to or otherwise engage anyone with whom you are interacting. At no point will I collect data from anyone other than you. Further, I will not record any personal data of other members of the school community or attempt to have you secure same for me.

I will use an observation protocol on an iPad to record what you do as you go about your daily work. The observation protocol will be labeled using the pseudonym we agreed to in our initial meeting. Only this unique pseudonym will be included in this protocol so that any identifiable information will not be included with the data. Specifically, the protocol is a Word document in the form of a table with "open" rows and columns. The column headings on this protocol are 'Time', 'Activity', 'Participants', 'Location', and 'Notes'. The rows are left blank to record observations under the various headings. The first column will be used to take note of the time an activity/action/behaviour begins and ends. This category generates data on the duration of time you spend engaged in specific work behaviours, actions, and other tasks. The second heading will describe what you are doing at the duration of observed periods. This captures the substance of your day-to-day work. The third column provides evidence on the extent to which your work necessitates interaction with others. Here, I will state whether you are "alone" or "with others" when engaged in a particular activity. No other information will be entered in this field. You will be invited in the second, follow up interview to comment on the extent to which your work involves interactions with students, teachers, non-teaching staff and/or other people. The fourth column will describe where the

actions, tasks, or other behaviours are taking place, i.e. where you are physically located when engaged in the observed actions/behaviours. Paying attention to where your work unfolds is another important aspect of getting at a comprehensive account of the current nature of such work. The last column will record anything else of interest with regards to observed behaviours or actions or points to be clarified regarding these same areas with you, at the second (post-observation) interview.

Risks and Harm of Participation

There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study.

Benefits of Participation

You may not directly benefit from participating in this study. However, information gathered may shed some important light on the nature, characteristics, and challenges of school principals' work in Grenada which in turn may help to better support principals in their work and more meaningfully prepare aspiring principals for the school principalship.

Voluntary Withdrawal of Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer questions or withdraw from the study at any time. If you decide to withdraw from the study, you have the right to request withdrawal of information collected about you. If you wish to have your information removed please let me know. 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 and added to a data pool), the information that was collected prior to you leaving the study will still be used. No new information will be collected without your permission.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

During the process of data collection in Grenada, only I will have access to the data. Upon return to Canada, the PI will have access to the data, as well as representatives of Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board who may require access to the study data to monitor the conduct of the research. Immediately upon completion of the interviews, the audio-recordings would be transferred to a password protected and encrypted file on my laptop, and then deleted from the recording device. My laptop is password protected and encrypted, and I have not shared the unlock codes with anyone. After observations, the observation data will be kept on the iPad which is also password protected and encrypted, placed in my purse, and locked in the trunk of my car along with the laptop. I have not shared the unlock codes for the iPad with anyone. Other hard copies of data, such as the signed consent forms, will be placed in another bag in the trunk of the car. So, the interview and observation data would be marked by your pseudonym and kept separate from the signed consent forms. I will take the most direct route from the data collection sites back to my place of residence, and avoid stops in transit. At my place of residence in Grenada, the data will be kept in two locked drawers and only I have a key; one drawer for the interview and observation data, and a separate drawer for the signed consent forms. On the return journey to Canada, all data will accompany me (no data will be left behind in Grenada), and will be in my bag and on my person at all times. Upon return to Canada, I will retain the data on my encrypted and password protected laptop and iPad for the process of data analysis and then transfer all electronic data to Western University's secure online management system. The PI will store all hard copies of data, including signed consent forms, in a locked drawer in the PI's office. All data will be destroyed after the mandatory five years' data retention period. The hard copies of the data, which constitute all printed interview and observation transcripts, and signed consent forms, will be shredded after this five-year period. The electronic files stored on Western's servers will be tracked by Western University's archives, identified for final disposal and digitally shredded as per university policy. The electronic files stored in my laptop and iPad will also be digitally shredded, not simply deleted.

Your real name or any other information which may possibly identify you will not be included in any publication or presentation of the research findings. All information collected during this study will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside the study unless required by law. I will not share

any information regarding your participation in this study with the Ministry of Education, the Grenada Union of Teachers, or other affiliate organizations or superiors. While the PI and I will do our best to protect your information there is no guarantee that we will be able to do so. If there is a data breach, the inclusion of your name in the signed consent form may allow someone to link the data and identify you. As I explained above, I will keep your signed consent forms in a secure and confidential location for a minimum of five years. A list linking your pseudonym with your real name will be kept by me in a secure place, separate from your study file.

Expense and Compensation of the Study

It is not expected that you would incur any expenses from participating in this study, and you will not be compensated for your participation.

Rights of Participants

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to be in this study. Even if you consent to participate you have the right to not answer individual questions or to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose not to participate or to leave the study at any time it will have no effect on your employment status. You do not waive any legal right by consenting to this study.

Contact Information
If you have questions about this research study, please contact:

Principal Investigator	Research Assistant
Dr. Katina Pollock, Associate Professor,	Donna Hazel Swapp, PhD Candidate,
Faculty of Education, Western University	Faculty of Education, Western University
Email: ███████████	Email: ████████
Telephone: ██████████	Telephone: ████████ (Canada)
	████████ (Grenada)

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact:

The Office of Human Research Ethics
Western University
Email: ████████
Telephone: ████████

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

School Principals' Work in Grenada

Letter of Informed Consent: The Principal

Principal Investigator

Dr. Katina Pollock, PhD, Faculty of Education

Western University, ███████████████████████

Research Assistant

Donna Hazel Swapp, Faculty of Education

Western University, ████████████████████

I agree to be audio-recorded in this study.

☐ YES   ☐ NO

I consent to the use of unidentified quotes obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research.

☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

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

_____ _____   _____

Print Name of Participant   Signature   Date (DD-MMM-YYYY)

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

_____   _____   _____

Print Name of Person   Signature   *Date (DD-MMM-YYYY*

Obtaining Consent

Appendix E: Interview Schedule

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A. Pre-observation semi-structured interview

<u>Introduction</u>

1. I thought we'd start off with your story as far as your journey in the school system is concerned.

      (a) How long have you been a school principal?

       - same school, different schools?

      (b) When did you become principal of this school?

      - formal, academic and professional experiences

2. How has this experience as a school principal been? How would you describe your experience as a school principal?

<u>Elements of Work – What is it you do on a daily basis as principal of your school</u>

1. Let's talk a bit about your work as a school principal. You know, we may assume a lot about the work of a principal but not many people are in a position to "see you in action" so to speak. So, if someone were to ask you, what is it that you actually do, what would you say?

2. How would you describe your work, in terms of its characteristics, demands, variety, or so?

3. Describe a typical day. (Does denominational status create a different set of dynamics in typical work?

4. Would you say that there are typical tasks you perform on a daily basis, or are you engaged in different tasks every day? In what types of activities are you typically engaged on a daily basis?

      (a) Are activities typical or unique to this time of the year? Are there specific administrative tasks/duties/responsibilities you spend a lot of time performing on a typical school day/week/month/year? If yes, what, where, with whom, and why?

      (b) Why do you engage in (these) specific tasks and not others? In other words, what is the thinking behind your decisions and work behaviours?

5. Tell me about your interactions when performing your work: with whom do most interact; where do you spend the most time; what aspect of your work are you most often engaged in. Why?

6. Do you spend time outside the normal hours of school engaged in work? Such as before or after school on weekdays, at nights, and on the weekends? What kinds of work do you perform then, and why? Is it your choice to engage in work during these times, or do you feel you have no choice if the work is to get done?

<u>Understanding of Work – What being a principal means to you</u>

1. What does being a school principal mean to you?

      (a) What informs your understanding of your work? In other words, how have you come to think of your work in the way(s) you do?

- For instance, would you say there have been certain experiences that have shaped how you think about your work/your understanding of your work? What are/were they? (as student, teacher, seeing other principals at work, etc.)

2. Can you point to any specific values/philosophies or beliefs or so that you think have framed how you understand/think about your work?

(a) From where would you say these values/philosophies have come? (own upbringing, education, socialization, etc.)

3. Has it been easy applying this understanding of what it means to be a principal to the practical undertaking of your work as principal of this school? How, or why not?

<u>Context of Work</u>

1. Can you tell me more about your school? This is just so as to get a better idea of the context in which you work.

- student & teacher population

- demographics: student SES & discipline, school achievements

- school's academic performance: over-time growth/decline?

- community: location, perceptions/school standing in community

- anything else you consider significant

2. Would you say your context constrains or enables your work? In what ways?

(a) Do you think this context is unique to your school? In other words, do you think how you engage in your work would be different under/in a different context/school/community, or would your work remain the same regardless of context? Probe for denominational emphases.

3. Would you say that you control your work, in terms of what you do on a daily basis, or are your actions dictated by (or premised upon) other factors? Please explain.

4. So, specifically, are there priorities which dictate how you spend your time? What determines your priority from day to day/on a daily basis? In other words, how do you go about planning what you would do each day?

5. Are there formal expectations guiding your work? What are they? Do you follow them?

- mandates and other directives from the Ministry of Education (Labour, Finance, etc.)

- legal, profession, personal, leadership frameworks, etc.

- any personal expectations guiding your work?

- any other expectations prescribing what your work is supposed to be?

<u>Challenges/Conditions/Impacts On/Around Work</u>

1. Do you encounter any challenges in balancing the mandates of your employer (MOE) with the interests of the union (GUT)? Does your position as a member of the teachers' union (GUT) conflict with the MOE or your performance of your work as a principal?

2. Principals in other Caribbean islands have expressed frustration with their lack of autonomy to make decisions in their schools, especially regarding teacher unprofessionalism and instructional leadership, and addressing student poverty. Do you experience similar issues?

3. Again, thinking holistically about your work, do you have freedom in structuring your own preferred patterns of work, or is your schedule dictated to/for you? How so?

4. What would you say are some challenges you face when engaging in your work as principal of your school?

    - why do you consider this a challenge/these (as) challenges?

    - any specific responsibilities as a principal that you find most challenging? Why? Is this unique to your context here at your school/in your school community, or to the work of a principal in general?

    - If you were to identify the most pressing challenge for you in your work as principal of your school, what would it be? Why do you see this as the most challenging?

    - Are there any kinds of support that you think would help facilitate your work?

    - what strategies do you employ to mitigate/address/navigate these challenges? Are there other strategies/actions/thinking/policy that you employ in executing your work as a school principal in Grenada?

5. The MOE has stated that two of the most pressing problems facing education in Grenada are low student achievement and lack of teacher and principal training. Do you agree?

    - What is the state of student achievement in your school? How does your work account, specifically, for this challenge?

    - Did you receive any formal training in preparation for your work as a school principal? Are you satisfied with the training you received support your work as a principal?

6. Would you say there are factors standing in the way of you performing your work to the highest standards possible? Explain.

7. There are growing accounts in the international literature about the changing nature of school principals' work: work intensification (increased workloads), more accountability and transparency demands, and more public scrutiny, to name a few. Does such a description reflect your reality as principal in your school? Please elaborate.

8. Do you experience any effects of Grenada's relationship with international organizations such as the UN/IMF/World Bank in your work? Please explain.

9. What about national policy agenda; any of these impact your work? Are you aware of any national policy agenda relating to education, school leadership, or student achievement, or any other that impacts your work?

10. What impact does technology (computer, smartphones, internet, etc.) have in what you do on a daily basis as principal of your school? (communication; public scrutiny; efficiency, etc.)

11. Given the global context in which schooling now unfolds (what with globalization, advances in communication technologies, and the prolific use of social media), do you think your work has renewed/shifted/shifting relevance, or do you see your work as being important in the same way as, say, 20 years ago?

12. Is there anything else that you would like to share in relation to your work as a school principal?

Listen for how they speak of understandings, influences, and challenges and probe (social, historical, economic, cultural, educational)

B. Post-observation semi-structured interview

1. In thinking about how long you've been a school principal, would you say that the work has changed from when you first became a principal? If so, how/in what ways?

2. In our first interview, we touched on how your understanding of what it means to be a principal and Grenada's colonial heritage. In what ways would you say current schooling in Grenada, and your work as a school principal, still reflects this country's history of British colonization? Can you elaborate?

> - How would you describe (the impact of) this context on your work? Do you consider this context a challenge, opportunity, or what?

3. When you think of your work on a holistic level, is there a difference in what you think you should be doing and what you actually do? Please elaborate.

4. If you were to identify the most important aspect/area of your work, what would it be, and why?

> - How would you rate this aspect? Is this the aspect/area that you spend the most time on, would like to spend most time on, or should spend most time on?

> - To what extent do others help fulfill this aspect/area? In other words, can you perform this aspect/area independently or do you rely on others to accomplish it?

5. The following were some behaviours and actions I recorded during the observations. Can you elaborate on them?

> - How informs broader understanding of work (values, purpose of work)
> - Aspect of work facilitated
> - Why this specific action and not a different (kind of) action? (overall approach)
> - Why the specific tone/mannerism?
> - Why so often/little? What dictates how you perform this task and how often you do it?

Appendix F: Observation Protocol

Time	Activity	Participants	Location	Notes
Description of when an activity started and ended.	Description of what is taking place with the participant, including behaviours of the participant, body language, and tone.	Identification of people involved in the interaction or activity with the participant (student, teacher, parent, and so on).	General description of where the activity is unfolding (office, hallway, school yard, and so on).	General thoughts of researchers. Questions for clarification.
Data continue to be entered in new rows as new activities begin and/or end.				

Appendix G: Sample Letter of Appointment for Principals, Grenada
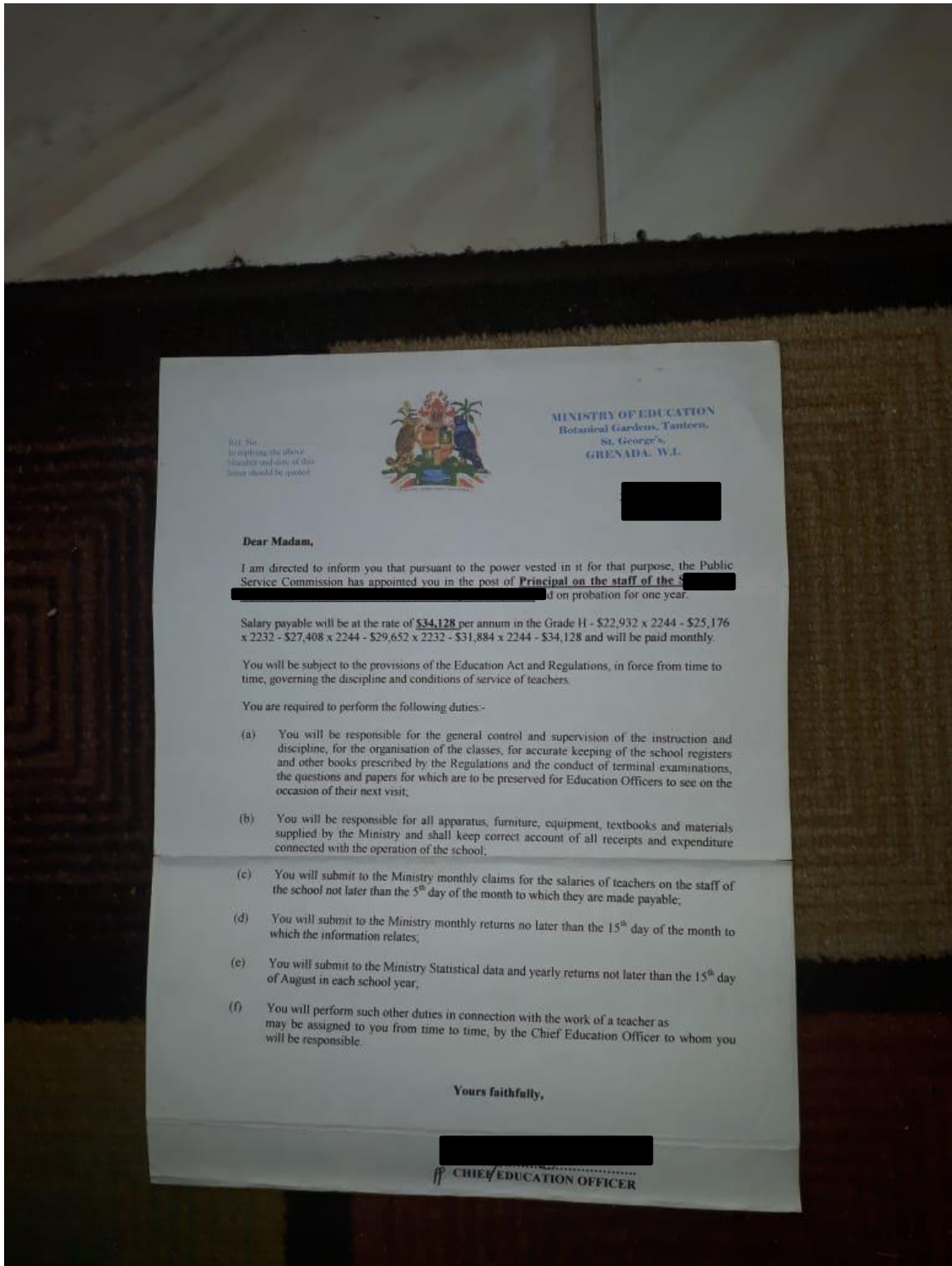
Appendix H: The *Education Act 2005*

The *Education Act 2005*, 139 (1) outlines 26 broad duties of school principals that have been compiled into 21 areas below:

1. Ensure observance of provisions of the *Act* and regulations
2. Promote satisfactory relationships with parents and community
3. Maintain order and discipline
4. Supervise and direct staff
5. Keep and maintain records and submit reports as directed to the MOE (admission and attendance register, log book of daily occurrences at school, leave book, teacher attendance register, inventory and stock book, accounts book, punishment book, visitors' book, copies of inspection reports, timetable, list of textbooks, circulars issued by MOE, records required by school medical officer)
6. Attend meetings of Board of Management (denominational schools), PTA, and/or school committee
7. Report outbreaks of contagious or infectious diseases
8. Report to child welfare authority any child in need of protection
9. Prepare school's operation and maintenance budget for review
10. Submit school financial statements
11. Prepare and implement school development plan
12. Keep parents informed of progress and development of students
13. Ensure instruction is consistent with approved curricula
14. Include cultural heritage traditions and practices in school activities
15. Formulate with staff school aims and objectives
16. Deploy and manage all teaching and non-teaching staff and allocate duties consistent with conditions of employment
17. Ensure the duty of providing cover for absent teachers is shared equally among staff
18. Maintain effective relationships with organizations representing teachers and other persons on staff
19. Organize and implement the curriculum
20. Evaluate standards of teaching and learning and ensure proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained

21. Maintain good order and discipline among students and safeguard their health and
     safety.

Appendix I: The 21 Responsibilities and Day-to-Day Management of a School

This document describes 21 areas of work and competencies for school principals:

1. Monitor/Evaluate/Provide feedback on school curricula, instruction, and assessment
2. Build/Maintain shared culture
3. Articulate visible ideals/beliefs on schooling, teaching, and learning
4. Seek out and keep abreast of knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment
5. Actively help teachers with issues on curriculum, instruction, and assessment
6. Focus on student achievement by establishing concrete goals on student achievement and curriculum, instruction, and assessment and keeping these prominent in day-to-day life of school
7. Maintain order and predictability by establishing procedures and routines
8. Affirm by recognizing and celebrating legitimate successes of individuals within school, school as whole, also recognizing and acknowledging failure when appropriate
9. Intellectually stimulate by fostering knowledge of research and theory of best practices among staff through reading and discussion
10. Communicate by establishing and fostering clear lines of communication to and from staff as well as within staff
11. Establish and foster procedures that ensure staff input into key decisions and policies
12. Attend to and foster personal relationships with staff
13. Provide optimistic view of what school is doing and can accomplish in future
14. Demonstrate flexibility by inviting and honoring varied perspectives on school operations and adapting leadership to the demand of situation
15. Ensure staff have resources, support, and professional development to execute teaching and learning
16. Contingent rewards: expect and recognize superior staff performance
17. Situational awareness: be aware of mechanisms and dynamics that define day-to-day school function and use awareness to forecast potential problems
18. Outreach: be an advocate for school to constituents and ensure school complies with regulations and requirements
19. Be visible to teachers, students, and parents through classroom visits
20. Discipline: protect staff from interruptions and controversies that distract teaching and learning
21. Change agent: challenge status quo school practices and promote the value of working at the edge of one's competence.

Appendix J: Grenada's Public Debt

At Dec	Domestic	External	Government Guarantee	TOTAL CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DEBT	TOTAL PUBLIC DEBT	GDP AT MARKET PRICE	Public Sector Debt as a (%) of GDP at Market Price	GDP Growth rate
2010	282,141.9	1,498,919.3	241,465.5	1,781,061.1	2,022,526.6	2,081,735.8	97.2%	(0.5)
2011	378,662.9	1,488,090.9	341,078.1	1,866,753.8	2,207,831.9	2,102,371.0	105.0%	0.8
2012	427,530.2	1,497,503.5	406,393.0	1,925,033.7	2,331,426.7	2,159,682.1	108.0%	(1.2)
2013	478,035.6	1,577,840.1	428,780.0	2,055,875.7	2,484,655.7	2,275,074.3	109.2%	2.4
2014	482,427.0	1,641,704.6	491,040.0	2,124,131.7	2,615,171.7	2,461,043.0	106.3%	7.3
2015	594,370.0	1,595,171.8	505,180.0	2,189,541.8	2,694,721.8	2,691,921.4	100.1%	6.4
2016	592,680.1	1,582,228.4	449,120.0	2,174,908.5	2,624,028.5	2,866,433.0	91.5%	3.7
2017	597,057.3	1,401,315.2	440,137.6	1,998,372.4	2,438,510.0	3,039,351.2	80.2%	4.4
2018 Prelim	559,975.2	1,417,757.3	194,920.0	1,977,732.5	2,172,652.5	3,155,479.7	68.9%	4.1
2019 Prelim	533,120.7	1,355,675.8	0.0	1,888,796.5	1,888,796.5	3,271,369.0	57.7%	2.0
2020 Est	512,405.4	1,455,658.7	0.0	1,968,064.1	1,968,064.1	2,797,150.0	70.4%	(16.4)

Source : Government Debt Unit & Central Statistics Office

Source: Government Debt Unit & Central Statistics Office, Statistical Division, Ministry of Finance, Government of Grenada. Email correspondence, January 18, 2022, 12:42 PM.

Appendix K: Principal Demographics

Number of Principal in Primary Schools by Parish and Sex

Parish	Male	Female	Total
Cariacou and P.M	1	5	6
St. Andrew	5	8	13
St. David	2	4	6
St. George	5	12	17
St. John	3	2	5
St. Mark	2	0	2
St. Patrick	1	6	7
Total	19	37	56
Percentage (%)	34	66	

Number of Principal in Secondary Schools by Parish and Sex

Parish	Male	Female	Total
Cariacou and P.M	1	1	2
St. Andrew	1	3	4
St. David	0	2	2
St. George	5	3	8
St. John	1	1	2
St. Mark	1	0	1
St. Patrick	0	2	2
Total	9	12	21
Percentage (%)	43	57	

Number of Principals in Primary Schools According to Sex, Qualification and Training

Sex	Trained			Total
	Graduate		Non - Graduate	
	First Degree	Masters		
Male	7		12	19
Female	18		19	37
Total	25	0	31	56

Number of Principals in Secondary Schools According to Sex, Qualification and Training

Sex	Trained			Un-Trained			Total
	Graduate		Non - Graduate	Graduate		Non - Graduate	
	First Degree	Masters		First Degree	Masters		
Male	5	1		1			7
Female	10			4			14
Total	15	1	0	5	0	0	21

Number of Principals in Primary Schools Undergoing Training by sex and Qualification

	Undergoing Training		
	Undergraduate	Graduate studies	Total
Male	0	0	0
Female	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

Number of Principals in Secondary Schools Undergoing Training by Sex and Qualification

	Undergoing Training		
	Undergraduate	Graduate studies	Total
Male	0	0	0
Female	0	1	1
Total	0	1	1

Source: Statistician, Ministry of Education, Government of Grenada. Email correspondence, February 3, 2016, 12:19 PM.

Curriculum Vitae

Name: **Donna Hazel Swapp**

Post-Secondary Education & Degrees

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), 2022
(Critical Policy, Equity and Leadership Studies in Education)
The University of Western Ontario
London, ON, Canada

Master of Education (MEd), 2012
(Educational Studies)
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada
Gold Medal

Bachelor's Degree of Education (BEd), 2008
The University of the West Indies
Bridgetown, Barbados/Open Campus, Grenada
First Class Honours

Relevant Experiences

Research Assistant
The University of Western Ontario
2011 – 2014, 2016-2018

Teaching Assistant
The University of Western Ontario
2016-2018

Instructor
BEd Program, The University of Western Ontario
2015-2016

Secondary School Teacher
Government of Grenada
1999-2010

Honours & Awards

- Ontario Graduate Scholarship award, *$15,000.00* (2013)
- Robert MacMillan Graduate Award in Educational Leadership, $1,000.00 (2014)
- W.A. Townshend Gold Medal in Education Award, *Highest Academic Average in Program, no monetary value* (2012)

Selected Publications

Swapp, D. H. (2020). Principal Leadership and Prioritizing Equity in An Era of Work Intensification: Must Wellbeing be Sacrificed? A case for A Special Issue, Canadian Cases: Issues and Challenges of Educational Administrators' Work Intensification. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy, 192*, 52-58. (Volume Two).

Swapp, Donna (2017) "Critical Thinking, Active Learning, and the Flipped Classroom: Strategies in Promoting Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice in the B.Ed. Classroom," *Teaching Innovation Projects*, *7*(1), Article 8. http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/tips/vol7/iss1/8