

University College London-Institute of Education

**EXPLORING CURRICULUM POLICY-PRACTICE GAPS IN JAMAICA:
LEARNING FROM POLICYMAKERS, PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS**

Thesis submitted for the award of Doctor in Education

Maureen C. Dwyer

March 2023

DECLARATION

I, Maureen C. Dwyer hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own. The word count (exclusive of the abstract, impact statement, reflective statement, appendices, and list of references, including footnotes, tables, and figures) is 45,149 words.

ABSTRACT

This study highlights the relationship between curriculum policy intention and enactment. It considered the gap between the design of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) in Jamaica and its enactment in a sample of twenty schools. The aim is to inform a real-world understanding of the expectations of curriculum policymakers and principals, and teachers as curriculum enactors.

The study utilises a qualitative methodology with thematic analysis. Data were collected using secondary and primary sources. Secondary sources included published and unpublished reports, desk reviews and my professional knowledge of Jamaica's public education system. Primary sources were lesson observations and policymaker and practitioner interviews.

The participants were seven key Ministry of Education and Youth Policymakers, twenty school principals and twenty classroom teachers who implemented the NSC. The theoretical framework includes Blumer's symbolic interactionism, globalisation and education reform, learner-centred pedagogy, social and sociocultural constructivism, Freire's critical pedagogy, curriculum enactment and Elbaz's theory of teachers' practical knowledge.

The research provides a means for the participants to contribute a contextual understanding of the possible pitfalls of implementing a globally inspired curriculum policy in a small developing state with post-colonial antecedents and significant resource constraints.

Generally, policymakers were unsophisticated in their policy expectations for the NSC. The principals view themselves as extensions of the MOEY, diminishing their role in enacting the NSC. Both policymakers and principals failed to recognise teachers' practical knowledge and support for the NSC. Their failure creates further dissonance between the NSC as a policy and its enactment in the classroom. However, teachers bear some responsibility for the inertia in enacting the NSC. This failure is partially due to a skill and knowledge deficit, which policymakers and principals should work together to address.

Finally, this study adds to the available literature on education policy-practice gaps, illustrates this phenomenon of global curriculum reform movements in a

small Caribbean state and reinforces the intrinsic value of engaging in real-world research to understand and solve complex problems.

IMPACT STATEMENT

As a professional, the expertise, knowledge and insights presented in this thesis have already begun to change how I do my work. Examining the enactment of the National Standards Curriculum from the standpoint of the enactors has enabled me to view the policy's implementation from a new and different perspective. This research has also helped me identify my axiological position and what drives my thinking about the topic. My choice of methodology and research methods employed in this study is a natural outgrowth of my axiological stance and are beneficial in shaping my thinking about knowledge and its creation. Most importantly, using the qualitative methodology has provided valuable insights into MOEY policymakers, principals and teachers, their thinking and work.

My knowledge of qualitative research perspectives and the value it brings to researching human subjects has grown exponentially. As a result, I am more comfortable using and experimenting with it in my day-to-day activities. I will continue to reflect deeply and reframe everyday problems to develop meaningful solutions for advancing my work.

The field of curriculum implementation gap research is well established. However, this research adds to this field by introducing factors characterising the gap in Jamaica's context. It should therefore present a starting point for other researchers desiring to explore aspects of the study further. Additionally, the systematic approach adds robustness to the interpretation of the data, which helps assure the soundness and trustworthiness of the findings. Interviews augmented by observations and video evidence allowed deep reflection and analyses. Using the combined methods described, the replicability of this study will provide great insights to researchers.

This study is a practitioner's research, and its applicability to real-world situations is essential. This study's approach and findings will benefit practitioners facing challenges in understanding how policy works from the inside. It will also provide an opportunity for policy designers and those who monitor and evaluate policy for impact to detect critical junctures or points at which policies are likely to deviate or change unless corrective measures are implemented. For example, in this study, it was seen that leadership at the level of the principalship was inadequate

to sustain the support teachers need to enact the curriculum policy successfully. Further, when I started this research, I believed that teachers were seen as resistant and reluctant to enact the policy. The research proved the opposite.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful completion of this thesis could not have been realised without the support of my supervisors, close family members and every single individual who, in any way, shape or form, helped collect and analyse the data and write the thesis.

Many thanks to my supervisor, Jennie Golding, a gentle and powerful teacher, coach, and critical friend. She scaffolded me through the varying stages of thinking about my work and writing it up in a seemingly effortless way that inspired me to be confident and to take risks. Jennie's genuine interest in me as a person as well as my work, are outstanding qualities that have contributed to her effectiveness as a supervisor.

Thanks also to Gideon, my second supervisor. His encouraging words and analytical feedback after each session brought me fresh insights with each passing day. His excitement for the possibilities of this work was never lost on me.

To my family members, especially Dwayne and Junior - my cheerleaders, helping hands and supporters. This journey would be much more difficult without your help.

To the numerous teachers, principals and school personnel and members of the National Education Inspectorate family, thank you. You were invaluable to the learning and growth processes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	9
LIST OF TABLES.....	10
LIST OF FIGURES	11
REFLECTIVE STATEMENT	12
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	16
1.1 Research Background	16
1.2 The Gap In Curriculum Policy And Practice	16
1.3 Research Rationale	17
1.4 The Study’s Contribution To Knowledge	18
1.5 Outline Of The Chapters In The Study	19
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE	20
2.0 Introduction	20
2.1 The Global Forces That Shape Education Reform	20
2.2 Learner-Centred Pedagogical Policies	29
2.4 Jamaica’s Curriculum Reforms, Including The NSC	40
2.5 Curriculum Enactment And The Role Of Institutional And Sociocultural Factors.....	46
2.6 The Role Of Principals In Curriculum Enactment	48
2.7 Teachers’ Practical Knowledge And Role In Curriculum Development.....	49
2.8 The Main Findings And Gaps In The Literature	62
2.9 Research Questions	63
CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	65
3.0 Introduction	65
3.1 Axiology And Professional Experiences.....	66
3.3 The Epistemological Stance	68
3.4 The Theoretical Perspective	70
3.5 The Conceptual Framework: Origins Of My Critical Framework	73
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS	77
4.0 Introduction	77
4.2 Sample Selection	79
4.3 Data Collection	81
4.4 Coding And Analysis Of Data	83
4.5 Insiderliness And Ethical Considerations.....	86

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF DATA	90
5.0 Introduction	90
5.1 Policy Drivers Of The NSC.....	90
5.2 Principals’ Views And Role In The Enactment Of The NSC.....	94
5.3 Teachers’ Practical Knowledge And Views Of The NSC	97
5.4 Classroom Observations And Video Recordings Of Lessons	109
5.5 Conclusion.....	111
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	113
6.0 Introduction	113
6.1 Policy Drivers Of The NSC.....	114
6.3 Evidence For Elbaz’s (1983) Theory Of Teachers’ Knowledge And The NSC.....	125
6.4 Classroom Observations	134
6.5 Answers To The Research Questions	135
6.6 Conclusion.....	138
CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....	143
7.0 Introduction	143
7.1 The Study’s Contribution To Knowledge	143
7.2 The Implications Of The Study.....	146
7.3 Recommendations.....	147
7.4 Limitations Of The Study.....	147
REFERENCES	149
APPENDICES	159
Appendix 1: Students’ Performance And Gsat Data	159
Appendix 2: Description Of The New Moeyi Agencies.....	162
Appendix 3: Abridges Illustration Of Jamaica’s Public Education System	163
Appendix 4: Participants’ Consent Form.....	165
Appendix 5: Policymakers’ Questionnaire	166
Appendix 6: Principals’ Questionnaire	168
Appendix 7: Teachers’ Questionnaire.....	169
Appendix 8: Specimen Of Teacher’s Interview Transcript	171
Appendix 9: Classroom Observation Sheet.....	189
Appendix 10: Description Of Sample Of Teachers	193
Appendix 11: Teachers’ Biographical Data.....	196
Appendix 12: Principals’ Biographical Data	197

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Term
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Council
DSS	Department of School Services
ESTP	Education System Transformation Programme
GSAT	Grade Six Achievement Test
JTC	Jamaica Teaching Council
JTEC	Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission
LCP	Learner-centred Pedagogy
MOEY	Ministry of Education and Youth
NCEL	National College of Education Leadership
NEI	National Education Inspectorate
NET	National Education Trust
NPSC	National Parenting Support Commission
NSC	National Standards Curriculum
PATH	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education
PEP	Primary Exit Profile

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Establishing Trustworthiness	78
Table 2: Distribution Of Participants And Schools.....	80
Table 3: System Of Coding.....	85

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: An Adaptation Of Mullis And Martin's Definition Of Curriculum.....	40
Figure 2 The Design And Enactment Of The Nsc	42
Figure 3: Current Moey Policy Development Framework.....	43
Figure 4: Elbaz's Theory Of Teachers' Practical Knowledge	54
Figure 5: The Conceptual Framework Diagram	76

REFLECTIVE STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

I experienced my doctoral studies (EdD) as a series of building blocks, with each course providing the scaffolding for the next, ending in the present study. I had to draw on all of my competencies and skills. My thinking about education and what it means to be a professional in the field is more significant, given my experience. The experience will immensely benefit me as an educator and policymaker.

In my reflective statement, I draw on the six sections of the Doctorate in Education. These are Foundations of Professionalism (FOP), Methods of Enquiry 1(MOE1), Methods of Enquiry 2 (MOE2), International Education, Institutional Focused Study (IFS) and my Final Thesis. I will describe my significant learning in each section and explain its contribution to my professional growth and knowledge.

FOUNDATIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM

The Foundations of Professionalism Module (FOP) created a forum for reflecting on the nature of professionalism, as the lecturers took the group of us through a series of discussions and related literature on the subject. This learning enhanced my current thinking about the intrinsic value of self-reflection, which set the tone for the remainder of the course. By the end of the Module, I developed a deeper appreciation of the nature of professionalism, a better understanding of my personal and professional identity, the value of analytically searching existing literature and critically doing so and reacquainting myself with the mechanics of academic writing and the researching of related literature.

In doing the accompanying assignment, I applied my learning and insights to explore the professionalism of Jamaican education officers. Furthermore, the linkages between this assignment and the subsequent ones became clear.

METHODS OF INQUIRY 1

Research ethics and the mechanics of research proposal writing were the central themes in MOE1. My tutors emphasised using research as a tool to support decision-making. Additionally, exploring the many research methodologies, such as quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods, was vital. I was pleased to learn

about some of the latest technologies available to support various stages of the research process. This exposure also prompted me to explore Microsoft Excel and some of its less-known applications.

The assignment to design and write a research proposal reinforced the theoretical perspectives of MOE1. Like FOP, my tutor's support and feedback were invaluable. The proposal writing skill is a vital tool for the research professional to have. I summarise my learning in this Module as follows:

- a) the mechanics of developing and writing a rationale to support the conduct of a study;
- b) the advantages as well as the dangers of insider research. The issues, and the attendant implications for the ethical conduct of research, respect for the ownership of data and intellectual property, and the role of bias in influencing research outcomes; and
- c) the mechanics of proposal writing and the importance of planning and designing research with an emphasis on context.

METHODS OF INQUIRY 2

Methods of Enquiry 2 consolidated and built on MOE1, focusing on the conduct of qualitative research with particular emphasis on the analysis of qualitative data. My tutors introduced me to using the NVivo Software, which supports qualitative data analysis. My decision to undertake a qualitative study of a small sample of school board chairpersons reflected my growing interest in the merits of qualitative research and the tools and methodologies associated with the approach. The academic review of the study was satisfactory. Moreover, the experience of studying social phenomena in different ways was incredibly gratifying. This significant learning paved the way for the more difficult tasks ahead.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

International education explored the growing internationalisation of education, comparative education, and the evolving view that education is a 'right' within the framework of the United Nations. Unsurprisingly, these matters resonated with

my classmates and me because the cohort of students represented 17 nations. As a result of this mix of nationalities and views, the discussions were lively and demonstrated that many of the issues affecting education delivery were borderless. These debates remain at the forefront of my mind, and I have integrated the learning into my work.

INSTITUTIONAL FOCUSED STUDY

My successful completion of the IFS confirmed the impact of the learning I gained in the first two years of the EdD. From design to execution, I drew on the conceptual and practical aspects of my earlier work and delivered a study with my supervisors' help that earned me a satisfactory grade.

More importantly, the IFS was my first complete qualitative study. I was delighted with the high quality of the information I captured using in-depth interviewing techniques and an interpretative framework for analysis. As a novice researcher, I felt that doing the IFS allowed me to use qualitative methods to explore the thinking of the primary school teachers in my study. In doing so, I incorporated their voices and perspectives on a current policy issue. In addition, their viewpoints provided insights into how they perceived the policy. The study also provided me with a valuable understanding of the thinking of some Jamaican teachers about their students and MOEY, which later stimulated my thinking about doing further research on the topic at the thesis stage of my studies.

FINAL THESIS

This section was by far the most demanding leg of my journey. Successes, discoveries, reflections, and periods of considerable anxiety and disappointment characterised it. These various experiences were sometimes episodic but indicative of the active and iterative process of learning that occurred during the study period. For example, the decision to explore the implementation of the NSC from the perspective of the interrelation among policymakers, principals and teachers was evolutionary. This process started with exploring teachers' beliefs and the enactment of the NSC. Later, the study evolved into exploring policy and practice, emphasising the value of teachers' practical knowledge to the design and enacting of the NSC. Finally, with a change in supervision and new insights, I decided to explore the MOEY's policymakers' expectations for the NSC and what characterises the resulting gaps in its enactment, using the voices of

policymakers, principals and teachers, with an emphasis on teachers' practical knowledge.

In undertaking the research, I reflected on my role as a MOEY insider and the possible biases this may introduce. There was also the issue of power relations and how this might affect policymakers, principals and teachers' willingness to be frank during interviews. Throughout the preparation of instruments and the collection and analysis of data, I tried to be objective and constantly applied and examined measures that would lessen possible areas of bias. The significance of mitigating bias was an essential aspect of my learning, which contributed to my increasing sense of objectivity to ensure the trustworthiness of the research.

The literature search suggests that gaps between education policy and practice are commonplace. However, although this situation is also a feature of Jamaica's attempts at education reform, I could not find any evidence of any previous research on the issue. Therefore, the absence of an earlier study was an opportunity to explore the topic, using the MOEY's implementation of the NSC in 2016 as the vehicle. The NSC represents the MOEYI's latest attempt at implementing a learner-centred curriculum into the public education system as part of the more comprehensive effort to transform the system.

In completing the study, there were many stops and starts, highs and lows and countless sleepless nights. To say that the going was challenging is an understatement. For example, the rewrites of sections of my thesis were especially painful, and my growing responsibilities at work made it even harder. However, finalising the study's current iteration and the change in direction is nothing short of a blessing. Significantly, I persevered despite the many hardships I encountered along the journey.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Education and Youth's (MOEY) implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) is one of the responses to the continuous calls by parents, civil society groups and other stakeholders for a change in the public education system (Task Force of Education reform 2004). Initially, the MOEY focused on revising the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT), the high-stakes primary school exit examination used to place students in secondary schools. However, the revision of the GSAT evolved into a comprehensive reform of the national curriculum. Curriculum change (the NSC) is one component of a broader programme of transformation that includes the creation of several entities to undertake some of the critical administrative functions of the MOEY (Education System Transformation Programme, 2005-2008). This thesis focuses on the MOEY policymakers' intentions for implementing the learner-centred NSC, the role of principals and teachers in its enactment, and the resulting gaps between policy intentions and teachers' practice in the classrooms.

Significantly, this thesis reflects my work as a practitioner and policy actor. I have worked in the public education system for over three decades. I began as a geography teacher and worked in two of Jamaica's prominent secondary schools, becoming head of one of the geography departments. Since then, I have held various positions in the public education system, including Chief Inspector of Schools at the National Education Inspectorate (NEI) and Acting Permanent Secretary of the MOEY over the last year. I have also witnessed the MOEY's three attempts at curriculum reform; the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) in 1998, the Revised Primary Curriculum (RPC) in 1999 and the NSC in 2015.

1.2 THE GAP IN CURRICULUM POLICY AND PRACTICE

As Chief Inspector of Schools, it became increasingly clear to me that there was a gap between the MOEY's expectations for curriculum policy and teachers' classroom practice. For example, the ROSE, RPC and NSC were intentionally learner-centred in orientation, and I was head of a geography department when the MOEY implemented the ROSE. However, despite the MOEY's efforts, the

results of school inspections during my time at the NEI consistently showed that teachers' classroom practice mostly remained teacher-centred (NEI 2016).

1.3 RESEARCH RATIONALE

This gap between the expectations of the MOEY policymakers and how teachers choose to enact curriculum in their classrooms was largely unexplained in the Jamaican context. However, understanding the reasons for this disconnect is essential to increase the chance of curriculum policy achieving desired objectives. It is easier to ascertain policymakers' expressed expectations, as there is usually an effort to explain this, which was the case with the NSC. Typically, there are challenges in learning why teachers enact the curriculum in a particular way: one approach is to ask them. My rationale for doing this study is to understand what characterises the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and how teachers enact the curriculum in their classrooms. I chose to include teachers' voices in this study because I believe they have critical practical knowledge about their subject area, how to teach, classroom management techniques, and curriculum development, which reflects their life experiences and sense of self. Teachers also have extensive knowledge of the sociocultural context of teaching and learning. Understanding this knowledge of the context is vital if curriculum implementation is to succeed. Brinkmann (2019), in her study of 60 primary school teachers in three states in India, offers an insightful evaluation of the significance of understanding the sociocultural context and the role of teachers' beliefs in implementing a learner-centred curriculum. The primary finding of her study is that "global pedagogical agendas face specific cultural and ideological challenges in an Indian context that affect how such models play out on the ground" (p. 10). Teachers' beliefs express sociocultural mores, which can help or hinder curriculum implementation, making teachers' involvement in the process a critical necessity. Di Biase (2019) agrees with Brinkmann (2019), as both argue that teachers' knowledge of sociocultural context is essential for the successful implementation of learner-centred pedagogy and other policy initiatives.

Thus, my research questions consider the sociocultural complexities of Jamaica's public education system: (1) What characterises the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and teachers' understanding of it? (2) What can we

learn from how the MOEY policymakers view the enactment of the NSC? (3) What can we learn from how principals view their roles in enacting the NSC in their schools? (4) What can we learn from some of the practical understandings of teachers about the NSC? The study's results confirm my early views on the value of teachers in successfully enacting curriculum policy.

1.4 THE STUDY'S CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The gaps between education policy and practice are well-researched. For example, Schweisfurth (2015) extensively reported the challenges faced by the Department of State for Education (DOSE) in The Gambia in reforming public education and enacting a learner-centred curriculum. Similarly, Brinkmann (2019) explored the enactment of learner-centred pedagogical practices in India and found that despite the efforts to do so, teacher-centred practices persist. This thesis contributes to knowledge in implementing curriculum reform within Jamaica's public education system in four distinct ways. First, the evidence from my study suggests that the MOEY policymakers managed the implementation of the NSC without the necessary sophistication and appreciation for local conditions, which negatively affected the process. The results outline the challenges in applying a globally-inspired pedagogical policy to local conditions. Second, principals appear to consider their role as simply reinforcing MOEY messaging: I argue that if principals were to take a more proactive role and lead the enactment of the NSC in their schools and context, the enactment process would be strengthened. Third, teachers felt they were underinformed about and under-involved in the MOEY's design and implementation of the NSC. However, the evidence suggests they have limited skills and knowledge to incorporate its principles into their classroom practice. Again, I argue that involving teachers would strengthen the process, their view of themselves professionally and their appreciation of how their officials view them. Finally, the results of this study underscore the need to involve principals and teachers in curriculum development in suitable ways and to equip them to do so, especially in a post-colonial context such as Jamaica. There is an urgent need for them to engage with the policy intentions of the reforms to interpret them for their students and contexts if education policy is to achieve the desired outcomes for students.

1.5 OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS IN THE STUDY

The study divides into seven chapters, which include the current Chapter (Introduction): Chapter 2 is the review of related literature; Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical framework; Chapter 4 covers the methodology; chapter 5 deals with the presentation of data; Chapter 6 discusses the findings and analyses of the study; and, lastly, Chapter 7 summarises the conclusions and recommendation.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This review outlines the evidence relating to how global forces help shape a country's education policy reform programme, specifically curricular reform. The discussion considers the concept of neoliberalism and some of its distinct features and contribution to education policies. Learner-centred pedagogy is a feature of the global education reform programme, and because international agencies and national governments widely promote it, it is called a travelling policy (Schweisfurth, 2015). Therefore, Freire's critical learner-centred pedagogy explores the broad concept of learner-centred pedagogy. The review defines and explores the theories of curriculum and curriculum enactment in the context of globalisation. It examines curriculum enactment and the role of institutional and socio-cultural factors. Finally, the review discusses the main findings and the gaps in the literature.

The broad research strategy involved electronic databases comprising the University College London and University of the West Indies library catalogues, printed books, and journals. The main keywords used to conduct the online research were: teachers' beliefs, globalisation and education, learner-centred pedagogy, education policy implementation, policy enactment, sociocultural context and education, education policy and practice, education change and teachers' practical knowledge.

2.1 THE GLOBAL FORCES THAT SHAPE EDUCATION REFORM

Butt (2017) argues that the concept of globalisation divides opinions because it means different things to different people. Therefore, depending on the side of the divide one finds oneself, it may reflect benefits or problems. However, Butt suggests globalisation describes the world's increasing economic, political, interdependence and cultural and social interconnectedness. Because of this convergence, there is a growing integration of trade, culture and ideas. He argues that this integration has affected education and policy and influenced the spread of curricula and education content. Like Butt, Rizvi and Lingard (2010) also

contend that global forces have shaped countries' policy priorities in various ways, depending on the context.

The influence of the flow of capital, ideas, culture and people on nation-states restricts their ability to develop policy solutions for themselves. Taylor et al. (1997) argue that because the relationship between globalisation and policy is not well-understood, there is a tendency to overlook the influence of global factors on education policymaking at the local level. This influence, particularly in developing countries, is often related to the work of international agencies. One example is the financing of educational reforms and projects by external agencies such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Taylor et al. assert that the effect of these funding arrangements and other externalities on education reform should inform policy analysis. Therefore, the shaping of local policies by global forces should be appreciated beyond the usual rationalisations of "policy borrowing, modelling, transfer, appropriations and copying" (Taylor et al., 1997, p. 60). In this regard, Bacchus (2009) identifies the possible negative role of supranational institutions in formulating policies at the local level. However, he argues that leaders and policymakers or planners must take responsibility for uncritically supporting development models that may not be in the best interest of their countries.

While Bacchus's (2009) argument that policymakers bear some responsibility for uncritically supporting development models that are not in their country's best interest, in reality, these decisions are not as straightforward as it appears at first glance. For example, Edwards et al. (2021) argue that the World Bank influences policy formation and implementation in multiple pathways. These pathways include loans, conditionalities, pilot projects, technical assistance, technical assistance, loan-related reports and studies, research, general publications, certification, coordination of foreign aid, international events and national actor recruitment and socialisation.

The World Bank's ability to fund educational projects is at the centre of these pathways of influence. Some ways that the World Bank influences policy decisions may escape all but the initiated policymaker. For example, setting up or supporting pilot projects may seem benign. However, the results of pilot projects can potentially influence policymakers and public opinion. Similarly,

conducting research is another tool because “the technical, rational and objective appearance of the research lends credibility to the findings. Commissioned studies can guide education policy by providing findings that justify certain policies” (p.7). Finally, the World Bank also plays a certifying role. Its support of education policies signals to other development and funding agencies that countries are taking the appropriate steps to address its educational challenges.

Regarding the funding and implementation of the NSC, Jamaica’s relationship with the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) was decades old, and the support for implementing a learner-centred curriculum dates back to the implementation of the ROSE and RPC in the 1990s. Presumably, the World Bank and IDB’s influence on the choice of policy prescriptions was well-established prior to the implementation of the NSC, given the longstanding nature of the relationship.

Like the World Bank, IDB and other funding and development agencies, the United States also influence the implementation of education policies through the work of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Peace Corps and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). For example, the three agencies accounted for 96 per cent of the US reported education assistance for 2019. The projects vary, including curriculum development, teacher support, textbooks, management and policy reform, and school construction (Congressional Research Service, 2021). For example, from 2019-2022, USAID funded the Youth Violence Reduction Project in collaboration with the MOEY (MOEY, 2019).

However, one could argue that developing countries do not passively accept global prescriptions to solve the education problems of their people. For example, Buenfil-Burgos (2009) asserts that the flow of ideas, culture and policies is not unidirectional, as there is constant pushback at the local level. Therefore, perhaps a better framing is that unequal power relationships can result in conditioning that slowly diminishes the ability of small states to frame their development plans and policies, and this imbalance ultimately reinforces dependence.

Part of the challenge facing local policymakers is that the push from the global space is not simply that the supranational agencies are underwriting the reforms in terms of the provision of loans, for example. It is also because, at the global

level, there is a continual need for integration across states to ensure vital efficiencies, such as cost-effectiveness, ease of movement of people and capital, as well as the regulations, policies, leadership and the workforce to support operational and administrative functions (Sahlberg, 2016). This idea is the underlying frame that facilitates globalisation.

Creating management methods and standards is a significant part of facilitating globalisation, as is the push for improvements in human capital and reforming education systems. Schweisfurth (2015) argues that an essential aspect of learner-centred education is preparing students for the emerging knowledge economy. The prevailing view is that "education for economic competitiveness requires the development of capacity for creativity and innovation, as knowledge and its application surpass material goods in economic value" (p. 15). This view is consistent with Sahlberg's (2016) argument that the perceived pre-eminence of the knowledge economy is at the heart of the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM). Ironically, the movement originated from the concerns of some developed nations "that their education systems would not be able to lead the way in economic, technological, and social transformations that were emerging globally" (p. 130). Over time, these early local movements have evolved into the current global reform movement. With this growing interdependence, there is also an increasing need for equivalencies across international borders.

One way to ensure synchronicity and equivalencies across nation-states and borders is to design standard frames of reference for teaching and assessments. Popkewitz and Rizvi cite the "OECD's PISA international assessment of student's knowledge of science, mathematics, and literacy...as a way of creating new categories of equivalence across nation-states" (2009, p. 19). Sjoberg (2015) argues that improving PISA scores have become a priority in many countries as the number of participating countries has increased. Therefore, "PISA has a profound influence on education policy in many countries, and this is indeed the intention behind the project...the reference to PISA to justify and legitimise educational reforms is widespread" (p.125). This reflects the philosophy behind the GERM, which advocates increasing standardisation of curricula, with clear standards for students' performance, the use of measurable outcomes and a framework of evaluations comprising a series of high-stakes tests (Massell and

Perrault, 2014, pp.196-199). This perspective has its roots in US President Ronald Reagan's 1983 education initiative (A Nation at Risk), which was a policy response to the poor state of America's public education system. President Clinton's authorisation of the Elementary and Secondary School Education Act (ESEA) in 1994, President Bush's programme titled 'No Child Left Behind Act' in 2002, and President Obama's 'Race to the Top' in 2012 are also examples of GERM at work (Sahlberg, 2016). Fuller and Stevenson (2019) state that the roots of the GERM existed on both sides of the Atlantic, and the 1988 Education Act in England is the UK's version of the GERM. These educational programmes signalled the emergence of neoliberalist ideals which reflect the pervasive economic movement that emphasises using markets as the primary means of allocating resources and delivering services. Neoliberal philosophy emerged in Chile in the 1970s and the USA in the 1980s with Reaganomics and Thatcherism in the United Kingdom (UK) (Savage 2017).

Like the USA and the UK, Jamaica adopted neoliberalist ideals in its economic programme in the 1980s. However, according to Miller (1980), neoliberalist thought did not inform its choices regarding the public education system. Instead, he argues that Jamaican society's worldview from the 1950s to the 1980s generally reflects two modes. In the years leading up to Jamaica's Independence in 1962, "the established British norms of behaving, performing and achievement were the standard of the colonies" (p. 14). This standard was the traditional mode. In the post-Independence period, starting in the late 1960s, the traditional mode gave way to the progressive mode. With the progressive mode, "the norms from Cuba and Russia, sometimes in combination with western norms, were employed as standards" (p.15). Although both modes were external, "the traditional mode was interpreted within the context of inferiority, and the progressive mode interpreted as exploitation" (p.16)

The policy response within the context of the two modes differed. In the immediate period leading up to and including the late 1960s, one of the policy motivations was to get the education system to mirror the UK. Afterwards, in the early 1970s, the main push was to counter the adverse effects of centuries of colonial exploitation by reorganising and extending equitable access to free public secondary education. For example:

Before the reform, of the nine thousand entering secondary schools, some two thousand received free tuition. Forty to fifty thousand eleven-year-olds competed for the two thousand scholarships: remaining spaces went to the children of parents who could afford to pay. The system favoured the affluent, not necessarily the more intelligent students. After the reform, all nine thousand places went to the best students regardless of parents' financial status. (Levi, 1989, p. 138).

Therefore, neoliberalism education reform, or GERM, did not begin in Jamaica until two decades after the USA and UK. The public education system started adopting the principles in the late 1990s with the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) and the Revised Primary Curriculum (RPC). These form part of the discussions below.

Sahlberg (2012) is critical of GERM. He argues that although many reformers believe that standardisation of curricula and the competition it creates leads to improvements in quality, the reverse is true, as it lessens cooperation among schools and the overall quality of education itself. As his argument goes, with the increasing competitiveness that the GERM fosters, schools have less incentive to cooperate, resulting in stronger schools being reluctant to assist their weaker counterparts as they compete for status or potential students.

Sahlberg (2012) also argues that with the increase in competition for school spaces, parents become more active as consumers in choosing the schools they believe offer their children the most significant advantage. Further, he asserts that the evidence indicates declines in academic performance and increased school segregation. Moreover, with standardisation, there is a greater tendency to teach to the test, narrow the curriculum, and prioritise reading and mathematics over other subjects.

The conflicting views on what works lay bare the challenges that face policymakers as they implement education policies that they hope will aid the development of human capital and, by extension, the development of their countries. Murgatroyd and Sahlberg (2011) argue that nation-states must choose to pursue an education policy framework associated with the GERM or instead focus on an education policy committed to public control, equity and teacher empowerment.

However, in the developing world, the choice is often not as binary as Murgatroyd and Sahlberg express. In many instances, it is simply a case where there is an urgent need to reform public education systems. One of the few or only funding sources is the external funding agencies, which transfer their ideas, as these reforms are not value-free. Instead, they represent a broader push by supranational agencies to promote and spread liberal democratic ideals, mainly in developing countries and often with little regard for the cultural values of these countries. These agencies justify education reforms in benign, apolitical and cognitive terms (Tabulawa, 2003). Dale (2005) proffers another perspective: despite the existence of several discourses regarding the knowledge economy, what is indisputable is that there is a qualitative shift away from labour and production and towards economies based on intellectual capital. Consequently, supranational agencies have used this shift to structure their interactions with Ministries of Education.

Therefore, there appears to be a certain inevitability regarding the external influence on the formulation of education policies. There is no chance of stopping globalisation, as the world economy is increasingly becoming more interdependent. The evidence is clear in the shift in emphasis from labour-intensive business models to knowledge-intensive ones requiring workers who can operate in this new ecosystem with a related decrease in demand for unskilled workers. This situation has implications for curricular change, as nation-states must make the changes that will adequately prepare students to access these jobs (Schweisfurth, 2015). Therefore, a country's failure to prepare students can marginalise entire groups from participating in the economy.

The inability to prepare students for higher-skilled careers is of concern for Jamaica. For example, in 2021, of the 36,605 students who sat the Caribbean Examination Council's (CXC) and other exit examinations, only 6,326 or 17.3 per cent, passed five subjects or more, including mathematics and English. Thus, only 17.3 per cent of the cohort that sat the exams matriculated for tertiary training (NEI, 2021). Cheng (2005) contends that because of the mismatch between the available skills and the requirements for development, educators and policymakers should plan with the needs of the individual, the local economy and the global economy in mind.

Bacchus (2009) believes that poorer countries should not just try to comply with the requirements of globalisation but should also try to play a more effective role in influencing the process. However, Louisy (2001) argues that influencing globalisation is easier said than done. Even though globalisation has created opportunities for some countries, the small island states of the Caribbean and the South Pacific are particularly vulnerable because of their size, small populations, limited institutional capacities and scope for diversification, susceptibility to natural disasters and environmental damage and limited access to external capital.

These challenges explain Sanders' (2017) assertion that globalisation did little for the fortunes of the Commonwealth Caribbean. He argues that from 1990-2016, China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew from 4.1 per cent to 17.86 per cent and India's from 3.6 per cent to 7.3 per cent. And even though the G7 countries, which comprise the United States, Canada, France, Japan, Germany, United Kingdom and Italy, experienced a fall in GDP from 50 per cent to 30.96 per cent, they remained prosperous. While "Latin America and the Caribbean's share of the world's GDP declined from 10 per cent to 7.9 per cent, and the small countries of the Caribbean were the worst losers in the region" (p. 479). As a result of the vulnerabilities of the Caribbean islands and their declining share of the world's GDP, there is little escaping the negative effects of globalisation.

While Bräutigam and Woolcock (2001) agree that the effects of globalisation on small states are challenging, they argue that there are opportunities if countries strengthen their domestic rules and institutions to cope with the inherent threats and risks. Arguably, there are some discrete benefits to globalisation, even for small states, as significant issues such as climate change and the global environmental crises require harmonisation across national borders. In this regard, the collaborations, relationships, and mutual understandings countries forge through greater cooperation and interdependence are crucial to tackling these problems, underscoring the need for balance. Friedman (2005) takes Bräutigam and Woolcock's idea further and argues that overcoming the vagaries of globalisation depends on a country's ability to glocalise. Its ability "to absorb foreign ideas and best practices and meld those with its traditions" (p. 325). Melding external best practices with local traditions is also consistent with

Bacchus' (2009) notion of countries playing a more influential role in shaping the education reform process.

Brinkmann's (2019) study of the role of teachers' belief in thwarting the implementation of learner-centred pedagogy in India suggests that there is glocalisation as local sociocultural factors shape the intended curriculum resulting in a local variant of it. For example, Brinkmann (2019) states that embedded at the sociocultural context is a "valuing of hierarchical rather than democratic relationships. As a result, many teachers in the study believe that teachers must control children through fear and discipline rather than favouring democratic and friendly teacher-student relationships" (p.16).

Despite the struggle between global and local factors in shaping pedagogical practices in the classroom, global forces wield considerable influence in transforming public education systems. These local education systems remain intricately connected to the global economy. Notably, the forces of globalisation characterised by the work of the World Bank, IDB, IMF, and other supranational organisations help shape education policies and how governments implement these at the local level. I believe that much of this process is invisible to the casual onlooker, as the activities of these organisations are pervasive and thus often taken for granted. The spread of education reforms (GERM), especially those that push Learner-centred pedagogies (LCP), present one of the latest challenges facing developing states as they try to balance the need to retain those aspects of their education systems that promote and honour their unique cultural identities with the need to be a part of the global political, socio-cultural and economic framework.

This balancing act or the retention of cultural traditions has become increasingly more challenging, given the continued rise of marketisation as the primary service delivery mechanism. However, regarding LCP, Schweisfurth (2013a) reminds us that:

Neither nations nor institutions exist in isolation, and even where for local reasons, there is resistance to ideas whose origins lie beyond national boundaries, this resistance is at least partially futile in the contemporary globalised world. (ibid., 37).

As I mentioned earlier, LCP is called 'a travelling policy' because of its reach and support from global institutions. The ubiquity of LCP underscores the increasing interrelatedness of nation-states and institutions and the partial futility of resistance in the contemporary globalised world. McDonald (2012, 1817-1818) notes that education policies and techniques have increasingly become a global transportable phenomenon, with international agencies, such as the United Nations, World Bank, and IDB, playing a pivotal role in its dispersion. The support for education policies is done through legislation, the framework of treaties and other agreements, and the provision of direct development aid. For example, in Jamaica, the MOEY created several new agencies to support the National Standards Curriculum, and there is pending legislation to provide a legislative framework. These reforms, including the implementation of the NSC, were partially funded by the World Bank and the IDB. Therefore, Jamaica's experience with LCP is further evidence of LCP's ubiquity and the support of supernational agencies to bolster its global appeal.

2.2 LEARNER-CENTRED PEDAGOGICAL POLICIES

Learner-centred pedagogical approaches have a long history, including Socrates, Dewey's progressive education programme of the early 1900s, Vygotsky's social constructivism and Freire's critical pedagogy (Britton et al., 2019). Thomas and Schweisfurth (2021) contend that "one of the challenges of examining learner-centred pedagogy is the breadth of definitions regarding the issue. A plethora of terms and definitions are often associated with or pitted against learner-centred pedagogy" (p. 300). However, they submit that Schweisfurth's (2013) description of the concept provides a broad framework for understanding its principles and relevance to Jamaica's context. She defines learner-centred pedagogy (LCP) as "a pedagogical approach which gives learners, and demands from them, a relatively high level of active control over the content and process of learning" (p. 20). In practice, teachers encourage their students to create answers to central questions, facilitate discussions, assessments are mainly open-ended, and there is a greater emphasis on collaboration instead of cooperation (Pedersen and Liu 2003). Nevertheless, international agencies and the global education movement have framed LCP as a pedagogical best practice, reflecting emancipation, preparation or cognitive narratives (Schweisfurth 2015). These are discussed in turn in the following sections: 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.

2.2.1 EMANCIPATION NARRATIVE

First, the emancipation narrative supports the freedom of individuals to participate in their welfare. This narrative focuses on the symbiotic relationship between teachers and students and advocates partnership in creating knowledge (Freire and Faundez, 1989; Freire and Macedo, 1987; Freire, 1974; Dewey, 1934, 1916). The emancipation narrative reflects the belief that pedagogy can facilitate an awakening of the potential within students and help them to develop the critical skills to improve their socio-economic conditions. Therefore, Freire's critical learner-centred pedagogy combines radical ideas and the practice of using conversations to explore meanings with a critique of the existing power structures and a language of possibilities for marginalised people. It is also an expression of faith in their ability to free themselves from the societal structures that foster this situation.

2.2.1.1 FREIRE'S CRITICAL LEARNER-CENTRED PEDAGOGY

Freire's critical pedagogy advocates a learner-centred approach reflecting his experiences working with the illiterate poor in Brazil. His focus was adult literacy, as being literate in 1940s Brazil was a prerequisite for voting in presidential elections. Therefore, Freire's main concern was the lack of opportunities for many Brazilians to determine their political future. He expresses his theory through his ideas of humanisation, the banking concept of education, critical thinking and consciousness and problem-posing educators.

Humanisation describes having the ability to engage and integrate with one's social world. Freire asserts that engagement with the social world differs from simply adapting to it. Engagement presumes a degree of agency, the ability to think, participate and contribute. Freire's characterisation of humanisation and his theory of critical pedagogy has significance in the socio-cultural milieu of Jamaican society because it typifies the persistent yet silent struggle by Jamaicans to become someone ('smaddy') within the context of Jamaican social reality. Nettleford (1998) calls it the struggle for 'smaddisation' or personhood. Nettleford's assertion underscores the need for educative processes to tackle these urgings. Decolonisation means dismantling the imposed mental and physical norms that continue to encumber the battle for 'smaddisation' (Sherlock and Bennett, 1998). Freire (1974) asserts that to achieve humanisation, "people

must first critically recognise its causes so that through transforming action they can create a situation...which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity" (p. 47).

Freire (1974) criticises the banking concept of education as it is characterised by narration by the teacher and typifies a teacher-centred approach to learning instead of a learner-centred one. Freire declares that the teaching and learning process is reduced to memorisation and recall and to a state where teachers confer knowledge on their students because they view them as empty vessels to fill with their versions of knowledge. However, it is essential to state that numerous variations or adaptations exist along the continuum between teacher-centred and learner-centred pedagogy and arguments regarding efficacy are in dispute. For example, Power et al. (2019) suggest that debates about the effectiveness of learner-centred versus teacher-centred approaches in educating young children have been going on for at least 100 years and have given rise to many cycles of education reforms. On the one hand, advocates of learner-centred pedagogy contend that teacher-centred or "didactic teaching methods and assessment regimes do not address the needs of children living in poverty or different cultures" (p. 571). On the other hand, advocates of teacher-centred or "traditional approaches claim that [learner-centred] education may further disadvantage the already disadvantaged" (p.571). Hirsch (1999), for example, believes that standardisation will allow students from poor backgrounds to bridge the attainment gap between themselves and their peers from more privileged backgrounds. In other words, the standardisation of education systems can offer the complete range of students access to the 'social and knowledge capitals' often available to the most privileged in society.

Standardisation means that the public education system should provide one standard for all students, irrespective of their social backgrounds. In this regard, Hirsch's idea is a pushback to Freire and the idea that the progressive or learner-centred approach to education offers the best chance for poor students to bridge the persistent achievement gap in the education system and society. As he (1999, p. 7) puts it:

There is an inverse relationship between educational progressivism and social progressivism. Education progressivism is a sure means of preserving the social status quo. In contrast, the best practices

of educational conservatism are the only means whereby children from disadvantaged homes can secure the knowledge and skills that will enable them to improve their condition.

According to Hirsch, lessening the attainment gap demands teaching foundational or core principles by rote to cement these principles. This pedagogical approach is necessary because poor students often enter school with vocabulary, number concepts and language skills deficits. Therefore, they need access to standardised core curricular offerings to bring them on par with their peers who might not have the same deficiencies in their backgrounds and socialisation. These core principles must be taught by rote, if necessary. Hirsch (1999) shares this view with Gramsci (1971), whom he described as believing that "the oppressed class should be taught to master the tools of power and authority, the ability to read, write, and communicate...to understand the world of nature and culture surrounding them" (p. 7).

Interestingly, this view of the benefits of mastering the tools of power is consistent with Freire's (1974) idea of the oppressed having the ability to read and comprehend. Hence, their dissimilarities are in their methodology or approach. Rote learning and meaning-making are complimentary because, in some respects, habitual repetition of foundational principles acts as a scaffold to enable knowledge application in different situations. This scaffold facilitates students' building and understanding of more robust ideas and concepts. This complementarity may partially be responsible for the persistence of "chalk and talk" or teacher instruction in India (Brinkmann, 2019) and even Jamaica, despite implementing the RPC and ROSE in the 1990s.

However, even though rote learning and meaning-making are complementary, a large part of the educative process, especially in a postcolonial society like Jamaica, is the need for it to foster social transformation. In other words, the educative process should not perpetuate existing forms of control by replicating and maintaining societal norms, relationships and ways of doing things. Instead, it should create new and varied sources of influence to engender a lessening of existing disparities. Compared to Freire's critical pedagogy, Hirsch's concept lacks the crucial emphasis on teacher-student engagement, interactions, reflections and opportunities for student participation, which Freire argues are vital elements for social transformation.

Critical thinking and critical consciousness describe students' ability to participate in the issues that determine how they live their lives. These are issues outside the basic routine and biological necessities of everyday living. Their participation means they understand and can engage with the essential issues affecting their lives and have views on improving them (Freire, 1974; Goulet, 2005). This position also recognises that the lack of quality public education undermines this ideal.

Freire (2005) asserts that teachers should become problem-posing educators and equal partners with their students in constructing knowledge. In addition, teachers should also fight for social justice and to foster the use of critical pedagogy in their classroom practice. Nevertheless, he recognises that the idea of an equal partnership in the relationship between teachers and students is potentially problematic. For example, a popular anecdote is that Jamaica has a cultural belief that children should be seen and not heard. Freire's counter is that teachers and students in a problem-posing context retain and maintain their unique identities and mutual respect through dialogue. Thus, he advises that whenever necessary, teachers have the freedom to be strict or firm in their classroom practice, so long as they maintain a 'harmonious balance' between talking to and with their students.

Freire's critical learner-centred pedagogy is not without criticisms regarding its clarity and relevance. For instance, Facundo (1984) argues that there is a tendency to adopt Freire's ideas uncritically and cites its failure in Puerto Rico and Guinea-Bissau as evidence of its lack of clarity and suitability. However, Mackie (1988) disagrees, arguing that her evaluation reflects a failure to understand the depth and complexity of his work. Nevertheless, Facundo does raise an important issue regarding the suitability of Freire's critical pedagogy as a model for transforming public education systems. Here, it is essential to point out that his model is about adult literacy, which poses limitations for its general use.

Torres (1997) argues that despite the limitations, the primary ones are the seeming need for clarity and its relevance. However, there is a tendency to view Freire's ideas as suspended in time, space and context without realising that these evolve. In this regard, Morrow (2020) argues that although there is a single

Freire, "his diagnostic thinking underwent important changes that require some form of periodisation" (p. 250). For example, before 1964, his pedagogical ideas were guided by a model that emphasised education as the centre of a democratisation project, with adult literacy being a big part. However, over the period 1964-1980, Freire's ideas took a decidedly Marxist turn, and his '*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*' should be viewed in this light. After his return to Brazil in the 1980s until he died in 1997, he arguably recognised the diverse nature of oppression, and his ideas reflected a less dogmatic approach to education.

Significantly, Freire's critical pedagogy is inextricably linked to the politics of the time and context, and analysis of his work must reflect an appreciation for this. Therefore, we should "contextualise his work historically...and acknowledge the evolution of his thought and self-criticism" (p. 5). For example, Freire's (1974) views softened after his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, as his later work in Grenada in the late 1970s suggests. Given Jamaica's close relationship with Grenada, his ideas may have influenced Jamaica's adult literacy programme (JAMAL). JAMAL taught 200,000 adults to read in the 1970s, one-tenth of the population at the time (Levi 1989). And it resembles Freire's National Plan of literacy training in the 1960s, which targeted 40 million Brazilian illiterates (Gerhardt 2000). Hickling-Hudson (2014) also parallels Freire's work in Grenada and the Freirean pedagogical principles employed by the Area Youth Foundation in its work with disadvantaged youths in Jamaica's Capital, Kingston.

Nevertheless, this study focuses on primary and secondary school students, not adult literacy. Thus, any perceived blanket application of Freire's critical pedagogy is impossible. However, as I mentioned earlier, the spirit of his ideas and his concept of humanisation resonates with Nettleford's 'smaddisation' or personhood and the persistent struggle for systemic decolonisation.

2.2.2 PREPARATION NARRATIVE

Second, Schweisfurth (2015) defines the preparation narrative as helping learners prepare to undertake their roles as citizens by acquiring the requisite skills. This narrative supports preparing students to be active citizens, for instance, by developing their critical thinking, listening and debating skills. These skills provide them with opportunities to engage in the knowledge economy. This stance assumes that economies' production and services sectors increasingly

rely on knowledge-intensive activities. For example, there is greater reliance on academic proficiency vis-à-vis physical labour. Supporters of this narrative believe this approach will counter the growing economic uncertainties, particularly in the case of developing states, as knowledge applications transcend economic goods and compensate for the disparities in natural resources (Schweisfurth, 2015).

Jamaica recognises the importance of educating students to participate in the future knowledge economy, which it captures in its medium-term strategic plan (Vision 2030 Jamaica). Stakeholders have argued that the current public education system should improve to ensure students acquire the necessary skills for Jamaica's economic development. Therefore, the focus should be on the acquisition of knowledge. For example, an investment banker, Aubyn Hill (2012), suggests that one prerequisite of economic prosperity is tangible improvements in the knowledge economy. Similarly, Professor Densil Williams (2016) from the Mona School of Business asserts it is the most valuable resource, especially for small countries like Jamaica.

However, there is a note of caution in the blanket acceptance of the predicted dominance of the knowledge economy. "Not only because the future is unpredictable, but because the knowledge economy will...be of greater benefit to some... than others creating new hegemonies or perpetuating old ones" (Schweisfurth, 2015, p. 33). In this regard, Schweisfurth and Elliot (2019) argue that despite the prevalence of political agendas in decisions regarding adopting LCP, pedagogical and social transformation requires deep conviction about its desirability and the form it should take. Therefore, without more, the preparation narrative in and of itself does not address the issues of social transformation, which is consistent across narratives.

2.2.3 COGNITIVE NARRATIVE

Third, the cognitive narrative reflects Vygotsky's (1970) social constructivism theory. It asserts that knowledge results from individuals interacting with their sociocultural environments. "It allowed for the interplay between the two lines of development, a natural line that emerges from within and a socio-historical or cultural line that influences the child from without" (Craine, 2016, p.224). It is the

idea that children learn by interacting with people and objects within and close to their social spaces. However, his theory is the subject of contestation. Matthews (2003), for example, argues that science should influence the construction of knowledge, as verifiable facts are the yardstick of reality. Therefore, "notions of observable and objective reality are in direct conflict with the assumptions of a constructivist worldview" (p. 59).

There are also contending conceptualisations of knowledge-making or learning. For example, Piaget's cognitive constructivism emphasises children progressing through the four stages of cognitive development, ending in being able to interact with their outside environment. Therefore, whereas Vygotsky emphasises the external sociocultural factors, Piaget stresses the individual's cognitive ability to acquire knowledge over existing sociocultural factors (Craine, 2016).

Bandura (1989) argues that "in social cognition theory, people are neither driven by inner forces nor automatically shaped by and controlled by their environment" (p.9). Instead, they contribute to their learning by their capacity and motivation to understand the world around them. As an educator, I have witnessed aspects of the three theories in classrooms as children progress through varying stages of their development, their social environment influences them, and they attain excellence through their motivation to do well.

Nevertheless, social and cognitive constructivism are the main ideas regarding children's learning. And Vygotsky's social constructivism is the underlying philosophy of many education reforms, including the MOEY's National Standards Curriculum (NSC), discussed below.

Regardless of the core bias towards a particular LCP narrative, policy expectations for LCP are rarely fulfilled in practice. For example, The Gambia is a former British colony with very high poverty levels. The country gained its Independence in the early 1960s. Policymakers saw reforming the public education system as pivotal to ensuring economic development. However, despite the popularity of the new curriculum with policymakers, the wider population did not support LCP. This lack of support was partly because of their conservative views on the status of children, the issues of discipline and children's respect for elders in society. There were other factors; among them was the lack of details in the written policy and the absence of guidelines for teachers and

other policy actors to enact the curriculum, and the failure of the Department of State for Education (DOSE) to provide the support and leadership that was required to streamline the enactment. (Shweisfurth 2015).

In South Africa, policymakers believed that implementing LCP would be emancipatory and transformational for the Black population. However, the high crime levels, poverty, inequality and economic malaise have hindered its success (Nykiel-Herbert 2004). In India, teacher-centred pedagogies persist, as these are deeply rooted in its culture (Brinkmann, 2019; 2015). Though the government supported the LCP reforms with significant investments in Botswana, teachers' classroom practices remained largely teacher-centred. Tabulawa (1998) argues that this persistence is partly because of the existing bureaucratic missionary education model and the rigid paternalism of the indigenous Tswana culture.

Regarding the English-speaking Caribbean, there is a near-absence of evaluative data on the success of LCP in schools. Evaluations of education reforms have primarily taken the route of whole-suite assessment rather than singling out the curriculum aspects of the reforms. However, much can be gleaned from the reports and studies because, like curricular-specific reforms, the broad issues also address the practical problems in institutionalising prescribed changes so that practice coheres with the text of the policy. For example, De Lisle (2012), in commenting on the circumstances of education reform in Trinidad and Tobago, notes that the barriers to institutionalised change include: participation, communication and collaboration, improved planning, strategic leadership and visioning and the lack of resources (p. 75). Similarly, Hutton's (2015) evaluations of the governance, management and accountability reforms of five English-speaking Caribbean countries (Jamaica, Cayman Islands, Guyana, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago) and nine countries in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) that they undertook from 1990 to 2010 are instructive. He emphasised weaknesses in engagement/collaboration among stakeholders, especially at the school level, and the lack of adequate resources as the significant barriers to implementing reforms in these countries. Therefore, even though De Lisle and Hutton did not isolate curriculum reforms in their evaluations, their observations nonetheless reflect some of the common hindrances to education reforms in the English-speaking Caribbean. For example, in Jamaica,

there are weaknesses in the engagement at the school level and a lack of resources to implement the reforms.

However, evaluating the various stages of implementing a curriculum is seldom easy, as there is almost always a gap between the policy intent and the policy that reaches the classroom. However, Weinbaum and Supovitz (2010) argue that even though this is often the case, if policymakers and planners are deliberate in implementing a curriculum, they can determine 'what works' in the classroom. Furthermore, they theorise that the actors at each stage of the implementation process, including the school and classroom, adjust education reforms through a series of 'iterative refractions'. They, therefore, contend that if there is a focus on the design and designers, schools and school leaders and districts and central office support or the junctures that these actors are likely to modify reforms, this will improve predictability.

Regarding the NSC, variations between the intended and attained curriculum might occur at various points along the implementation continuum. For example, it may occur at any of the MOEY regional offices, at the level of the schools, either through the intervention of principals, in their capacity as instructional leaders, or by teachers in their classrooms. Supovitz and Weinbaum (2008), in discussing the uncertainties of policy implementation, argue that "studies of teacher professional development programs... have observed how teachers incorporate new knowledge into their frames of reference, often changing the meaning of the reforms in the process" (p. 5). Therefore, this study, among other things, explores the responses of policymakers, principals, and teachers to the NSC to inform the greater alignment of the curriculum received by learners in the classroom with the MOEY's curriculum intentions.

Similarly, predicting the specific gaps between curriculum policy and practice, including the success of LCP, can be more manageable. The LCP narratives represent many countries' justifications for adopting learner-centred pedagogies. Methodologically, Schweisfurth's depiction is also helpful in distinguishing how participants in this study think about learner-centred pedagogy and the enactment of the NSC.

2.3 DEFINITIONS OF CURRICULUM

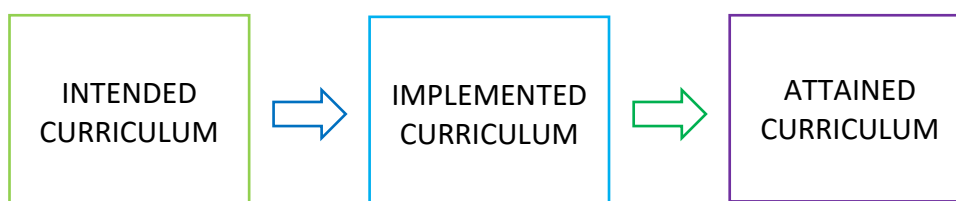
Ornstein and Hunkins (2018) suggest that definitions of curriculum fall into four general categories, and these are contested. First, at one end of the definitional range, they describe a curriculum as a plan of action with learning opportunities for persons to be educated. This description reflects that of Wiles (2014), Taylor et al. (1981), and Pratt (1980). Second, a curriculum can be based on planned learner experiences, which consider learning inside and outside the classroom and includes the community. This category mirrors Dewey's (1938) and Caswell and Campbell's (1935, p. 69) concept of a curriculum. Third, a curriculum can also be described as a distinct academic discipline with its philosophical foundations, principles and practices. Proponents of this view include Reid (1999) and Tanner and Tanner (2007). Finally, a curriculum can be described as a subject matter emphasising subject content. For example, English or mathematics, and often represented by specific curriculum materials, which is common in much of North America.

Therefore, Ornstein and Hunkins provide a valuable frame for understanding the many definitions of a curriculum that have evolved. There are minor variations within the categories, which underscores both the definitions' usefulness and the contested nature. Most of these descriptions are conceptual in orientation. However, Aslan (2021) takes the concept of a curriculum even further. She sees it as the basic rulebook of education systems. She describes it as "the constitution of education that directs an education system and defines the individuals to be raised in society" (p. 239). Aslan's definition is an interesting viewpoint; it implies that a curriculum provides the rules for education. There is an element of rigidity, seemingly ignoring the plural nature of many societies and the need for teachers to adapt the curriculum to their existing classroom circumstances. Nevertheless, one could argue that a national curriculum is a state-led education policy, which has implications for modification. Similarly, the NSC is a state-led curriculum policy; thus, there are also implications for adaptation.

Defining the curriculum is essential, as generally when people speak about it, they refer to the conceptual document. However, scholars have a growing understanding that a curriculum has progressed beyond a simple plan, as once it gets into the school, administrators and teachers mediate it. Mullis and Martin (2019) recognise that the definition of a curriculum goes beyond the conceptual

and includes its enactment. They describe the curriculum as "the major organising concept in considering how educational opportunities are provided to students and the factors that influence how students use these opportunities" (p.4). They further explain three elements of the curriculum: the intended, the implemented and the attained curriculum (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: AN ADAPTATION OF MULLIS AND MARTIN'S DEFINITION OF CURRICULUM



Mullis and Martin (2019) state that the intended curriculum is “what students are expected to learn as defined by their countries’ curriculum policies” the implemented curriculum represents “what is taught in classrooms, the characteristics of those teaching it and how it is taught” and the attained curriculum is what the students have learned and what they think about learning these subjects” (p. 4). I accept Mullis and Martin’s definition of a curriculum as a working definition for this study because it adequately captures the varied aspects of a curriculum and treats them as distinct elements. The primary focus of the study is to derive a deeper understanding of the disconnect between the intended curriculum and the implemented curriculum. The implemented curriculum is the curriculum that is enacted in the classroom. We now examine the primary features of the NSC’s intended curriculum.

2.4 JAMAICA’S CURRICULUM REFORMS, INCLUDING THE NSC

The MOEY's attempts at curriculum reforms reflect the larger historical context of an unequal public education system and its need to lessen the impact of this underlying dualism on students' performance. Douglas Orane (2018), a former CEO of one of Jamaica’s leading manufacturing and distribution companies, likened Jamaica’s dual public education system, where the Trust and Church-owned schools are the top performers and the government-owned schools at the bottom of the rung, to education apartheid. Similarly, noted Jamaica sociologist Peter Espuet (2019) argues that the persistent dualism in the public education system is due primarily to the lack of practical educational philosophy. However, reducing the inherent disparities in the public education system is complex

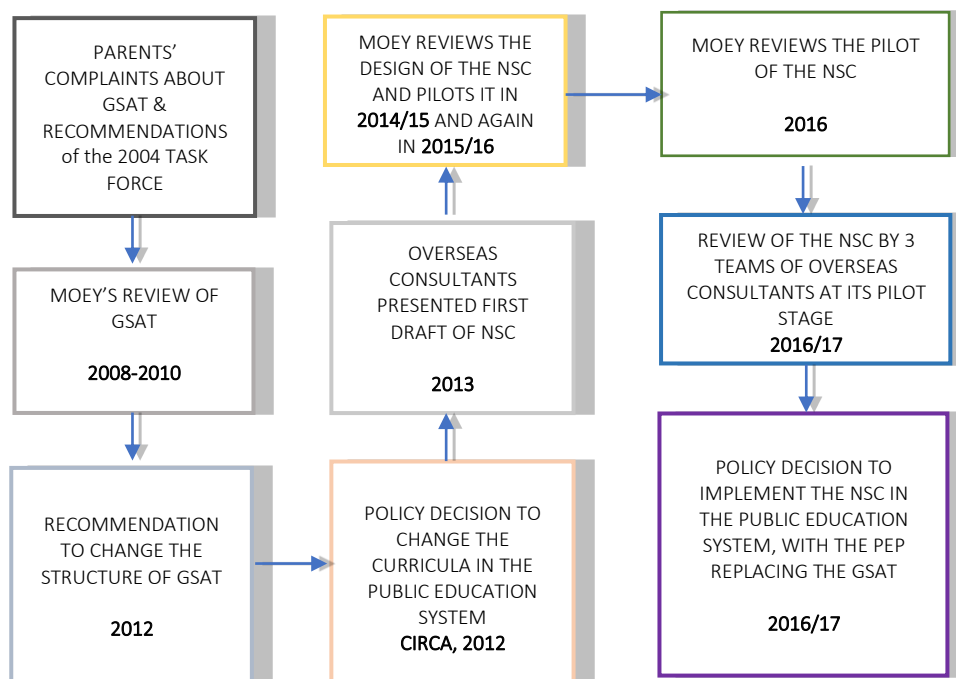
because Jamaica is a developing country, and education reforms require significant time, money and effort. Through curriculum reforms, policymakers have tried to bridge the performance gap between the different sets of schools, and even though there has been some success, the status quo remains. There have also been attempts at getting the public education system to reflect the Jamaican people's culture, identity and expectations. This change was necessary because the existing curricula content, imagery and symbols promoted European cultural values and worldview, almost excluding indigenous cultural identity and the local social and physical environment (Miller, 1989). Although Jamaica achieved universal primary education by the late 1960s, much of the impetus for achieving this feat came from the early post-independence motivations of parents to ensure that their children received a primary education (Miller, 1999). Even so, the wealthy usually enrolled their children in private preparatory schools, a common practice in many education systems.

The MOEY's first attempt at implementing a standard secondary curriculum was the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) in 1998. With ROSE, policymakers tried to standardise and localise what was taught and learnt in grades 7–9 in the system. This programme provided textbooks and other learning materials, training of teachers, increased classroom space by building schools and other infrastructure, and use of the shift system to create additional space where necessary and the introduction and expansion of school-related welfare programmes to support students (Miller, 1999). Before this, the curricular offerings varied from school to school, at both primary and secondary levels. For example, Catholic high schools had curricula that were usually more extensive than those offered in the newly upgraded high schools. The enactment of the Revised Primary Curriculum (RPC) in 1999 was designed as a companion to the ROSE and to equalise primary level education by bridging the performance gap between the government-owned primary schools and those owned by Trusts, the Church and private entities. The expectation was that children attending government primary and private preparatory schools would now have an equal chance to gain a place at a high school of their choice. However, the education offerings and the adequacy of the material and other forms of support provided by the MOEY were still lacking. These shortcomings negatively influenced the policy expectations (Roofe, 2014). Moreover, they contributed to the latest cycle

of reforms resulting from the recommendations of the Task Force on Education Reform (2004).

With financial assistance from the World Bank and the Inter-American Bank, the Education System Transformation Programme (ESTP) undertook the reforms, which created seven self-directed agencies from 2005-2008. These new agencies assumed many of the critical administrative and other functions previously done by the MOEY to improve efficiency, accountability and education service delivery (see Appendix 2 for a description of the new agencies). In addition, the curriculum unit, supported by the ESTP, led the design and the eventual enactment of the NSC in 2016-2017. The MOEY enacted the NSC in all 930 public primary and high schools, with the Primary Exit Profile (PEP) replacing the Grade Six Assessment Test (GSAT) in 2018-19 (see Appendix 3).

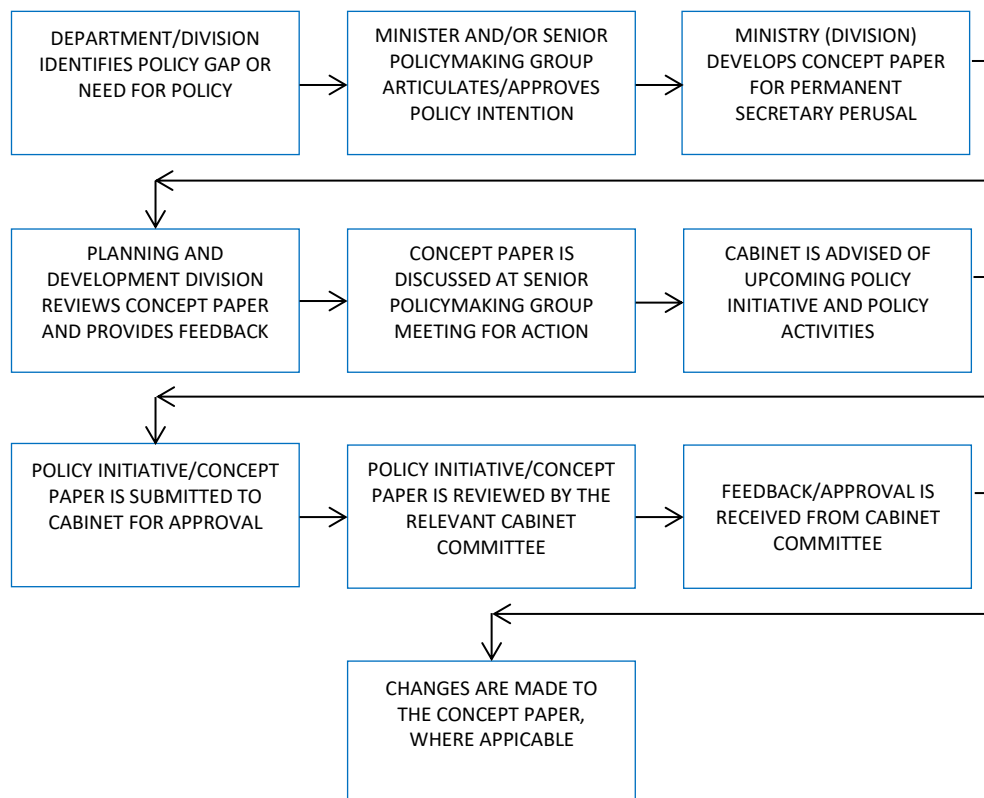
FIGURE 2 THE DESIGN AND ENACTMENT OF THE NSC



Roofe (2019) argues that one of the critical concerns with the NSC is that it was designed and developed centrally by the MOEY and disseminated to the schools with minimal input from the teachers whom the MOEY expected to implement it (p. 4). Therefore, there was an inadequate engagement of the schools and teachers in the design and enactment of the NSC. The MOEY's enactment plan confirms Roofe's observation, as it reflects a top-down approach focused on establishing Curriculum Enactment Teams (CITs) and training trainers to train the

teacher (MOEY, 2016). Figure 2 shows that the process began with reviewing the Grade Six Assessment Test (GSAT), which started with parents' complaints about its weaknesses as an exit examination. This process ended with the design and development of the NSC. Again, as Roofe (2019) observes, there was minimal teacher input consistent with the MOEY's typical approach to enacting education policy, which has implications for the institutionalisation of the NSC and the change in the education system that the MOEY expects. Since enacting the NSC, the MOEY has created guidelines for policy development (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: CURRENT MOEY POLICY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



The NSC effectively overhauled some of the existing curricula in the public system and replaced these with a standardised curriculum for grades 1-9. It represents the most ambitious attempt at curriculum reform since Jamaica's Independence from Great Britain in 1962 and is based on learner-centred pedagogy. "The NSC promotes a learner-centred, holistic approach to teaching and learning" (NSC 2016, p 3). The MOEY's vision is that students will become creative problem-solvers, critical thinkers and stewards of the environment in keeping with 21st-century learning skills (NSC, 2016). As stated in the NSC's policy document:

The key aims of the National Standards Curriculum are to develop successful lifelong learners who are confident and productive individuals who value their Jamaican identity and citizenship (NSC, 2016, p. 10).

The NSC seeks to encourage a commitment among educators to promote shared values and principles. The values are:

The Jamaican culture and heritage, tolerance and respect, inclusivity, social justice and democracy and sustainable development. The Jamaican curriculum is based on principles that emphasise the development of competencies, attention to present-day realities and the future, learning progression, learning styles, divergent thinking and outcomes, the place of culture in learning, and an inclusive, empowering and thought-provoking context.

(NSC 2016, p. 12)

On the face of it, the language of the NSC's policy document suggests that the MOEY intends to use the NSC to transform the existing socio-cultural setting of Jamaican society because of the emphasis on social justice, democracy, cultural identity and independent thought. The ideals reflect learner-centred pedagogy's emancipation narrative. In addition, there are elements of its preparation narrative in the NSC's emphasis on providing students with the requisite skills and competencies to operate and thrive in the 21st century. The NSC also declares that "effective use of these methods depends on an understanding of constructivism as a fundamental theory that has influenced the values and principles upon which the curriculum rests" (NSC 2016, p. 23). This reference to Vygotsky's social constructivism theory highlights the MOEY's reliance on the cognitive narrative and its emphasis on collaborative learning methodologies. Its focus on Vygotsky's theory also reflects its belief that the sociocultural and historical dimensions of learning are the most critical factors in determining cognitive development. Therefore, all three narratives are at play, each contributing to varying curriculum elements and the MOEY's hope that the NSC will accomplish its policy expectations.

Further, the NSC policy document lists the key aims of the curriculum as creating successful life-long learners who are confident and productive and who understand and value the Jamaican identity and what it means to be a citizen of the country. The policy states:

Although there is a set of subject areas that forms the content of the curriculum, the problems presented are to be explored through learner-centred methods. Effective use of these methods depends on understanding constructivism as a fundamental theory that has influenced the values and principles upon which the curriculum rests and other complementary theories that support a learner-centred environment. (NSC 2016, p.24)

The NSC emphasises the understanding of constructivism as the primary theory underpinning a learner-centred environment. In this regard, the NSC is characteristic of other progressive curriculum reforms. For example, the Finnish National Core Curriculum list the fundamental pillars of the new curriculum as “the uniqueness of every pupil and the right to a good education, cultural diversity...the educated human being and active citizen, the necessity of a sustainable way of life and the school as a learning community” (Irmeli Halinen, 2018). These fundamental pillars of the curriculum embody the underlying ideas of learner-centred teaching and learning, the importance of citizenship, life-long learning and acquiring 21st-century skills.

Regarding the NSC, the then Minister of Education, Senator Ruel Reid, stated that “[he] looked forward to the testimonials of students, parents, teachers and other stakeholders of the empowering of this learner-centred curriculum and remained confident that it will contribute to make Jamaica renown” (MOEYI, 2018, p. vii). Additionally, each subject area's philosophical statement expresses learner-centred pedagogical principles. For example, the mathematics curriculum indicates that the teaching and assessment are learner-centred in orientation. These are examples of the fundamental linkages between the NSC and learner-centred pedagogical principles.

Despite the parallels with other modern progressive curricula, the NSC lacks essential details to guide its enactment in classrooms. For example, the policy states that constructivism is the underlying philosophy but does not define it. However, the references to Vygotsky and the collaborative nature of learning suggest social constructivism. Additionally, and of greater significance, the policy lacks the details to guide the NSC's pedagogical enactment. For example, within the Jamaican context, what does learner-centred pedagogy mean? How are teachers to enact it? How are teachers to modify it to suit their specific classroom circumstances? These are some of the critical questions that the MOEY should

answer because, without answers, teachers will face increasing challenges in enacting the NSC.

2.5 CURRICULUM ENACTMENT AND THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS

Ball et al. (2012) argue that enactment is a process influenced by institutional factors, administrators, teachers, students, parents and the existing sociocultural context. These combine to mediate the intended curriculum resulting in the enacted curriculum or what Mullis and Martin (2019) call the implemented curriculum. Therefore, Ball et al. (2012) recognise institutional and sociocultural factors reshape the intended curriculum. Thus, making the enacted curriculum different in every context. At first, I thought the main issue was implementing the NSC as a curriculum policy. However, after reading Ball et al.'s concept of enactment, it became clear that there was a difference between the two. My interest was in how schools enact the NSC, even though enactments of the intended curriculum may differ from one school to the next. Therefore, Ball et al.'s observations resonate because this study seeks to explore possible institutional and sociocultural factors influencing the NSC's enactment.

Institutional and sociocultural factors challenge curriculum enactment. Therefore, as I alluded to earlier in discussing Weinbaum and Supovitz's (2010) suggestion, the process is rarely linear. Simply because of the tendency "for external reforms to repeatedly change as they filter through multiple layers of the education system, including the district, school, department, team and classroom" (p. 68). In this regard, the policy text of the intended curriculum frequently hides the underlying cut and thrust that eventually gives rise to the enacted curriculum. The reality is that "few policies arrive fully formed, and the processes of policy enactment involve ad-hockery, borrowing, re-ordering, displacing, making do and re-invention" (Ball et al., 2012, p. 8). This observation highlights the potential volatility of the policy enactment process. It also explains why Ball et al. (2012) use the word 'enactment' instead of 'implementation' to depict the process of moving a curriculum policy from a series of texts on paper to practice in the classroom. They argue that enactment "involves interpretation ...the transfer of text in action and the abstraction of policy ideas into contextualised practices" (p. 3). For example, school boards, principals and teachers mediate curriculum

policies at the school and classroom levels. Braun et al. (2011) call it the "creative process of interpretation and translation" (p. 586). However, policymakers sometimes ignore these actors' iterative sense-making role, especially teachers. Their omission from the deliberative process leads to a predisposition to view and treat all schools and teachers in the same way and to design policies for the best schools and teachers, with slight variation in the application.

In this regard, Ball et al. (2012) take a pragmatic view of curriculum enactment; they recognise that a curriculum does not dictate what schools should do. Instead, it creates a narrow set of options for schools to decide how to achieve the curriculum's goals. At the school level, these decisions are the subject of compromise, as a curriculum is crosscutting, value-laden, fragmentary and may result in unanticipated consequences (Taylor et al., 2007). For example, Supovitz, Sirinides and May (2009) contend that principal leadership and peer teacher's influence determine instructional practice. This observation confirms that "school leadership is an important influence on how reforms are understood and enacted" (Weinbaum ad Supovitz, 2010, p. 70). Therefore, the school is one of the three possible junctures where principals and teachers will mediate or refract the intended curriculum. It is also the point where policymakers can intervene to gain a greater understanding of the local imperatives that cause principals and teachers to change the curriculum, communicate the non-negotiable elements of the curriculum, or emphasise specific aspects. Ozga (2000) suggests that curriculum enactment is the product of struggle with people, some of whom may even represent community interests outside formal policymaking. Yet, they potentially wield influence over the enactment of the curriculum.

In thinking about the actors who exert influence on curriculum enactment, there is sometimes a tendency for researchers and policymakers alike to limit the categories of actors, implying that the list of actors begins at the level of policymakers and downwards to the schools. This has been my experience in participating in discussions over many years. As discussed earlier, the global institutions and their indirect demands for sameness in education policies are above the local policymakers. However, these organisations do not fully realise the influence micro-actors and sociocultural contexts have on education policies. Further, in a democratic state, the influence that policymakers exert on education

reform depends on the structure of the government, the character of the education system, the quality of public institutions, the level of engagement of the general population and civil society in these matters, sociocultural values, and expectations and crucially, the schools. Braun et al. (2011) argue that these are essential factors in the shaping of curriculum policy, especially the school-specific issues such as "school intake, history, staffing, school ethos, culture, and material elements, like buildings, resources and budgets" (p. 585).

These elements help frame the sociocultural context within which policies shape and develop into what the circumstances dictate (Bell and Stevenson, 2006; Deleon and Deleon, 2002; Matland, 1995). Further underscoring the view that "education reforms are complex and embedded contextual, cultural, and historical stories and reform, and methods need to be undertaken with caution" (Luke, 2011, p. 6). Small post-colonial states like Jamaica possess unique sociocultural features that could impact the enactment of curricular policies. For example, how Jamaican society views power relationships, the existing pseudo-authoritarian political culture, and resource constraints.

2.6 THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS IN CURRICULUM ENACTMENT

Principals, as school leaders, play an integral role in enacting curriculum policies. However, over the last twenty years, many studies show that in their work, increasing demands have been placed on them by ministries of education, parents, and communities Fullan (2000). Moreover, much of the demands placed on principal leadership relate to developments in the education policy landscape. These have, in fundamental ways, altered the role of school principals, shifting their responsibilities and focus into new arenas to keep pace with current expectations for their performance (Grissom et al. 2021). This shift underscores the need for effective principal leadership, particularly during complex change.

Whether centrally or locally led, curriculum change is complex and requires leadership at all levels within schools. Principals, teachers, boards of governors, parents, and students form an interdependent web of enactors as they implement the changes in the curricular programme. For example, teachers exert influence on curricular content and pedagogy. They are called upon to interpret and enact curriculum principles, content, and pedagogies they have not created and will need to make sense of as they teach students. As such, principals should

understand and lead changes while ensuring that schools continuously improve. Goleman (2000) analysed the effective leadership styles of 3,871 executives to determine their effect on culture, and he concluded that “leaders need many styles”. The ability of principals to harness the energies of all other leaders in the school’s setting to create a culture of learning fitting for the local context is desirable.

Principals are instructional leaders, and as such, they influence change in teachers’ instructional practices. For example, Supovitz et al. (2010) argue that “principals who focus on instruction foster community and trust and communicate school mission and goals are associated with teachers who report making greater changes to their instructional practice” (p. 43-44). This assertion underscores the importance of principals recognising that they play an integral role in ensuring that they lead curriculum change within their schools. Their role includes supporting their teachers in understanding the curriculum and creating a climate where teachers collaborate to mediate the curriculum to ensure contextual relevance. Similarly, Koyama (2011) argues that “increasingly principals have become powerful policy actors [in curriculum reform]” (p. 20). At the point where the curriculum policy enters the school, principals act as a bridge between policymakers and teachers and their assessment of their role help to determine the level of success.

2.7 TEACHERS’ PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND ROLE IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The crucial point in considering curriculum policy implementation should be what teachers know or understand about curricular reform and how they can contribute to its implementation (Elbaz, 1981). There was doubt whether the early research on teachers’ practical knowledge could generate other theories and the overall usefulness of the findings. For example, Elbaz-Luwisch and Orland-Barak (2013) argue that the prevailing opinion was that “the extensive research had generated only weak correlations between teacher behaviour and student outcomes” (p. 98). However, arguably, these early misgivings about the value of research on teacher effectiveness are slowly changing. For example, Hattie (2003) gave early signs of this change in his assertion that students account for 50 per cent of the variance for achievement, and teachers account for 30 per cent. Later, there were others; for instance, Burgess (2019) stated that “teacher effectiveness is the most

important component of the education process with schools for pupil attainment" (p. 1). He defines teacher effectiveness as students' academic progress with a given teacher over time. More recent measurements also include non-cognitive outcomes. For example, specific soft skills such as interpersonal behaviours, attitudes and dispositions, and an appreciation for the importance of civic culture.

Nevertheless, there are gaps in the research on teachers' effectiveness. Perhaps in some respects, this reflects the substance of Elbaz-Luwisch and Orland-Barak's (2013) assertion about the prevailing negative opinion on teacher effectiveness. For example, even though the evidence of teacher effectiveness is improving, researchers have been unable to isolate the aspects or characteristics of teacher effectiveness most responsible for students' attainment (Hanushek, 2011). Similarly, Rockoff (2004) argues that although school administrators, parents and students agree that teacher quality impacts student achievement, the evidence connecting this to recognisable teacher characteristics is unpredictable. Burgess, Rawal and Taylor's (2022) observations confirm this finding and contend that while research shows that more effective teachers positively influence students' attainment and future success. "Evidence about why those contributions differ remains scarce" (p.9).

The importance of teachers' effectiveness to student attainment also connects with the earlier discussions regarding them being a mediating force in curriculum reform, which further supports my decision to canvass their views on the MOEY's reforms and enactment of the NSC. In reflecting on my two decades as a geography teacher, I realised I did not consider whether my learning could inform the MOEY's curriculum policy. Instead, I focused on enacting the curriculum and ensuring that my students completed the syllabus and were successful in their exams. My experience as an educator suggests that this tendency not to get involved in providing policy feedback and guidance is commonplace among teachers and helps to reinforce some negative conceptions of teachers' worth and work.

These negative conceptions of teachers' work and worth indicate the incompleteness of research on their work. Elbaz (1981) describes the research on teachers' work as patchy and biased, and the conclusions weaken their vital role in what she calls the 'educational enterprise'. This perception mirrors society's persistently negative view of teachers' abilities. This view is evident in

George Bernard Shaw's (1903) rebuke stating that "he who can, does, he who cannot teaches" (p. 230). However, Elbaz (1981) admits that this view is changing. Hargreaves (1994), on the other hand, suggests that conflicting opinions of teachers' work and worth have always existed alongside each other. He cites Waller, who, as far back as 1932, advised that "teachers will do well to insist that any program of education reform shall start with them, that it shall be based on, and shall include, their common-sense insight" (p. 452). There is still support for this viewpoint. For example, Carter (1993), Goodson (1992), Connelly and Clandinin (1990) and Clandinin (1986) have all written about the need for policymakers to include teachers' voices in education reform and for education researchers to explore teachers' work through their narratives. Hargreaves (1994), too, recognises the importance of this but argues that "the pendulum of understanding teachers, their voices and concerns, may now be swinging too far the other way" (p. 7). He believes that teachers are inescapably biased, so their voices should not have the right or privilege over other voices, not least because there is no single representative teacher's voice. Not all teachers are dutiful and sympathetic to the welfare and needs of their students.

Nevertheless, recent research shows a growing appreciation for the usefulness of teachers' voices in curriculum reform. Some of these changing perceptions result from enlightenment, whereas others result from necessity. For example, Pietarinen, Pyhältö and Soini (2019) contend that the success of curriculum reform depends on engaging those involved to make sense of the reforms. This process of shared sensemaking involves incorporating education practitioners, especially teachers, into the decision-making or policy reviewing. Hardy (2018) argues that with standardisation and performative demands, there is a greater need for the collaborative involvement of teachers in curriculum and assessment practices as learners. However, these approaches are not unidirectional. Therefore, the collective experience is a cycle where teachers learn and share their expertise or knowledge.

The multidirectional nature of teachers' practical knowledge ensures that teachers teach and learn from their students within an enveloping social context while sharing their experiences with other teachers. The classroom and different settings, such as seminars, are vital for transferring knowledge. These spaces facilitate points of convergence which help to synchronise the experiences of

teachers and students from diverse sociocultural backgrounds. Additionally, the teaching, learning and sharing opportunities that these create among teachers and students underlie the grounded theory and critical pedagogic approach to curriculum design that this study proposes. This approach reflects Elbaz's (1981) theory of practical knowledge, despite the methodological challenges that this sometimes entails. For example, Elbaz (1981) admits that "the generalisability of practical knowledge is a contentious issue" (p. 61); her theory of teachers' practical knowledge is discussed below. However, she thinks that researchers should examine the sources of this dispute, as often, people focus on teachers' decisions, which can be misleading. Instead, researchers should focus on the function of their practical knowledge and not necessarily on the quality of their decisions. In my view, the quality of their decisions is essential, as it helps frame the quality of their teaching, which ultimately affects students' achievements. Therefore, their practical knowledge and the quality of their teaching require consideration in enacting the curriculum. Nevertheless, Elbaz's concept of teachers' practical knowledge is a compelling framework to examine teachers' work and its value to the curricular process.

Elbaz (1981) asserts that there is a belief that teachers do not "possess knowledge and expertise appropriate to their work" (p.11). The body of knowledge they hold would be better utilised and of more significant benefit to their students if they were to be suitably engaged in developing and implementing curricular policy. This view recognises the teacher "as an agent, with an active and autonomous role shaped by her classroom experience" (p. 4). In this regard, Elbaz's work is essential and seminal because it defines teachers' practical knowledge and outlines the intrinsic value of their thinking and expertise. She explains her initial thought process:

In my efforts to deal with this problem, I developed several working assumptions, which helped shape the notion of teachers' practical knowledge. Various theoretical formulations influenced these assumptions, but they do not constitute a theoretical account of practical knowledge. They are a series of ideas that enabled me to work on the problem. (1981, p. 13)

Importantly, Elbaz's (1983, p.7) concept of teachers' practical knowledge challenges the view that teachers can only be 'facilitators, enactors or conveyors'

of policy. Instead, "teachers ... [should be seen] as thinkers, knowers and holders of knowledge in their own right" (Elbaz-Luwisch and Orland-Barak 2013, p. 99). Elbaz defines her theory of teachers' practical knowledge using five categories: knowledge of self, knowledge of the teaching milieu, knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of instruction and knowledge of curriculum development. These categories comprise the content of teachers' practical knowledge (Figure 4, p. 55).

Elbaz (1983) argues that teachers' knowledge of self describes how their values, beliefs, purposes and experiences shape their practice. For example, their sense of their capabilities and ability to relate to their students and others combine to determine how they approach their work.

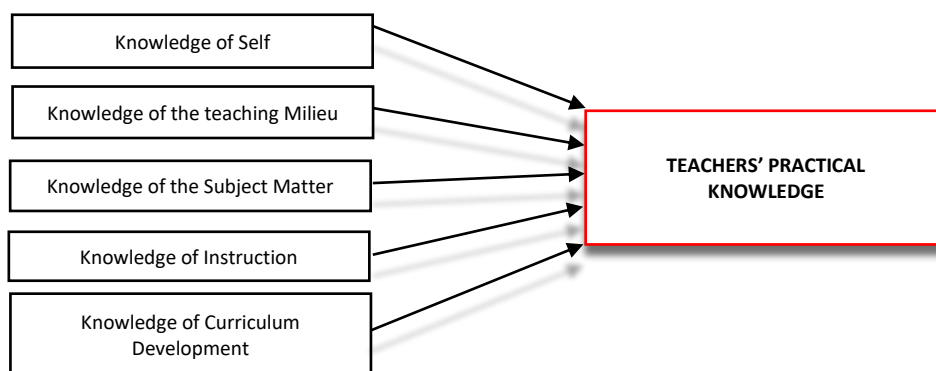
Knowledge of the teaching milieu characterises teachers' relationships with their students and the classroom as distinct entities. Nevertheless, it extends beyond the classroom and includes their relationships with fellow teachers, the political dimension of their unions, school administration and the confluence of sociocultural influences outside the school's walls. For example, the Jamaica Teachers' Association plays an active role in determining pay and emoluments and conditions of work for teachers, which indirectly influences their classroom practice.

Teachers' knowledge of their subject matter includes their understanding of it both as an academic discipline and as a medium for expressing, clarifying and transferring experiences, feelings and values. These are distinct yet overlapping concepts, and teachers continually maintain the balance between them as they try to relate academic discipline to students' everyday lives.

Teachers' knowledge of instruction embodies their view of teaching and how students learn. Their presumption of how students learn determines their pedagogical stance, teaching style, interaction with their students and how they evaluate students' learning. Teachers' ideas about organising students' learning will determine the resources they use and how they use what is available to deliver their lessons. For example, the absence of suitable science labs in some secondary schools in rural Jamaica may entail teachers using the great outdoors to show students practical examples of how science works in nature.

Finally, teachers' knowledge of curriculum development and how to enact it in their classrooms is a composite of the various aspects of their practical knowledge. It includes their training, years of classroom experience, and interactions with students and various stakeholders. The key to curriculum development is knowing how to apply this knowledge to the problem the curriculum seeks to address. The focus is on determining students' needs, organising the curriculum to reflect the context, using the available resources to solve the problems and evaluating the level of success or failure.

FIGURE 4: ELBAZ'S THEORY OF TEACHERS' PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE



Elbaz argues that teachers use the content of their practical knowledge to help them solve everyday practical problems in their classrooms. Some of these issues are situational-specific. Therefore, their knowledge results from the interrelationship between theory and practice within a given context. It describes their knowledge of their working context. It refers to their understanding of the challenges that characterise their immediate environment and how these impact their work. "It is the knowledge that is oriented to the practical situations the teacher encounters" (Elbaz, 1983, p. 101). These understandings result from interactions with students, the curriculum and the other elements within the school's ecology.

Teachers' knowledge is also a manifestation of the personal, as they are integrally involved in shaping knowledge within their sphere of influence. As Elbaz (1983) puts it: "the notion of teacher's perspective is not to be understood narrowly. It encompasses not only intellectual belief but also perception, feeling, values, purpose and commitment" (p. 17). This point also underscores the earlier argument in the literature about the role of personal beliefs in teachers' decision-making (Nespor, 1987). Therefore, "being practical, the teacher's knowledge is

much more accessible to observation in use than in formally articulated or codified form" (Elbaz, 1983, p. 17). In practice, the teacher, in multiple ways, is the final arbiter of policy enactment in the classroom. Thus, the curriculum enactment is partially, and in some instances, primarily an extension of their personal beliefs and decision-making frame of reference.

Elbaz (1983) argues that they also use their experience to help shape the school and classroom world. The school's world is separated from the outside and represents an entire world. She explains that:

In the world of teaching, this suspension involves a particularly marked 'bracketing' of experience. For in teaching, the assumption often seems to be made that the world of school is complete unto itself. (p. 19)

The school's world has rules and codes integral to teachers' decision-making toolbox. This observation is similar to other professions; for example, the hospital may count as the doctors' and nurses' world, with its rules and codes governing behaviour. Teachers' forms of thought and theories also help to frame their worldviews and understanding of the world. For example, the teacher's formal practical knowledge comprises ideas learnt during schooling and training (Elbaz, 1983)

Therefore, teachers' practical knowledge is socially conditioned and results from social interactions (social construction). Teachers also consider their students' expectations, standards of behaviour and interests in shaping their subject areas (Elbaz, 1983, p. 18). They understand the learning needs of their students, and while delivering the curriculum, they see themselves as having the responsibility to satisfy these basic requirements. In addition, teachers are socially connected with their students, as they all live in the school's world (Brinkmann, 2019).

Teachers, like their students, bring their cultural and other experiences of living outside the school's world into the sphere of its influence. In other words, even though the school's world is socially distinct from the social world beyond its walls, it is not immune from the power of this outer world. This state of affairs illustrates cultural influences' fluidity and multidirectional nature. For example, students' experiences in the classroom can influence aspects of their behaviour at home, and the converse holds. Holmes (2021) argues that culture represents the context

within which students learn. It enables them to make sense of the social worlds around them and informs their actions, feelings and thoughts. Therefore, it provides the framework for their sense-making and helps them navigate the sociocultural realities of home and school. For example, their sociocultural beliefs and socialisation, including parental expectations, attitudes and beliefs, help to shape their school life and experiences. This view underscores my earlier point about this study's conceptual and methodological design. I argued that the sociocultural and other interactions between teachers and students underlie the grounded theory and critical pedagogic approach to curriculum design that this study proposes, which reflects Elbaz's (1981) theory of teachers' practical knowledge.

However, there are other conceptualisations of teachers' practical knowledge. For example, Shulman (1987) asserts that teachers' knowledge about their subjects or content knowledge is vital to teaching and learning and that their skills reflect this knowledge. Therefore, effective teaching merges content and pedagogical knowledge or the most suitable way to teach the content. He argues that in devising pedagogical knowledge, teachers consider the curriculum, the learner, the educational context and the educational object or purpose. Ball, Thames and Phelps' (2008) test of Shulman's theory confirms that content knowledge is essential to teaching and learning. However, they argue that the existence of pedagogical knowledge is not a given, and its presence should therefore be conditional on the ability to measure, represent, and explain its influence on the effective teaching of the subject matter.

Fenstermacher (1994) reasons that teachers' practice knowledge is primarily the knowledge needed to teach effectively. Grossmann (1990) and Ferguson (1997) share this view. However, Beijaard and Verloop (1996) believe that the scope of teachers' knowledge is more comprehensive and includes their specific skills, expertise, beliefs, norms and values. At the same time, Swart et al. (2018) believe that teachers' level of professional practice and experience is also a factor. Clandinin (1986) argues that "teachers are commonly acknowledged as having experience, but they are credited with little gained from that experience" (p. 8). This observation partly explains the misinterpretation of teachers' efforts to influence the implementation of curricular policy as resistance (McLaughlin, 1987). It may also explain why some believe teachers are less capable than their

college-educated peers (Lortie, 1975). Or that their "professional isolation limits access to new ideas and better solutions...permits incompetence to exist and persist to the detriment of students" (Fullan 1993, p. 45). In considering the significance of teachers' practical knowledge, Elbaz encourages the involvement of teachers in the curricular policymaking process, which is the main distinction between her theory from the other viewpoints and ideas.

Elbaz (1983) argues that the typical concept of curriculum development is quite linear. In other words, usually, policymakers develop the curriculum, and once they commission it, an assessor is assigned to evaluate its utility. This evaluation typically measures the theoretical objectives that comprise outputs, students' formative assessments and examinations. Essentially, teachers are absent in the curriculum development, and even in cases where policymakers consult them, it is usually tokenism. Despite this shortcoming, teachers are responsible for enacting the curriculum in their classrooms, and with students, they also live with its consequences. Policymakers also blame teachers if it fails to match policy expectations. Therefore, "teachers' active role in the creation of new instruction arrangements is denied, but they are credited with a generous share of the responsibility for failure" (Elbaz 1983, pp. 7-8). McLaughlin (1989) contends that discussions about education policy are typically on the details of the inputs. These discussions seldom explain what characterises the gap between policy and practice, yet the answers lie in the daily reality of working in the classroom. As she puts it:

What teachers do every day and the workplace conditions within which they go about their tasks set boundaries and constraints on practice not typically considered by the policy. Yet, these workplace conditions and classroom realities fundamentally determine how or even whether teachers respond to policy mandates and objectives (p. ix).

Therefore, the persistent discord between curriculum policy and practice is due partly to the absence of teachers' voices in the policy discussions.

Kirk and MacDonald (2010) argue that teachers' voices are restricted by the top-down approach to policymaking, which negatively impacts their feeling of ownership of the curriculum, and by extension, the process itself. Mikser, Kärner and Krull (2016) characterise curriculum ownership as a situation where teachers

believe they are integral to the curriculum implementation process, and so they willingly invest time and effort.

Flinders (1989) contends that one of the main barriers to including teachers' voices in decision-making is the image many people have of them. This image, he says, is one-dimensional, as they "are either idealised as dedicated, caring, and self-sacrificing, or they are denigrated, as lazy, inept, and self-serving" (p. 1). The result is that policymakers seldom explore the complex nature of teachers' work or their ability to contribute beyond mere enactors of policy (McLaughlin, 1987, 1976; Elbaz, 1983, 1981). Flinders suggests that if policymakers were more aware of the intricacies of teachers' work, curricular policies would better reflect the practicalities in the classroom, which, as discussed, reflects Elbaz's views on the matter. Unfortunately, curriculum reform processes too often exclude teachers' voices and compromise outcomes for students and, more broadly, the system itself (Westbury and Reid 1983). The justification for this is based upon the flawed opinion that "always...teachers need the help, guidance, direction, and leadership which others can provide" (p. vii).

Elbaz-Luwisch and Orland-Barak (2013) argue that the concept of teachers' practical knowledge and where it intersects with the policymaking process has evolved from earlier observations. The focus now includes the community of teachers learning from each other and contributing to the policymaking process. Thus, the focus is "on community settings, as contexts for constructing teacher knowledge and for fostering teacher development...[and] extends the notion of teacher knowledge to a more complex view of teacher learning in the community" (p. 104). These views resist the rooted bias about the value of teachers' work and practical knowledge to the policymaking process. This new way of looking at how teachers can contribute to policymaking considers the global movement to standardise education discussed earlier. These learning communities have become valuable spaces for the exchange of ideas and places where teachers can work collaboratively and, when necessary, challenge the GERM:

Mostly, they are viewed as relevant and authentic spaces for participants to critically, collaboratively, and supportively create knowledge and examine their roles and practices shaped by accountability systems and often competing political agendas of education reforms. (Elbaz-Luwisch and Orland-Barak 2013, p. 104)

However, for these learning communities to effectively contribute to curriculum reform, policymakers must enable their involvement. This requires resisting the temptation to view the reform processes as purely top-down.

Nevertheless, with the increasing use of standards-based reforms across the public education system, "teachers are allowed little freedom to decide curriculum as a whole or what they teach in their classrooms" (Datnow et al., 2002, p. 19). By minimising teachers' input, these models fail to account for nuance within settings and instead apply general principles with little regard for local conditions (Darling-Hammond 1988). Thus, failing to consider the possibility that "local service deliverers are experts and have the knowledge of the true problems; therefore, they are in a better position to propose purposeful policy" (Paudel, 2009, p. 41). As a result, teachers ultimately determine the fate of policies, and "it is simply unrealistic to expect policy designers to be able to control the actions of these agents" (p. 41).

Enacting "a new curriculum at the school level mostly implies changing schools and teachers' practices and beliefs" (OECD, 2017). Moreover, enactment requires reconciling policy expectations and the demands of those from below (Bell and Stevenson, 2006, p. 19). Changing a curriculum means changing how education works, how teachers teach, how students learn and their learning content (Weaver, 2010). Importantly, this necessitates belief change among policymakers and teachers. In fact, given the nature and complexity of education systems, policymakers need to build support for education policies among school leaders, teachers and other stakeholders (Fullan, 2015). Therefore, the complexities of education systems curriculum change are always iterative, non-linear, and increasingly dependent on feedback and collaboration across all system levels (Burns and Koster, 2016).

There is also the issue regarding teachers' struggles in enacting a learner-centred curriculum. Windschitl (2002) argues that "educators...[struggle] to develop new...repertoires of practice to realise the vision of children constructing their knowledge" (p. 131). These struggles, he suggests, are conceptual, pedagogical, cultural, and political in the description. While he admits that teachers are not the only ones affected, he believes that teachers carry the more significant burden in enacting a learner-centred curriculum because the adaptations are substantial.

As McLaughlin (1987), echoing Weatherly and Lipsky (1977), explains, "that policy [enactment] depends finally on the individual at the end of the line, or the street-level bureaucrat" (p. 174).

Conceptual struggles depict teachers' experiences understanding learner-centred reforms' philosophical or theoretical foundations. So, policymakers must explain to teachers the details of the policies that they expect them to implement (Oakes et al., 2000). This sensitisation of teachers regarding policy changes is essential because learner-centred classrooms require significant changes in how teachers "usually think about instruction because the traditional didactic relationship between teacher and student is replaced by one that is more interactive, complex and unpredictable" (Windschitl, 2002, p. 143).

Teachers' pedagogical struggles are often closely related to their conceptual difficulties. They must first understand the theory of constructivism before integrating it into their practices. For example, Richardson (1990) reports that in a study involving two teachers, they routinely filtered the information "through [their] personality and, or their belief system...to alter [their] practice quite dramatically, such that it was no longer the same practice" (p. 15). Hence, teachers' existing beliefs do impact the implementation of curricular reforms.

Cultural struggles speak to the need to transform the classroom culture to accommodate the changes that learner-centred teaching requires. It is a recognition that schools or their socio-cultural contexts are a part of a larger "tacitly understood framework of norms, expectations, and values that give meaning to all activities occurring in schools" (Windschitl, 2002, p. 150). In other words, teaching is much more than delivering content. Teaching is an integral part of a network of power relationships encompassing norms and ways of doing things that the teacher must navigate. Hence, creating the new patterns of teaching that learner-centred pedagogy requires is very difficult.

Political struggles are a constant feature of change. Windschitl (2002) argues that "reform-oriented teaching often generates controversy and substantial conflict that can make success difficult, if not impossible, to achieve" (p.154). Therefore, because of the totality of education change, policymakers should be conscious of the challenges that may arise from curriculum enactment (Fullan 1993). These challenges involve multiple issues and situations at all levels of the system. For

example, at the school level, there may be issues concerning the capacity of teachers and principals to lead the enactment of the new curriculum. For instance, policymakers expect much more of teachers, which demands greater autonomy. This shift has power relations implications. It is even more problematic when the teachers are not skilled enough to carry out the increased responsibilities that learner-centred pedagogy demands. There are also resource constraints, the training the school boards, school leaders, and teachers require to facilitate the reforms, engaging parents, civil society, and the Teachers' Union. These all have the potential for power relations challenges.

Therefore, teachers' struggles in enacting a learner-centred curriculum are quite significant. Policymakers are inclined to underestimate curriculum enactment's intricacies, which worsens an already difficult situation (Ball et al., 2012). Teachers also struggle to understand the process and often apply their frames of reference, resulting in distortions. However, despite the validity of Winschitl's (2002) view of the difficulties teachers encounter in enacting learner-centred approaches, local adaptations of external reforms are commonplace. Supovitz and Weinbaum (2008) argue that research indicates that "these potentially powerful ideas tended to shrivel as they became widespread, replaced by more superficial and marginal re-arrangements that were mere shadows of their former selves" (p. 6). Some of these policy adaptations raise the issue of whether they are helpful or harmful. Supovitz and Weinbaum (2008) suggest that the answer to this question depends on the degree of variation from the policy. If it violates the core principles of the policy, it may be detrimental. However, this change may be helpful if the new interpretation is necessary to fit the policy into local conditions. Policy fidelity, or the lack thereof, is primarily contextual. In this regard, Mundy et al. (2016) argue "that patterns of convergence or divergence in the adoption of global policies are highly idiosyncratic" (p.11).

However, there is evidence that the global conversations concerning learner-centred pedagogy have moved on. The contemporary debate now reflects the broader Global Education Reform Movement (GERM), the facilitative activities of non-state actors, and the deeper issue of whether market-based education policies are the right prescription for ailing public education systems. This, coupled with the fact that learner-centred pedagogical policies have had limited success even in some developed countries (Shweisfurth, 2015). Nevertheless,

the fundamental issues regarding learner-centred policies and the broader GERM, including the adaptation of these policies and the role of policymakers, principals, and teachers in this process at the local level, are similar and justify inquiry.

For example, in Jamaica, there is evidence that even though the MOEY implemented the learner-centred ROSE and RPC curriculums some 20 years ago, the National Education Inspectorate (NEI) reports that “classroom lessons were teacher-centred with little differentiation to cater to the learning needs of the students. As a result, many students were easily distracted and were not learning at optimal levels” (NEI, 2016, p. 20). This persistence of teacher-centred practices underscores the inherent challenges accompanying the shift to learner-centred approaches.

Regarding the existence of literature to contextualise and ground this study’s account of the persistence of teacher-centred practices in Jamaican classrooms, aside from the work of the NEI, there is no compelling body of literature to support the study’s characterisation of teachers’ classroom practices. However, the NEI’s work in this area is seminal because the framework of inspections relies heavily on the observation and evaluation of teachers’ classroom practices, applying learner-centred principles. The sparsity of literature underscores the significance of this study in gaining a deeper understanding of the persistence of teacher-centred practices.

2.8 THE MAIN FINDINGS AND GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

The literature reveals that global forces shape local education policies through the activities of supranational agencies like the World Bank and the IDB. Curriculum reforms remain one primary means through which these agencies exercise their influence. Consequently, there is a persistent push toward marketisation and standardisation of education systems. Publicising learner-centred pedagogies as best practice is at the core of this propulsive force. This predisposition has implications for curriculum enactment, given the mediating institutional and socio-cultural factors, the role of principals and the direct role of teachers in the process and the resulting tensions.

The literature also suggests that the mediating role of the teachers in enacting a curriculum is very significant (Brinkmann, 2019). Yet, policymakers do not fully use teachers' practical knowledge to bridge the policy vis-à-vis practice gap and thus perhaps reconcile the intended curriculum with the enacted curriculum. Elbaz argues for engaging teachers and using their practical knowledge to guide curriculum policy because of its intrinsic value to curriculum enactment. However, the literature also points to the challenges teachers encounter in enacting a learner-centred curriculum and the need for additional knowledge and skills to do it properly (Windschitl, 2002).

Therefore, given the evidence that, thus far, the enactment of the NSC has not achieved the MOEY's broad policy objectives, I argue for a retrospective probe of its enactment using the voices of policymakers, principals and teachers. From the perspective of these actors, the aim is to understand and unravel some of the issues/challenges that characterise the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and its enactment in classrooms.

The findings of this analysis will go a long way in understanding this area of research because there are no studies that consider the enactment of the NSC, and neither is there any study that evaluates the enactment of a learner-centred curriculum within the Jamaican context. Also, in my search, I did not find any study in the English-speaking Caribbean that examined the implementation of learner-centred curricula. This absence may also provide opportunities for the transference of understandings or lessons, given the similarities with Jamaica's socio-historical context. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap in the available research in Jamaica and the wider English-speaking Caribbean, and the study's research questions reflect this intention.

2.9 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1. What characterises the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and teachers' understanding of it?**
- 2. What can we learn from how the MOEY policymakers view the enactment of the NSC?**

3. **What can we learn from how principals view their roles in enacting the NSC in their schools?**

4. **What can we learn from some of the practical understandings of teachers about the NSC?**

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The literature review indicates a gap between policymakers' expectations for curriculum reform and how teachers choose to enact these reforms in their classrooms. My interest lies in determining what characterises this policy-practice gap in the case of Jamaican teachers' enactment of the NSC and what informs their actions. In other words, what practical knowledge do Jamaican teachers bring to bear on the enactment process? These form the basis for my research questions. Specifically, in answering these questions, I want to hear their voices or perceptions of the practical knowledge they apply to the process. I also want to hear the voices of the policymakers and principals because they are also integral to the implementation process. Therefore, I have adopted some elements of Crotty's (2005) initial framework of the social research process. In addition, the approach reflects my axiology or values and perceptions of good and bad and right and wrong. These values also drive my interest in undertaking the study.

This chapter considers my axiological view, ontology, epistemological stance, theoretical perspective and conceptual framework. My axiology captures and gives life to my belief that every child should have equal opportunities in the public education system and a chance to be all they can be. Understanding the policy-practice gap is vital to determining how the MOEY can make the public education system fairer in delivering quality education to every child, irrespective of socioeconomic background. Ontologically, an appreciation for reality's subjective and varying nature in each school and classroom and how these realities present themselves advances the process of understanding the divide between policy and practice. Also, the perceptions of knowledge, particularly among those responsible for designing and enacting the NSC, facilitate this process.

Similarly, I recognise that this knowledge has multiple conceptions depending on whom you ask, which underlines qualitative research's subjectivity. These considerations inform the theoretical perspective, methodology and methods for answering the research questions below.

3.1 AXIOLOGY AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

Hart (1971) argues that man continually reflects on the conditions of his life, trying to understand how these things affect him. He states: "man has always been preoccupied with the nature of values—the notion of good and bad, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly are as old as the real and apparent" (p. 29). This characterisation defines man's axiology. As researchers, these value judgements determine how we interact with the world and our decisions. These judgements also decide which projects to pursue and the value of the results (Lukenchuck, 2017). Guba and Lincoln (2005) assert that the researcher's axiological disposition has far-reaching effects because it determines their "choice of the problem, choice of theoretical framework, choice of...methods, choice of context...and choice of formats for presenting findings" (pp.197-200).

Regarding my axiology and views on education, I believe that the public education system has a moral duty to ensure every child has access to good quality education. In addition to academics, providing good quality education requires focusing on developing children to become productive and confident citizens who can exercise their full potential, regardless of backgrounds and starting points. This view results from my Catholic upbringing and the social context of this upbringing. Growing up in rural Jamaica, I saw and experienced the power of education to change the trajectory of lives by instilling the "ability to think abstractly and to make value judgements and moral decisions" (Philosophy of Catholic Education, n.d.). Therefore, I appreciate the urgent need to change the education system in Jamaica, and this view inspires my commitment to equal access to equitable education. Equal access means what it says, and equitable education acknowledges that children come to schools and classrooms with varying needs. Therefore, providing resources for teaching and learning should reflect these needs to ensure equity.

I also believe in excellence in the public education system, which restates my earlier views regarding good quality education. But this quality should reflect social justice principles and be part of educational theories and practices at all levels of the education system. For example, Bogotch (2000) argues that social justice education is a deliberate intervention and an ongoing struggle that challenges the dominant systems of power by empowering every child to become someone by giving them the tools to be active participants within their societies.

I also came of age in the 1970s in Jamaica. Then, it was a period of immense tumult in Jamaica and the world as political ideas—indeed, ideas of all types and shades—jostled for control of the available intellectual space. Jamaica experimented with democratic socialism, which caused social upheaval resulting in capital flight and the loss of vital expertise. Many, particularly the middle class, feared the country was drifting toward Cuban-styled communism. However, as mentioned in chapter 2, the 1970s also saw significant progress toward making the public education system more equitable. I benefited from these reforms, receiving a full scholarship to one of the traditional secondary schools. I would not have been able to attend without this scholarship, as my parents could not afford the tuition. Undoubtedly, these experiences influenced my values and decision to become a teacher and later to apply to work at the MOEY, as I believed that I could make an even more significant difference in the lives of young people.

Furthermore, my decades-long experiences as an educator provided essential insights that influenced my values and, ultimately, my decision to do this study. As a classroom teacher in two prominent high schools and head of the geography department in one of them, I witnessed teachers' challenges in enacting curriculum. Later, as an education officer and the head of the education officers' professional body, in the MOEY, I supervised schools. Here, I became even more aware of the gap between curriculum policy and practice, between what the MOEY wanted teachers to implement and what they chose to enact for one reason or another. Their motives for doing this were sometimes valid. These experiences helped to sow the seeds of introspection and assessments, though wanting to provide a forum for teachers' voices came much later. My move to education planning shed light on some of the MOEY's difficulties in providing the resources to support the curriculum implementation process. When I became Chief Inspector of Schools, these earlier experiences placed everything in context and slowly, the need to conduct this study in a way that explored teachers' practical knowledge became a reality.

3.2 THE RESEARCHER'S ONTOLOGY

Ontology describes what individuals consider reality or what exists. It is related to epistemology because one's view of reality reflects a particular way of knowing

that this reality exists. This idea implies that there are numerous realities. Therefore, even though the teachers in the sample participated in the MOEY's NSC sensitisation programme, their opinions about it are highly personal. For example, a teacher's perception of how students learn demonstrates her understanding of what it is to learn and will influence how she chooses to enact the NSC in her classroom, which has implications for the research process. What each teacher decides to tell me, at best, is their subjective view of reality, and so are my analyses of their interviews. Therefore, even though researchers sometimes speak of validity through triangulation when dealing with qualitative research, this is fraught with difficulty. Arguably a fitting approach to ensure the procedural integrity of the research process is to work at establishing trustworthiness. I will expand on this idea in Chapter 4.

3.3 THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL STANCE

Hamlyn (1995), cited in Crotty (2005), argues that "epistemology deals with the nature of knowledge, its possibility, scope and general basis" (p. 242). Epistemology embodies the philosophy that supports the research, and the researcher must justify its suitability. As a prelude to answering the research questions, it connects the subjects to the context and determines what we know and how we know it (Greene, 1994). The epistemological stance derives its legitimacy from the circumstances surrounding the inquiry. Therefore, knowing how "implies knowing how in a given context in which appropriate actions emerge from contextual knowing" (Greenwood and Levin, 2000, p. 52).

Greenwood and Levin's (2000) assertion is apt and reflects my position regarding the treatment of the study participants and, expressly, how I understand the teachers' contributions. For example, I recognise the uniqueness of their views on teaching and learning and how these compare with the MOEY's intentions for the NSC, expressed by policymakers. I also recognise that teachers' opinions on these and related issues reflect experiences of living and teaching within the broader society and the ecologies of their schools and classrooms. In other words, their views represent socially constructed non-objective explanations of their engagement with the NSC and their students within a specific sociocultural context.

3.3.1 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

The epistemological stance that I adopted in this study is social constructivism. This stance embodies the idea that there is no objective basis for knowledge. It results from social agreements and human interactions and exists because of implicit or manifest compacts among individuals or groups. Therefore, reality, or how we understand and perceive the world, is socially constructed (Burr and Dick, 2017). For example, Twomey-Fosnot (2005) states:

Constructivism is a theory about knowledge and learning; it describes both what "knowing is and how one "comes to know" ... the theory also describes knowledge not as truths to be transmitted or discovered but as emergent, developmental, non-objective, viably constructed explanations by humans engaged in meaning-making in cultural and social communities of discourse (p. ix)

Social constructivism partly mirrors social constructionism. However, social constructionism reflects and focuses on the collective's meaning-making activities and transmission of knowledge. While social constructivism "focuses exclusively on the meaning-making activity of the individual mind" (Crotty, 2005, p. 58). For example, Vygotsky's (1970) theory of social constructivism states that learning results from social interaction. For example, a child learns through interactions with teachers, peers and objects within their schools and other sociocultural environments. Given this relationship, one cannot overemphasise culture's role in conferring meaning.

Culture determines how people classify phenomena because it confers meaning and informs what we do and how we do it (Palincsar, 1998). Therefore, "everything that we take to be real, rational, or good, everything we hold dear, finds its origins in our processes of relating [with each other]" (Gergen, 2015, p. 13). These relationships live and evolve through language, symbols, social terminologies and other forms of communication.

In this regard, Burr and Dick (2017) argue that although language and other forms of communication are vital to social constructionism, power resides in discourse. The same applies to social constructivism, given the relationship between the two concepts. Discourse refers to those elements of language and other forms of communication that convey ideas and power. Because "discourses do not simply describe the world, an event or a person; they influence what we do and how we

act" (p. 3). This feature explains the social constructivist preference for discourse analysis in all its forms, for instance, interviews, texts, and the various symbolic representations of discourse. Symbolic interactionism theory is also consistent with discourse, which explains why it is part of this study's theoretical perspectives. Providing opportunities for participants in this study to express themselves freely is essential to understanding the underlying meanings determining their actions in enacting the NSC. However, the subjective nature of the participant's views requires methodological safeguards to ensure the data is as trustworthy as possible.

3.4 THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The theoretical perspective outlines the philosophical stance that lies immediately behind the methodology the researcher adopts to undertake his inquiry (Crotty, 2005). Theories comprise informal and formal concepts that seek to explain how and why things work. Although formal concepts are generalisable and provide frameworks for solving problems, informal concepts are also helpful in explaining why things work the way they do. Theoretical perspectives "are formal theories that emerge from...empirical work" (Ravitch and Riggan, 2012, p. 12). The theoretical perspective reflects the assumptions that underpin the researcher's view of the social world and explain the different types of relationships (Figure 5 below). My philosophical stance is interpretivism and primarily symbolic interactionism, which I address in 3.4.1 below because it aids the "interpretation of meanings and actions of actors according to their subjective frame of reference" (Williams, 2000, p. 210). Therefore, it allows me to use linguistic and observation techniques to analyse participants' actions, language use, and other forms of communication in enacting the NSC within their natural classroom environments.

Aside from symbolic interactionism, the theoretical perspective also includes other concepts. These are globalisation and education reform, learner-centred pedagogy (Vygotsky's social constructivism, Freire's critical pedagogy and his emancipation narrative, and learner-centred pedagogy's preparation narrative), curriculum definitions and perspectives, curriculum enactment and the role of sociocultural factors and Elbaz's theory of teachers' practical knowledge. These concepts also help to frame the inquiry and facilitate the analysis and findings.

3.4.1 INTERPRETIVISM (SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM)

Blumer (1969) argues that symbolic interactionism rests on three broad principles. First, human action toward people, objects, institutions and everything else in their social life results from what these mean to them. "The meanings things have for them are central in their own right" (p. 2). Second, these meanings result from interactions with fellow human beings. "The meaning of a thing for a person grows from how other persons act toward the person concerning the thing, and their actions operate to define the things for the person" (p. 4). Third, people interpret and modify these meanings based on their encounters with people and objects. Therefore, the actor can alter these meanings through self-interaction even though the initial meanings result from interactions with other people. As he puts it:

The actor selects, checks, suspends, regroups and transforms the meaning in light of the situation in which he is placed and the direction of his action. Accordingly, interpretation should not be regarded as a mere automatic application of established meanings but as a formative process in which meanings are used and revised as instruments for guidance and action formation (p. 5).

Meanings are not static or cast in concrete. Although institutions and groupings may hold and enforce collective meanings, individuals have opportunities to modify them through interaction with fellow human beings or objects. In other words, although these meanings guide actions, "one must see the activities of the collectivity as being formed through a process of designation and interpretation" (Blumer, 1969, p. 21).

Consider the existing scenario regarding the implementation of the NSC. First, the MOEY outlines its expectations through the intended curriculum. The curriculum embodies beliefs regarding what and how teachers should teach and the expected outcomes. Next, the MOEY conducts a Pilot in a sample of schools through its curriculum unit. Relying on its regional offices to select the schools, it begins the Pilot using a series of workshops with the principals and teachers. The regional offices are responsible for school supervision and other administrative functions. However, they have little autonomy, as the governance structure of the MOEY is highly centralised.

After the assessment of the Pilot, the MOEY instructs the principals to enact the NSC in their schools. The principals, in turn, pass on these instructions to their teachers. In interacting with their students, the NSC and the sociocultural contexts of their schools, teachers apply their practical knowledge to the NSC, resulting in a differentiated curriculum. Therefore, several versions of the enacted curriculum possibly exist across classrooms and schools, potentially impacting the enactment of the NSC. Teachers' interactions with students also help to determine the version of the curriculum they implement. Here, several factors could be at play. For example, teachers may decide that students cannot manage the prescribed curriculum based on their interactions with them, resulting in the enactment of a different version. However, the significant takeaway is that meanings and perceptions reflect interactions within a given context, and, as I have argued above, culture plays a vital role in the meaning-making process. When taken together, these individual and collective meaning-making activities throughout the implementation and enactment processes reflect the justification for using symbolic interactionism as the primary theory underlying the theoretical perspective. Furthermore, the extent to which teachers' mediation or modification of the NSC has affected its enactment and their reasons for modifying it forms an integral part of my inquiry.

3.4.2 THE OTHER CONCEPTS IN THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The literature review indicates that several factors combine to influence education and curriculum reform, which was the case with the MOEY's implementation of the NSC. These factors form part of the theoretical perspective. Among them is the influence of global forces on education reform. This influence is partly due to the flow of ideas and culture and partly to the funding arrangements with supranational organisations like the IDB and World Bank to provide the capital to undertake these reforms. Jamaica has had a longstanding relationship with both organisations, and they were involved in funding the education reform programme that resulted in the design and implementation of the NSC.

The spread of learner-centred pedagogy reflects, in part, the influence of these supranational organisations and the flow of ideas and culture, which Sahlberg (2012) calls the GERM. Despite the absence of a universal consensus on the practical meaning of learner-centred pedagogy, teachers are generally expected

to give students greater autonomy over their learning. This expectation bears significance to the MOEY's implementation of the NSC.

Similarly, Vygotsky's cognitive, Freire's emancipation narrative, and learner-centred pedagogy's preparation narrative are also of practical significance to the study as they form part of the MOEY's motivations for implementing the NSC.

Regarding enacting the NSC, Mullis and Martin (2019) stress that the curriculum is a live document, which evolves when it gets into schools, as teachers mediate its delivery to students. This process of mediation lies at the heart of this study. It also reflects the institutional and sociocultural factors that help to create the gap between the MOEY's intentions for the NSC and how teachers choose to enact it in their classrooms.

Finally, Elbaz's theory of teachers' practical knowledge acts as the prism or lens through which the study explores their mediation activities in the classroom. As I discussed in the review of literature, the five categories of teachers' practical knowledge are (1) their knowledge of self, (2) of the social milieu of teaching, (3) of the subject matter, (4) curriculum development and (5) instruction.

Along with Blumer's symbolic interactionism, the above concepts form the theoretical perspective that underpins and adds to the conceptual framework of this study.

3.5 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: ORIGINS OF MY CRITICAL FRAMEWORK

Maxwell (2012) argues that “the conceptual framework of your study is the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs your research” (p. 222). He agrees with Miles and Huberman (1994) that it “explains...the main things to be studied, the key factors, constraints or variables and the presumed relationships among them” (p. 18). However, Maxwell (2012) distinguishes his view about what the conceptual framework is, contending that it also includes “the actual ideas and beliefs that you hold about the phenomenon to be studied” (p. 222). Therefore, the conceptual framework “ultimately raises questions about who you are” (Ravitch and Riggan, 2012, p.7). This observation suggests that the researcher's axiology or values influence what

is studied and the methods used to study it (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 22; Guba and Lincoln, 2005, pp. 202-203).

Therefore, the conceptual framework is the blueprint of your study and even predates the first time you put pen to paper or type your first sentence. In this regard, the conceptual framework predates my decision to explore (1) what characterises the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and teachers' understanding of it? (2) what can we learn from how the MOEY policymakers view the enactment of the NSC? (3) what can we learn from how principals view their roles in enacting the NSC in their schools? and (4) what can we learn from some of the practical understandings of teachers about the NSC? Later, these became my research questions.

Oddly enough, the interest underlying my research questions started with my axiology and experiences. For example, seeing first-hand the life-changing chances of quality public education and believing every Jamaican child should have this opportunity. I realise that teachers are essential to making this a reality. After becoming a teacher, education officer, education planner and Chief Inspector of schools, these experiences taught me that many variables in the ecology of schools and the education policy domain determine teachers' and schools' ability to provide it. Therefore, my axiological values and experiences combined to define the research problem.

However, I know that, ontologically, there are multiple ways to see this problem (Twomey-Fosnot, 2005). Therefore, even though I may have a particular view of the research problem, I know the participants may disagree or not see it as a problem. This interpretive or subjective view of knowledge becomes a potpourri of formal and informal theories and ideas of how things work. Here, I used Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism, which speaks about the interactive nature of meaning-making. The fact that the participants in this study, through interactions with self, people, objects and institutions, determine meaning. These meanings are fluid and, therefore, subject to mediation. From the literature review, as stated earlier, I have incorporated globalisation, learner-centred pedagogy, Vygotsky's social constructivism and Freire's critical pedagogy, curriculum definitions and perspectives, the role of sociocultural factors in shaping curriculum and Elbaz's theory of teachers' practical knowledge. The latter

provides the conceptual lens for exploring teachers' practical knowledge. These combine to form the theoretical perspectives and provide the framework for answering the research questions (Ravitch and Riggan, 2012). This conceptual framework mirrors Maxwell's (2012) interactive model because even though "these components may affect and be affected by one another. It does not presuppose any particular order any necessary directionality of influence" (p. 215). Figure 5 illustrates the conceptual framework.

FIGURE 5: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM

AXIOLOGY AND EXPERIENCES		
ONTOLOGY		
EPISTEMOLOGY: SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM		
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: INTERPRETIVISM SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM GLOBALISATION AND EDUCATION REFORM LEARNER-CENTRED PEDAGOGY VYGOTSKY'S SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM FREIRE'S CRITICAL PEDAGOGY (EMANCIPATION NARRATIVE) LEARNER-CENTRED PEDAGOGY'S PREPARATION NARRATIVE CURRICULUM DEFINITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES CURRICULUM ENACTMENT AND THE ROLE OF SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS ELBAZ'S THEORY OF TEACHERS' PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE		
MOEY'S EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NSC	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF SELF	CONCEPTUAL LENS
PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE TEACHING MILIEU	
	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF INSTRUCTIONS	
TEACHERS' ENACTMENT OF THE NSC USING THEIR PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER	
	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT	

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that qualitative research places the researcher in the participant's natural environment to make sense of phenomena through the meanings people assign to them. Similarly, Merriam (2009) argues that qualitative research is about understanding the meanings people have constructed and how they have attempted to make sense of their worlds. However, both characterisations, while not incorrect, are arguably oversimplifications. For example, it is not always the case that qualitative research places the researcher in the participant's natural environment. Plus, sometimes, participants assign implicit meanings that might not be obvious to the researcher.

Nevertheless, neither of the above definitions is incorrect, but a more practical way to view qualitative research is from the perspective of the type of data and its uses. In this regard, Nkwi, Nyamongo and Ryan (2001) suggest that "qualitative research involves any research that uses data that do not indicate ordinal values" to explore or make sense of phenomena (p. 1). For example, these data sets might include text such as interviews or questionnaires or images such as photography or illustrations.

I have adopted a qualitative approach to this research because this position allows participants to tell their stories using their voices. Chandler et al. (2015) argue that "one of the tenets of qualitative research is the emphasis and honouring of its participants' own words as generative of meaning and knowledge" (p.1). This emphasis on honouring participants' words is essential because qualitative research often masks issues of power because there is often an inequality of power between researchers and participants. Therefore, allowing participants to express themselves using their voices mitigates the power imbalance. Furthermore, using participants' voices allows for depth of exploration because it also gives the researcher the flexibility to combine the content of the research with the context. Therefore, in this study, I had the opportunity to highlight nuance and even answer research questions that might have been difficult to answer otherwise (Mason, 2002). As Blumer (1969) points out, "I think logicians would agree that to understand adequately a here and now relation, it

is necessary to understand the here and now context" (p. 131). Allowing the participants in the study to explain the existing context is very useful for understanding the issues surrounding the implementation of the NSC.

4.1 METHODOLOGY

The methodology used to analyse the data is thematic analysis. Nowell et al. (2017) argue that "thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that can be widely used across a range of epistemologies...It is a method for identifying, analysing, organising, describing and reporting themes found in a data set" (p.2). Braun and Clarke (2022) also argue that thematic analysis is a valuable method of data analysis which can yield trustworthy findings. Furthermore, thematic analysis is flexible because it can be used in varying types of research and does not require the solid theoretical knowledge of other approaches, thus making it easier for novice researchers. However, despite these advantages, there are disadvantages mainly because of the lack of substantial literature to guide novice researchers in its use (Nowell et al. 2017).

TABLE 1: ESTABLISHING TRUSTWORTHINESS

STEPS IN THEMATIC ANALYSIS	MEANS OF ESTABLISHING TRUSTWORTHINESS
STEP 1 DATA FAMILIARIZATION	I transcribed the interview data and entered it into the Excel database. I also documented my thoughts about potential codes and themes and edited the classroom observation videos.
STEP 2 GENERATING INITIAL CODES	I began to make comparisons between the interview data and classroom observation data. I adopted the NEI framework to assess classroom observations. For the interview data, I started to make associations between the participants.
STEP 3 SEARCHING FOR THEMES	I continued my examination of the emerging themes and codes while combining my reflections with live memory.
STEP 4 THEME REVIEW	I organised a team of my peers to review the videos from the classroom observations, and their notes were compared with my notes and reflections.
STEP 5 DEFINING AND NAMING THEMES	I reviewed the documentation of the peer review from the videos and made adjustments to the themes.
STEP 6 WRITING THE REPORT	I documented and described the entire process, from compiling the transcripts, and comparing datasets to writing the reports, ensuring that the iterated phases were documented and reviewed for coherence and credibility. Additionally, I recorded the reasons for my analytical choices throughout the study.

I used thematic analyses in this study to maximise time and simplify the data analysis process because of the data's complexity and size. In addition, it has been argued that in qualitative research, the different steps in the process, such as data collection and data analysis, often coincide throughout the process (Creswell, 2007). This was my experience in conducting this study, as I found that although the steps in the processes were distinct, there was considerable overlap because of their interrelated nature. This overlap increased the need to ensure the research processes were rigorous enough to assure an appropriate level of trustworthiness. Stahl and King (2020) argue, "qualitative researchers strive for ... trustworthiness, which means that when readers interpret a written work, they will have a sense of confidence in what the researcher has reported" (p. 26). Table 1 outlines the six steps I took to ensure the trustworthiness of the research process, which were adopted from Nowell et al., 2017. These steps ensured that the resulting conclusions were credible and trustworthy.

4.2 SAMPLE SELECTION

In conducting the study, I used the voices of policymakers, principals and teachers to understand the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and its enactment in the classroom. Given the small-scale nature of the study, I used a purposive sampling technique to select the samples of policymakers, principals and teachers (see Table 2 below). Robson (2011) asserts that the decision to use this approach is based entirely on the researcher's judgment of how the participants would provide the critical information required to answer the research questions and satisfy the requirements of the study. The participants were selected based on the schools, principals and teachers participating in the NSC Pilot and the policymakers instrumental in its design and implementation. The MOEY had selected 47 schools across six education regions for its trial of the NSC before implementing the curriculum in public schools. The MOEY selected schools based on typicality regarding school types, geographical location, social and economic factors and school performance.

I decided to use schools from the Pilot because the schools, principals and teachers participated in MOEY's NSC workshops. The Pilot schools were testing grounds for implementing the NSC, and the MOEY exposed principals and teachers to its content and trained them in its use. In addition, my experience of previous curriculum reforms suggested that the MOEY's implementation and

sensitisation exercise across the general population of schools would be very uneven, creating additional complications for the overall conduct of the research.

TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND SCHOOLS

MOEY OFFICIALS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS	REGION	SECONDARY	PRIMARY
	4	4	1	2	2
	4	4	2	2	2
	4	4	3	2	2
	2	2	4	1	1
	4	4	5	2	2
	2	2	6	1	1
8	20	20	6	10	10

Initially, I selected 23 of the 47 schools in the NSC Pilot or roughly half of the Pilot, using purposive and convenience sampling techniques (Robson, 2011). Adopting this approach was a convenient way to access the readily available pool of schools that the MOEY had selected to Pilot the NSC, representing the cross-section of schools in the public education system. In exercising my judgment careful to limit bias in the selection. However, three schools provided teachers who did not satisfy the interview criteria, and I removed them from the study. One was an intern, and two had less than three years of teaching service. This change did not affect the sample's viability, as the remaining 20 schools represented the six education regions and rural, urban, primary and secondary schools. Aside from this, the main criterion was that the 20 schools represented the different school types in Jamaica. For example, all boys, all girls and multigrade schools. Each principal was a part of the sample, and I asked them to select a teacher from their staff who had participated in the NSC's Pilot, experienced using the ROSE or RPC and had a minimum of three years of classroom experience. As mentioned earlier, I asked the principals to select the teachers, as this placed me at arm's length from the process, given that the NEI had inspected all the schools at least once over the last five years. Again, the teachers were volunteers who

could opt out of the study at any time they wished. In addition to the principals and teachers, the purposive sample of participants included eight MOEY policymakers involved in various stages of the design and implementation of the NSC (Table 2). The process for gaining consent for students to be filmed was incorporated in the general consent gained from MOEY and principals to conduct the fieldwork, i.e., classroom observations to include filming the teaching and learning episodes. As is expected in Jamaica, permissions were granted by the MOEY and individual school principals acting in loco parentis (acting in their parents' place). The University College London provided ethical consent for the study.

4.3 DATA COLLECTION

The data collection methods used in this study were: interviews of MOEY officials, principals and teachers; classroom observations of the 20 teachers and video recordings of each teaching a lesson; and documentary analysis of critical texts relating to the NSC (Table 2).

The interviews of the MOEY officials, principals and teachers were semi-structured, allowing interviewees to express their opinions (Robson, 2011). The interview instruments were pre-tested and tweaked to ensure efficacy. I gave each participant an opt-in/opt-out letter (see an example of a signed copy of an opt-in/opt-out letter in Appendix 4 and interview sheets in Appendices 5-7). I also ensured the participants' anonymity, using pseudonyms instead of their real names (for example, Teacher 1 was Angela and Teacher 20 was Victor, see Appendix 10).

I administered the interviews of the MOEY policymakers in one sitting, which were conducted at the MOEY Headquarters. The interviews of principals and teachers were conducted on-site at the schools, and where necessary, follow-up was done via telephone. During the interviews, I had the opportunity to ask the interviewees follow-up or probing questions. Thus, I could clarify and capture critical details, which might not have been so if I had used another method to interview the participants. However, the process was very time-consuming because of the

large number of participants, which is one of the drawbacks of using this method (Bryman, 2012; Newby, 2010). I recorded and transcribed the interviews (see an example of a complete transcript for one of the interviewees in Appendix 8).

Regarding the classroom observations, I observed each teacher selected in the sample teaching a lesson. Each observation took place before the sit-down interview with the teacher, which facilitated an understanding of whether their teaching practice was consistent with the views and opinions expressed. Although the principals selected the teachers, they gave each teacher a consent form stating that I would record the interviews, video record the lessons observed and use their anonymised quotes in my publications. All the teachers gave their written consent to these conditions. At any point in the study, teachers could discontinue the interview or the lesson observation, and they knew they had the option to do this. These classroom observations were an essential aspect of the data collection process, as they provided a basis to compare what teachers said with what they did in their classroom practice. I did not restrict them, and they chose the lessons. Robson (2011) asserts that "you do not ask people about their views, feelings, or attitudes; you watch what they do and listen to what they say" (p. 316).

Similarly, Adler and Adler (1994, cited in Angrosino, 2005, p. 729) state that observation is "the fundamental base of all research methods". The classroom observations were mostly 45-90 minutes, using a standardised observation sheet (Appendix 9). As an experienced observer, I could also observe teachers' and students' myriad facial expressions and other social cues during the lesson, making analysing their behaviours easier.

The data from lesson observations were critical in enabling the evaluation of Elbaz's (1983) theory of teachers' practical knowledge using the standardised observation sheet. The observations were a rich source of information to draw inferences. This process was sometimes a delicate task, given my role as an insider. Therefore, I reminded teachers that I was only an observer. Teachers' classroom management techniques gave clues about the level of trust between them and their students, and students' participation indicated their confidence. For example, teachers who are comfortable with students who probe and see it as a part of learning are less likely to keep them quiet with the threat of

punishment. The content and quality of questions teachers asked their students also yielded an understanding of teachers' and students' knowledge of the subject matter, the level of critical thinking and problem-solving teachers required of their students, and how students responded to these expectations.

In respect of video and audio recordings, Peräkylä (2005) argues that these forms "provide the richest possible data for the study of talk and interaction today" (p. 875). The field notes, and the videotapes of the lessons were valuable sources of reflection and review. Both provided the option of regularly reviewing the lessons and augmented my ability to recognise cues that would signify, for example, teachers' use of practical knowledge and the ease with which students interact with their teachers. The recordings also provide opportunities to view the participants in their natural environments and settings (Asan and Montague, 2014). However, despite these advantages, the videographer's presence may make some participants uncomfortable (Atkinson et al., 2003). Therefore, the researcher should ensure that participants are comfortable and if the source of discomfort is known, then the researcher should adopt appropriate measures to reassure them. There may also be instances where participants decide to play to the camera or put on a show. In this case, an objective data assessment should reveal instances of exaggeration or attempts to mislead.

4.4 CODING AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

I analysed the data over several weeks. It was an iterative process, which included transcribing the recorded interviews into text. The length of the process was due to the extensive database size. And the fact that I returned to the database with each new insight to find possible interpretations. The first step in the data analysis was to develop a practicable and appropriate coding system. The coding is "as much about enacting through the epistemic profile of the researcher as it is about a discovery" (Hedlund-de-Witt, 2013, p. 2). However, the emphasis remained on discovery and finding answers using the participants' voices (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The database size led to the decision to use the structural coding methodology. I developed the preliminary codes from the interview questions and activities, which informed the thematic descriptors (Robson, 2011; Saldana, 2009; Namey et al., 2008). There are several advantages to using thematic coding analysis. It is very flexible and easy to learn; the results are easily communicated, which is very useful with large databases

as it provides a practical means of summarising significant features in the database. The main disadvantage is that its flexibility "can inhibit the researcher trying to decide what aspects of their data to focus on" (Robson, 2011, p. 477). I used Microsoft Excel to help with the coding and analysis, which did not compromise accuracy.

The thematic descriptors also made it easier to identify, label and index texts in the responses (Table 3 below). I placed 15 thematic descriptors under four finalised themes: (1) policy drivers of the NSC describing the impetus for changing the curriculum, which includes the global and local drivers; (2) principals' views and role in the implementation of the NSC describing the principals' expectations for the NSC and their role in its implementation; (3) teachers' practical knowledge and views about the NSC covering, among others, teachers' philosophies, their views on teaching, how students learn, and their views on the implementation of the NSC; and (4) classroom observations of lessons. These themes provided broad categories for data analysis and from which to derive the findings and conclusions (see Table 3 below).

TABLE 3: SYSTEM OF CODING

PRELIMINARY CODES	THEMATIC DESCRIPTORS	FINALISED THEMES
POLICYMAKERS' INTERVIEWS	THE GLOBAL INFLUENCES AND CONCERNS ABOUT THE NSC	POLICY DRIVERS OF THE NSC
	THE MOEY'S MOTIVATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NSC	
	MOEY'S POLICY EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NSC	
PRINCIPALS' INTERVIEWS	PRINCIPALS' EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NSC	PRINCIPALS' VIEWS AND ROLE IN THE ENACTMENT OF THE NSC
	PRINCIPALS' ROLE IN THE ENACTMENT OF THE NSC	
TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF SELF	ELBAZ'S THEORY OF TEACHERS' PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE
	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE TEACHING MILIEU	
	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER	
	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF INSTRUCTIONS	
	TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT (NSC)	
TEACHERS' CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS AND VIDEO RECORDINGS	TEACHERS' CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES	CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS
	THE CONTENT AND QUALITY OF QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	
	STUDENTS' CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS WITH TEACHERS AND PEERS	
	EXPRESSIONS OF MUTUAL RESPECT	
	TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES	

4.5 INSIDERLINESS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.5.1 INSIDERLINESS

As mentioned earlier, I know that the Chief Inspector's role carries a high public profile, and my position as an insider in the education system might cause anxiety for principals and teachers. Consequently, the question of my positionality and its possible impact on the principals and teachers from whom I expected to collect credible data was an area of concern for me during the design and fieldwork stage of the study. Bukamal (2022) argues that given the significance of positionality in the relationship between the researcher and participants, the researcher's biography and cultural background should be made explicit very early in the study. Therefore, I wrote letters to the principals of the twenty schools selected, introducing myself as a student researcher. The letters outlined what I intended to study and its purpose and invited them to participate.

Regarding the teachers in the sample, I inserted a layer between them and me by limiting my initial contact with them. Therefore, I asked the school principals to choose teachers willing to volunteer to gather data supporting my research. I indicated that I would observe and record the teachers teaching a lesson. I also outlined that it would not be binding for them to remain participants, if they were uncomfortable. In the same letter, I indicated I would interview the teacher outside the classroom after the lesson observation.

All the principals agreed to participate, and we also decided on tentative dates on which I would visit the school to do the fieldwork. This approach was my way of not putting the school under any strain to prepare for me. We also agreed that if teachers were initially willing to participate but later felt uncomfortable, alternates would be okay once they met the minimum criteria. That is, teachers should have at least three years of experience as a practitioner and be trained or sensitised in using the NSC. Like the letters to the principals, in the letters to the teachers, I outlined the purpose of my research and my role as a student researcher. In addition, I prepared consent forms and told all the participants that they were volunteers and could opt out or in at any time.

In conducting the fieldwork, reducing participant anxiety was at the forefront of my mind. In Jamaica, MOEY professionals usually wear suits. Therefore, I wore

business casuals to strike the happy medium and set them at ease. In our discussions, I used light conversational tones that were reassuring. When I entered the school, I went directly to the principal's office, and again, I discussed the purpose of the research and the scope of the activities I planned to undertake.

In the lessons, I introduced myself, sat at the rear of the room and never interrupted the teacher or students. If I got the occasional glance from a teacher, I smiled reassuringly. I had an assistant video-record the classroom observations, and teachers knew beforehand that I would do this.

Once teachers completed their lessons, I walked over to them, and they chose where I would conduct the interview. I had asked permission to record the conversations to listen for any hidden meanings or inferences I missed in my discussions.

Having taken these steps to reduce the effects of the power relationship and the fact that I am an insider, there is still no guarantee that these steps will set every participant at ease to provide the information I require for the study. Nevertheless, insiderliness has some distinct advantages and disadvantages. (Mercer (2007) acknowledges the challenges that education researchers face in investigating their place of work. She recognises the continuous nature of these challenges and the need for research to manage them. As she puts it:

On the one hand, [insiders] often enjoy freer access, stronger rapport and a deeper, more readily-available frame of shared reference with which to interpret the data they collect; on the other hand, however, they have to contend with their own preconceptions, and those their informants have formed about them as a result of their shared history (p. 13).

As the then Chief Inspector, I could visit the schools and examine relevant data about them in the MOEY. As an insider, I also had first-hand knowledge of the public education system. Therefore, I had to balance and manage these variables to ensure the trustworthiness of the research's findings.

4.5.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

My role as Chief Inspector is a potential opportunity and a potential challenge. On the one hand, I have access to MOEY officials, schools, principals, teachers,

NSC-related documentation, decades-long experience working in the public education system and the direct insights accompanying this. However, on the other hand, there is the associated danger of bias. In this case, truth is defined as my interpretation of the realities expressed by the participants in relation to their views on the subject matter. Therefore, I sought to engage the participants in ways that inspired their confidence and trust in me as a researcher. I was aware that their personal experiences shaped their understandings and that these may or may not accord with my opinions. I encouraged them to be open and candid in my discussions. And that I would respect their sincerity and report their views using their voices

Consequently, I was guided by the principles of the British Educational Research Association (BERA), and the highest level of integrity was maintained throughout the study. In addition, I received ethical approval from the UCL Research Ethics Committee to conduct the study. I also ensured that participants understood what the research was about before they gave their written consent to be part of the study and that they were aware that they could withdraw this consent at any stage. In processing the data, I took precautions to protect sensitive personal biographic data by anonymising the participants by assigning them pseudonyms. All steps were taken in accordance with the Jamaica Data Protection Act, 2020.

These steps included ensuring anonymity, informed consent, and issues relating to the confidentiality of participants, who are officials of the MOEY, and serving principals and teachers in the public education system. These matters were significant to my research, and as such, I sought to minimise the risk to the participants and preserve the integrity of the research in the following ways:

1. I wrote to the MOEY outlining the research purpose and sources of data and sought and received permission for its use;
2. The data that were collected were stored in the UCL databases for 10 years and in my database, protected by a password as opposed to the MOEY's network for the period of the research and will be destroyed once the assessment exercise and related activities are completed;
3. No further use will be made of the data; and

4. The findings did not speak to specific individuals or schools. Instead, the participants were referred to using pseudonyms, and as such, their anonymity was also preserved.

I also acknowledge my position as Chief Inspector of Schools and authority within the MOEY and the consequent responsibilities of trust and integrity that this carries with it. Accordingly, in my data gathering, analysis and general conduct of the study, I attempted to be fair and impartial, reported the truth and upheld the confidentiality of the data sources. I also acted within the confines of the laws of Jamaica. For example, as a public servant, I am guided by the rules governing the use of sensitive information not in the public domain.

Having complied with all the ethical rules, I reserve the right to openly report any findings from this study.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF DATA

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the main findings of the study using the 15 subthemes and the four primary themes that form the framework for the presentation of data to answer the research questions. In the previous chapter, I described these 15 subthemes and four themes, and the excerpts from the policymakers, principals and teachers' interviews best illustrate their views. Additionally, I transcribed their interviews verbatim using standard Jamaican English. Thus, there are some differences in expression and word usage compared to British and American English.

I describe, in turn, the policymakers, principals and teachers' interviews centred around the policy drivers of the NSC and the MOEY's policy expectations for the NSC, principals' views and role in the implementation of the NSC and teachers' practical knowledge and views of the NSC, respectively.

5.1 POLICY DRIVERS OF THE NSC

I selected the group of policymakers because of their roles in formulating the policy direction of the NSC. All were involved in the process, from the initial curriculum design to its implementation across the public education system. It was also essential to determine the primary considerations that drove or informed the MOEY's decision to use a standardised curricular solution to address existing problems in the education system ('policy drivers'). The findings on global influences, policy motivations and policy expectations regarding the implementation of the NSC are as follows.

5.1.1 GLOBAL INFLUENCE AND CONCERNS ABOUT THE NSC

All eight policymakers recognised global influences on how the MOEY formulated and articulated the NSC, and they referred to successful learner-centred reforms in other countries. For example, policymaker 6 argued that Singapore and Finland took the vital step of making education a national priority. Nevertheless, two policymakers believed that the MOEY should exercise caution in adopting foreign education policies, emphasising the significance of managing the implementation process to reflect contextual or cultural factors. For example,

policymaker 2 stated, "countries that adopt learner-centred education do not confine the principles to the education sectors, and the culture is usually consistent with the programmes". Similarly, policymaker 4 argued that "adaptation of approaches must be carefully examined and tested to determine its suitability to countries' needs".

Three policymakers believed that the MOEY did not clearly state the policy direction so that there was a roadmap for all to follow:

The policy document has not been shared...The education policy needs to be articulated and not left to the interpretation of various groups. This affects the outcomes and leads to the splintering of knowledge. The NSC espouses the constructivist approach [and] teachers...need additional training and support to be able to maximise students' learning, especially in multi-grade settings. (Policymaker 3)

The policymakers appear to use the expression of 'learner-centred' and 'constructivist' interchangeably. For example, the NSC policy document uses both concepts as different ideas; however, the document uses learner-centred pedagogy to characterise the NSC. Policymakers in the sample use the concepts as if both are the same, possibly because the early progressive movements' child-centred approaches reflect today's constructivist approaches (Windschitl, 2002).

5.1.2 THE MOEY'S MOTIVATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NSC

Six policymakers believed that the inequality in the public education system was one of the lingering ill effects of Jamaica's colonial past. For example, policymaker 1 stated that "the system adopted from the British...traditional grammar system caused some students to be left behind". In commenting on the unequal nature of the public education system, some of the policymakers were explicit:

Little or lack of education for all Jamaicans before Independence and even after Independence in the earlier part, the social class structure prevented the majority of Jamaicans from accessing quality education, as many were disenfranchised (sic). (Policymaker 6)

Generally, policymakers agreed that the inequalities of opportunities in the public education system hurt those students from the lower stratum of Jamaican society,

placing them at a significant disadvantage concerning attainment. Therefore, they were of the view that the State had an obligation to address this:

Not all students are exposed to the same experiences and thus, inequalities...based on students' backgrounds and communities. However, these students must be allowed to maximise their potential, as the system has an obligation to the nation. (Policymaker 3)

Six policymakers expressed confidence that the NSC's learner-centred orientation would improve students' learning and provide them with the essential skills for their progress. This confidence was in keeping with their view that knowledge did not only reside with teachers and that they should give students opportunities to share their viewpoints. Contrast this perspective with the opposing view that the teacher is the stage sage, which might produce contrasting results. As Policymaker 8 suggests:

The traditional sage-on-the-stage approach has not produced students who are critical thinkers and problem solvers.

A 21st-century learner must be equipped with the skills of problem-solving, critical thinking, integrity, caring, and knowledge, and be able to transform this knowledge and apply it to solving problems. Getting these skills requires the constructivist approach (sic). (Policymaker 3)

Moreover, four policymakers stated that improvements in the quality of human capital were a precondition for the country's development. They argued that a more literate and educated society would create social, economic, and political stability:

The development of the country is dependent on the level of education of its people. The curriculum must meet the needs of the 21st-century demands. (Policymaker 3)

The policymakers did not define what they meant by 21st-century education or 21st-century demands, nor was the NSC policy document clearer. Instead, both expressions were used abstractly to suggest that the education approaches should provide solutions for the challenges of the present and the immediate future. Moreover, policymakers did not attempt to provide evidence of a well-informed viewpoint on how the MOEY would achieve 21st-century education.

Policymakers also voiced their concerns about the decline in values and attitudes within Jamaican society, and two of them believed that the NSC would make a positive difference in this regard:

A decline in values and attitudes gives rise to problems [which in turn] gives rise to inequality, conflicts, identity crisis, etc. (Policymaker 2)

5.1.3 THE MOEY'S POLICY EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NSC

All the policymakers were optimistic that the NSC would succeed despite the perceived shortcomings in certain areas. They believed that students would be better engaged, self-directed, able to function within collaborative teams, and in general, take greater responsibility for their learning:

Students [would become] more engaged, enjoy learning, boys more engaged, generate ideas, [and have] greater confidence, to break down socio-economic barriers (sic). (Policymaker 1)

Despite the policymakers' optimism, as I pointed out in chapter 2, the absence of a definition for learner-centred pedagogy within the Jamaican context and the lack of necessary details in the policy document to guide teachers pose significant challenges to enacting the NSC.

All policymakers believed that teachers were integral to the transition from a teacher-centred pedagogical approach to a learner-centred one, and this is a critical factor that requires attention:

Teachers would play a more facilitative role, and they will have to spend more time planning to meet the various learning needs of the children. (Policymaker 7)

Teachers would need to give more power and control to students in terms of classroom activities. (Policymaker 8)

Teachers are now apprehensive, but gradually they will embrace, adapt, and accept when they see the value. (Policymaker 1)

However, six policymakers recognised that the reforms would take time, effort, and additional resources. For example, four of them believed that teachers required additional training and support to facilitate the implementation process.

This support is in addition to the traditional in-school support that the MOEY provides:

The government will need to provide resources that will aid the curriculum implementation and ongoing in-service training for teachers. (Policymaker 8)

Additionally, only two policymakers believed that the MOEY should use data to inform the decision-making process in implementing the NSC. However, their responses seeming lack a reliance on data to support their opinions and perhaps this absence speaks to the importance that policymakers attach to the use of data in the decision-making process:

The Ministry should use data to drive the decisions, and compare outcomes from other systems and make informed decisions. (Policymaker 4)

Also, one policymaker felt that the MOEY should involve stakeholders in the implementation process to ensure its success:

Stakeholders should be involved in the process because they are the system's watchdogs. (Policymaker 1)

Despite acknowledging the need to involve stakeholders, there was no evidence that policymakers regarded teachers as stakeholders and that the MOEY should engage them to ensure success in enacting the NSC in classrooms. Instead, on the contrary, the interviews suggest that policymakers were focused on teacher reform and getting teachers in lockstep with the NSC rather than engaging them to try and tap into the practical knowledge that they might have. Similarly, there was no evidence that policymakers recognised the challenges that teacher reform entails, the complex and prolonged nature of this type of reform and the fact that seldom if ever, is this achieved.

5.2 PRINCIPALS' VIEWS AND ROLE IN THE ENACTMENT OF THE NSC

I chose the 20 principals in the sample because they are administrative and curriculum leaders for their schools. In addition, despite the existence of their school boards, principals often interact directly with the MOEY. Therefore, their active participation in the implementation of the NSC was vital to its success.

5.2.1 PRINCIPALS' EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NSC

An analysis of the interview data showed that 14 principals said they supported the MOEY's decision to implement the NSC. For example, Principal 3 characterise his support for the NSC as "pushing it":

I was one of those people pushing it. I have been teaching for 24 years. Great efforts are being made to ensure implementation. I have never seen it being pushed so much. (Principal 3)

It is a very good move by the Ministry, especially in regard to the differential instruction for each child or group of children. (Principal 10)

I consider it a step in the right direction, giving students an opportunity to be more fully engaged in their learning. (Principal 11)

The MOEY's efforts in this approach are to allow children to have autonomy over their learning. When children are allowed to explore, discover, and be involved in their own learning, they will be more open, receptive, and responsible. (Principal 13)

Some principals suggested that the implementation of the NSC was overdue:

This is advisable, as researchers and education practitioners have posited for years the merits of this approach. Children learn more by doing and are constructivist learners when actively participating in the teaching and learning process. In this information age, the teacher cannot be the reservoir of knowledge but the facilitator of learning. (Principal 15)

The principals' suggestions of constructivist learning as synonymous with learner-centred pedagogy indicate oversimplification. This generalisation points to the absence of clear pedagogical guidelines in the NSC policy document, and this was a recurring feature in the interviews of the policymakers and principals. Principals also expressed the view that the implementation of the NSC would improve students' learning:

The efforts of the Ministry to encourage learner-centred approaches in schools will encourage students to be critical thinkers while they take charge of their own learning. It will also encourage them to reflect on what they are learning and how they are learning. (Principal 16)

Principal 16 use of the phrase "take charge of their learning" reflects the view that the MOEY expects teachers to allow students to become active participants in

their learning. However, as I said earlier, the policy document never articulated what this means practically. Therefore, principals were expressing their interpretations which were also lacking in specifics.

Despite the general optimism expressed, six of the principals stated that they had concerns about the availability of resources to support the implementation of the NSC, the short period within which the MOEY expected to complete the process and whether the NSC would cater to the needs of weaker students:

The curriculum meets the required learning outcomes of our students. It is being supported by the teachers, they are frustrated by the limited resources and the implementation process... Even though the teachers see the relevance and merit, they are challenged by the limited resources and conflicting information. They are frustrated as they must rewrite the curriculum to meet the needs of their students, even though they are being bombarded by the term 'standardised'. (Principal 18)

The implementation is rushed, as major changes need more time. (Principal 6)

The MOEY should be commended for the initiative to promote learner-centred classrooms through the NSC...There must be established means of testing and catering to the needs of those students who are a part of the regular system but do not with the capacity to benefit from the NSC. (Principal 20)

Among those principals who voiced concerns about the availability of resources, not everyone was of the view that this would necessarily prevent its successful implementation:

Cause even yesterday (sic), I was explaining to the Grade 1 teacher, "Yes, you are going to have some slow ones, you are going to have very fast ones—geniuses. You have to plan ahead". I plan to have more staff meetings this year coming than any other year (sic). So, I must implement anything I get I must implement. (Principal 5)

To get teachers to buy-in... one excuse is that we do not have resources...but resources don't have to be technological, they don't have to be internet, but they are there in nature, and the type of curriculum allows for these discoveries, for the children to discover on their own (Principal 3).

The principals, like the policymakers, saw themselves as extensions of the MOEY: “anything I get, I must implement” (Principal 5). There was little or no evidence that principals saw themselves as instructional leaders responsible for ensuring the NSC’s coherence and relevance and teachers’ participation and engagement in shaping the curriculum.

5.2.2 PRINCIPALS’ ROLE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NSC

Despite differences in opinions regarding the availability of resources to support the curriculum, all 20 principals indicated that it was their responsibility to implement the NSC. In addition, they had to support their teachers in transitioning to learner-centred approaches. However, five principals stated that overseeing the transition was their greatest challenge:

There was scepticism by some teachers because it’s foreign and far-fetched, the first world...and the Ministry is forcing something on them. (Principal 6)

The principal’s goal is to ensure effective teaching takes place. His overall supervision is key in making this venture a success. However, the biggest challenge is changing the culture of the teachers. For example, the chalk-and-talk approach. (Principal 10)

I will have to supervise, I will carry out continuous workshops, which is a must because teachers must always be on top. (Principal 5)

I will make myself an expert in the policy, so I can aid my teachers. (Principal 8)

The principal’s role includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that teachers comply with the required standards, monitoring and support... mobilising stakeholders to embrace the initiative and ensuring its success...through parental engagement and meaningful partnerships. (Principal 20)

The above excerpts indicate overwhelming support for implementing the NSC. However, several principals expressed concerns regarding its timeliness because of the existing resource and other constraints within the public education system.

5.3 TEACHERS’ PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND VIEWS OF THE NSC

As mentioned in the previous chapter, I gave the principals the criteria for selecting the teacher participants, and they chose one teacher per school from those teachers who volunteered. Overall, the 20 teachers appear reasonably

representative regarding the length of service and practical exposure to the learner-centred RPC, ROSE and NSC. They were also representative of the teaching force at the primary and secondary levels of the public education system across the six education regions. In interviewing them, it was essential to find out who they were as individuals and to have an opportunity to explain how they viewed their role as teachers. The teachers' years of experience ranged from three to 30 years, and all had undergraduate qualifications. Four also had postgraduate qualifications (see Appendix 11).

For example, Devon (pseudonym) believed that "teaching should be relevant to students' everyday experiences". Jacqueline stated that "all her students should reach their full potential, no matter what level they are", and Victor saw "teaching as a holistic way of educating our youth". The complete description of the sample of teachers and their philosophies and pseudonyms is in Appendix 11.

5.3.1 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF SELF

The data showed that 13 teachers expressed that the primary source of their pedagogical philosophies was their own experiences as students. They reported that these experiences also helped to inform their choice of profession. Four said that factors within the ecologies of schools (school leadership, mentoring, school culture, etc.) influenced them. For three teachers, the sources were exposure to socio-cultural experiences other than the early experiences of being a student. Among the 13 whose teachers influenced their choice of profession were:

Yes. Mr L was an excellent teacher. Of course, we wish that we were in his class, but you know, he was very stern but we admired that. I personally admired his sternness. So, it was a combination of my Grade 6 teacher Ms H and Mr L, at that time that I wanted these two. (Carlton)

When I was leaving high school, I never liked mathematics at all. It was not until I went to MICO that I started to appreciate mathematics...it developed over time, and what I saw my teachers doing...and this drove me to the constructivist approach and active learning...I moved from hating it to being nominated as Mathematics Teacher of the Year nationally. (Wayne)

Beverley and Lorna transformed what was, particularly for Lorna, an unpleasant childhood experience into something valuable for their students.

Your teacher would come to class, you would take out your textbook and you would turn to page whatever, and that was it. And, I was a good language student. When I came to...I said I do not want my classes to be based on textbooks and to be 'boring'...So, I think I took that from my personal experience. (Beverley)

I thought I could never do math...our math teacher comes to class he'd be like (sic), "you're N.P.E, you're N.P.E!" And, we're like, "Sir what does that mean?" And, he said, "you are non-progressive elements" ...And what I know—what I do with my students each time they do something, I commend them. (Lorna)

Devon reflected on teachers' tendency to teach as they had been taught and then on his own practice. He explained:

I have to make an effort, and I think it's the same for many teachers—make an effort to engage in student-centred learning. It has to be a deliberate effort because the natural tendency of a teacher – I'm speaking broadly here, especially teachers who grew up in a certain era, is to teach as how we have been taught, which is sort of a lecture sort of chalk and talk kind of thing. But I have to make a deliberate effort when I am planning a lesson for the students to basically be able to interact and to understand the concepts I am teaching easier.

Fay declared that: ...in my high school, I was turned off from maths by my High School Teacher, so I always say that if I should walk along that path, I don't want to be anything like that math teacher. Ursula explained:

When I just started [teaching] and even based on my personal experience growing upthe chalk and talk. You know, we used to get things, but the interest of the current generation is so different.....their attention span is so short. And, if you continue with the old way of teaching, you are going to lose some of them [students].

The important thing to note is that both positive and negative experiences influence career choice, as these choices are usually the sum of experiences, previous social interactions and needs.

Even Elizabeth first said:

Nothing in my schooling brought me to this philosophy because when I was going to school I learnt because I needed to learn, not because of teachers taught or what they were doing. (Elizabeth)

However, in a follow-up question, she admitted:

When I was at primary school there was this teacher who I emulated. She was like a mother. She was the boss in the classroom. When she steps in, all talking cease (sic). And, she was

rough, but at the same time we knew that she loved us. And I always said that if ever I go into the classroom, I wanted to be like her. (Elizabeth)

Carlton also said that in addition to his teachers (L and H), it was an experience with his students that helped to shape his subsequent practice:

When I left college and started teaching at an inner-city school, there were some boys who 'breathe math', but they could not do English, and they were troublemakers. So, I made a deal with them, I teach you English, and you teach me math. At first, when I said that, they thought I was crazy, but afterwards they realised that I was serious. And they used to stay up late after school, and...they were excellent teachers. And I used their methods and teach other people, and I realised they got the concept very well. (Carlton).

Carlton's experience was a very good example of teacher-student collaboration. Those teachers who were influenced by factors within their schools' ecologies included:

All right, you have mentors as you go along. So, while on, I met a few that make you want to go and keep going. Then the school where I was placed to do my teaching practice, that lady was awesome. (Helen)

I have a good rapport with my literacy coordinator for the school and the math coach for the school. I try to develop a good relationship with them so that I can call if I have an issue. I ask people to come in and watch me to see my low points and high points. (Karen)

Some teachers were influenced by other types of sociocultural experiences, including:

I had my parents...who, even though we did not have lunch money, we had to go to school every day... my father was a policeman, and my mother was a housewife, and there were six of us. All of us now who are not nurse or teacher, all of us now realise the importance of education. The same way I feel I want my students--because the students from this area are from the typical background that I was brought up from. (sic) (Angela)

Well I can testify two things': I did common entrance, I considered myself a master student from primary school. However, I was unsuccessful and I do not know why...that is what gives me the motivation to assist other students...Not only that my son was going to primary school and he was doing alright for the first part of the school year until he reached grade 3...So, I went to his teacher and asked her why my child was placed last in his grade...she could not present anything to me in a document, any folder, or a portfolio of

my child. So, based on that, I decided that I would never have treated somebody else's child in that manner. So, I put out everything to ensure that the students that are given to me reach their full potential. I work with my son and his teacher in grade 6, and he is now at a [traditional high school] ...in grade 9. So, I know that we, as teachers have to do our jobs efficiently so as not to short-change the students. (Jacqueline)

5.3.2 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE TEACHING MILIEU

Five teachers expressed an awareness of their teaching milieu and incorporated this knowledge into their relationships with their students. In other words, they understood the classroom context, the impact of the social setting on teaching and learning, how to enhance the teaching and learning experience, and how to approach and engage their students:

One is modelling. I model certain behaviours that are appropriate behaviours for students to learn. Even simple things such as just passing a student on campus and saying good morning, and good afternoon, interacting with them, just to teach them that this is acceptable behaviour, rather than as a teacher I am demanding it from them but not returning it. Another thing is to use practical everyday activities as a means of teaching. So, for example, some of my students they like hands-on because I teach a set of slower students presently, and they like to do things where they interact with each other and so on, not just sitting in a classroom. So, taking them outside to plant stuff. While we are planting, we are talking and interacting, you know, doing little craft work and stuff like that. I find that these are means of helping them to stay focused. And enjoy the learning process more than just sitting in a classroom daily. (Devon)

My interaction with them and my classroom is a 'talking classroom'. It is not just writing alone; we discuss, we have presentations and based on how you see them deliver themselves, sometimes you know that definitely...learning has taken place... they have journals that they enter daily. ...Yes, test scores are very important, but that alone cannot be it, for me, it can't be. (Karen)

5.3.3 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER

Classroom observations confirm that most teachers know their subject matter, and the classroom observations confirm this. However, because of the overlap with their knowledge of instruction, in many instances, they made only oblique references to their discrete subject areas. Icylyn and Jacqueline are exceptions:

Okay, well, coming up as a student long ago, we didn't have much technology in the class, so I learnt with the kinesthetic and tactile...
... a lot of labs; Biology, Chemistry, Physics, a lot of labs and

demonstrations and I liked. I enjoyed that, and even with Geography and so on, I loved – I enjoyed the field trips. It brings more experience and exposure, and things become more real, and for me, I appreciated that, so I incorporated more of that in my own teaching. Now I know that teaching does not stop there because the students also have to have notes. They have to have information.... and I usually –love to put the slides together, and with my slides, I usually put a video. Once I put up my uhm notes, I usually accompany those notes with some sort of simulation. Even if I ask the child to do a presentation, they must put in a drama piece or something. So, I like to put those as well because it brings concepts to life. (Icylyn)

Give them something to manipulate, give them the things to see the charts or use the multimedia projector. I mean getting things that they are interested in because, if you know, I was going to do the chart with the boys because you know the gender. I was going to do a chart with the ball, but then the time was going. (Devon)

Yes, because I would allow them to, but then I realised that time was going. I didn't want it to be too drawn out, so yes. When the inspectors were here I did a lesson, and I just used the marbles. I collect the marbles from them when they are playing with them in class, so I have them in the math corner. So, I was doing like mean and mode and all a that, and the whole them come up, and we draw we ring in the class and me down on my knee a lick marble, I relate to them. Go down to their level, and I guess that is it. Learner-centred is just allowing the students to be actively involved in the lesson, and the teacher acts as a facilitator, not the one that is doing or telling. The students are actively involved in their learning and are discovering things on their own with the teacher as a guide. (Jacqueline)

5.3.4 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF INSTRUCTION

Fourteen teachers from the sample stated they favoured collaborative teaching approaches, while six said they preferred significant teacher participation or were seemingly unsure. Despite the lack of clarity in the NSC policy document regarding what constitutes collaboration within a classroom setting. Some of the teachers who expressed a liking for the more collaborative approaches noted:

Given that I have different abilities in my class, I utilise peer tutoring strategies, which is when I pair the, well, I won't say smart, the more advanced student with a student who is not as advanced, as the first, as the latter, I should say and then they will work along with that student...I employ as well differentiated instructions with the use of music and songs to get the children to do what I really want them to do. (Norma)

Sometimes to begin my lessons I use guiding questions. So, I will just give them questions randomly in groups to come up with answers and they will have to think through carefully. I allow them to discover things on their own, come back and share, and then we ask questions to see how well they understand. (Fay)

I must ensure that the students are engaged. So, for my classes, dictating notes, we hardly ever do that. So, it is all about the learner being at the centre of the learning experience or the narrative. A lot of practical activities are done in terms of catering to different learning styles...for certain topics, we use visual aids, and so on. So, we differentiate the methods of instruction. But the primary thing is that we make everything real life for them. (Beverley)

Among those teachers who expressed a preference for greater teacher involvement in the educative process was Ursula, who said:

Okay, I do a lot of research. I go online. I read. I like to search for new ways. In this age, children tend to be technologically geared. And so, as an asset, this school allows us to have device days. And so we try to use devices to bring across lessons, and we try to use music. I am a Christian, so I do not allow all those. But some of the children will come up with their own song and we put something to it. (Ursula)

Ursula also set limits for her students based on her Christian beliefs.

The entire sample of teachers advocated learner-centred approaches, as their view of how students learn:

Once students discover things for themselves, really discover things for themselves, I believe that the knowledge would have been cemented in their minds, and for the most part, as long as they live, they would have learnt that (sic). (Marcia)

Using their experiences...and it is what you want to use to move them from point A to point B...and sometimes you learn from them as well. (Karen)

When you draw from their experiences, and you allow them to be a part of the experience. So, when we speak of student-centred learning. When I have my students doing the activities, trust me, I get—I get the best from them. (Norma)

Beginning with teachers' understanding of the principles of learner-centred pedagogy, nearly all of them said that they understood its principles and what these meant for their classroom practice. Again, the NSC document does not clearly define what constitutes learner-centred education. Therefore, teachers'

definition of learner-centred reflects generalisations. Nevertheless, it appeared that teachers lacked a deep understanding of learner-centred pedagogy. This observation is consistent with the earlier findings above. Among the teachers' comments were the following:

Now back in the day, it was teacher-centred pedagogy. What teachers say or weh teacha do right, and you never dare question what teacher says (sic). Now we notice that it's student-centred. The lesson must be planned around the students. So no longer do we say teacher will do this; we say students should be able to do this...because I believe to some point with the Minister, if the student didn't learn, the teacher didn't teach. There is some truth in it. (Lorna)

It means the focus is on the student and how they learn and finding ways to promote that kind of activity and learning...and the point is, don't let up...the student is always the focus—having them discover things for themselves. (Marcia)

However, Rose was less eager to use learner-centred pedagogy in all situations, which in some ways, appears to contradict some of her earlier statements. But perhaps she wanted to make it clear that this approach is not appropriate for every classroom situation or lesson:

Alright, I think for some topics, it is fine. But for others, we must have the teacher, especially for chemistry, for some topics, there is no way a student can go out and do research and then come back to you, and it is more so students doing the talking (sic).

Teachers' views on the state of today's classrooms vis-à-vis those of the past were:

From my time, to be very honest, learning was just trite. Like it was like routine—not much imagination came out of it, not much enthusiasm and so on, for the most part (sic). There were very good days, but in terms of now, I think that now we have broadened the resources that we're using. We don't just use textbooks. Many of the activities I give my students come from the Internet. (Beverley)

Well, I don't know if we learned differently, we were forced to learn in a particular manner back then, yes. So, what happens is that we were given—it was a more rigid system where the teacher would stand up and teach, and you sit down, and you listen and try to get it and so on—not much interaction on the part of students, not much cooperative learning, research, and stuff like that. It was mostly lecturing...But nowadays, technology is their

interest...technology is one way that we must engage them (sic).
(Devon)

When I was going to school, you know it was rote learning, and to be honest, I don't remember some of them...They just tell you to say this, and you don't know why you are saying it. As opposed to now, the students are doing discovery-based learning, so when they find things out, it sticks. In comparison to just saying it and don't know what it means, it's meaningless, so now we are doing discovery learning, it's more meaningful, and they can relate to it, so I think it is better now; students learn more (sic). (Jacqueline)

There were a few teachers who viewed the proliferation of technology negatively:

But what is happening with this era of students, is they are so on the tablet and everything. We had to go to Tom Redcam library and sit and write our notes. (Angela)

I don't know if totally the opposite, but, in my time, you didn't really have so many things around. You get a book, and you really lost yourself in it—you lost yourself in the book (sic)...Our children, even when they are outside, they are on a device. They are eating, they are on a device...Yes, and their attention span, I think their attention span is much shorter than ours. (Ursula)

Just under half of the total sample of teachers favour using various co-management techniques with their students. For example, Devon divided his students into groups and assigned group leaders who co-managed the lesson:

Number one, the grouping helps. When you put them into groups, I find that you are better able to control and you are better able to hold them accountable for behaviour and for work done and for the cleanliness of the space they're in... you put a group leader in place, that person assists you to make sure that the groups complete tasks and you use incentives to motivate them and also to get them on task. (Devon)

A few teachers use corporal punishment as a form of discipline and classroom management, even though this is against the MOEY's policy. Corporal punishment poorly reflects how teachers view their students regarding their personhood and dignity. The practice also reflects the authoritarian nature of control and seriously undermines the idea of the co-construction of knowledge which underpins learner-centred pedagogy. Devon and Fay rejected its use in the classroom, but Helen and Icylyn favoured its use:

The difference is that in my day, as one saying goes, 'you are seen and not heard. So, now students can speak. They have freedom of speech, whereas back then if you opposed something or had another way of doing something, you could never dare to say that to your teacher...you'd have to keep your mouth shut...because I remember every day after lunch I would have my two hands stretched out to learn my timetables and if you missed one. (Fay)

Devon also shared Fay's rejection of corporal punishment:

For one, people here, well, some people might say that my classroom is noisy...whereas I am a person, who doesn't like to beat, so beating is not really a part of me... but my students I leave them in groups after the task is given, and we observe and so on. (Devon)

However, two teachers supported the use of corporal punishment:

There's a difference, there's a difference because then there was the belt, so uhm, even if the subject was hard, it's like you had to just—you had to learn...because the teacher was there and sometimes even if it's something they taught before and they re-teaching or reviewing, and you didn't get it, you might get two slaps...You know, so it's much more challenging now for us teachers, and we have to be, I think, more dedicated and just have that and just want to see the best out of these students. (Icyllyn)

Well, classroom management goes back to the teacher, the individual, so it's the rules that are laid down from day 1 from the first day you have met your children...On corporal punishment, well, to be honest, with the generation that we have, I know... It's something. I can't keep my hands at my side. It is not something I am supposed to do. I try to reduce the amount of time I use[it] but with the children if I had a full class out there... things happen. To be honest, it's true, it's who feels it knows it, but at the end of the day, you do not harm them because they still love you, and you show them, and they know why. Because even the batch that I had last year had some boys, man, oh my God, they drive me up the wall, but every lunchtime, they come and still sit and eat (sic). (Helen)

Icyllyn painted a picture of frustration, if not outright combat, in trying to manage her class. She stated:

First, if that classroom of students is not managed, you cannot have class. As I said, the class is a size of fifty and if I am not—if I am sick, might as well I don't go to that class because they're going to overthrow me...but you have to be firm (sic). (Icyllyn)

Finally, there was the issue of assessment strategies and how these related to the use of learner-centred approaches:

That is a very good question...I do things like peer review...I ask them questions, and I tell them to ask me questions. (Beverley)

I don't believe in just the normalised assessment at the end...a student may not be learning at a particular time based on their score or a piece of assessment. But given more time, they will catch on because not everyone learns at the same rate. (Victor)

When they are participating. So, they are participating and eager to answer questions. I know, yes, I'm getting somewhere with my students; they're getting the concept. (Lorna)

5.3.5 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The interview data revealed underlying tensions between the MOEY and teachers, and the NSC's implementation amplified these tensions. Of the sample: (1) eight gave their full support for the implementation of the NSC, (2) seven gave their conditional support for its implementation, and (3) five did not support its implementation.

Teachers who offered their full support for the implementation of the NSC (Group 1):

You know I watch my teachers teach using...the new curriculum and I realise that the children are excited, especially when the teacher lets them discover what they are going to be learning...so if your boss which is the Ministry of Education, in this case, says this is how we want this to be done, you should follow. If you have a better way then you should bring it forward. (Carlton)

I don't believe that teachers should determine, because at the end of the day we want equity across, because we don't want here in..., you know we have the national exams. So, that I believe that teachers should not have the say as to what is, okay it can be tailored, but in line with the government's policy. If teachers have their say there would be confusion. (Jacqueline)

Yes, I think that it is good, that is okay. That is okay, because first, that's the body that sets the curriculum and we should follow that guideline. (Icylyn)

I think that if the MOE is the governing body, they should have a strong influence on what is done. It should not be up to the teacher, what to do. Because, at the end of the day, there will be a summative exam that will be set by that body. So, if that body is expecting a

certain kind of result, then they are expected to state how it is expected to be done, since they are going to be testing it and what they want to be done. (Trevor)

I am in favour of the change. Change is constant, education is dynamic, there is always something new for us to learn and I think the children thus far here, and with the Ministry's proposal, it will work. There are always implications and some things that we just won't agree with, but it's my job, and as a professional, I have to act according to the Ministry, my the umbrella I'm at the Ministry. (Norma)

I believe it is a good move because some teachers are too laid back in what they do. The NSC forces you to provide a learner-centred environment. (Opal)

Some teachers who gave their conditional support or had reservations about the implementation of the NSC (Group 2) remarked:

Basically, for me, it is not a bad approach. I think it is a good approach. I think the NSC document is a good document to use, and so on. My only drawback is the resources, the availability of the resources that we would need to really, Uhm, do it in-depth and meaningful so that we can see that learner-centredness is really taking place. (Fay)

I do believe that the Ministry is making a valiant attempt in terms of creating curriculum and putting policies in place. But I think that it is not being backed up by the necessary resources to get it done...because our school piloted the NSC and I did not see people coming in to evaluate and get feedback from us. So, it seemed like a half-hearted attempt that was made (sic). (Devon)

You may have some general standards but schools can tailor it to suit themselves because schools know what resources they have, in terms of whether human resource or otherwise they have (sic). (Marcia)

Some students come without breakfast and sometimes it so Americanized, the content and what they want us to do...backyard garden, how many schools have backyard and space? They cannot even find space to play. And I have 40 students in my small space. You cannot keep the things in there. As they make the stuff, as I mark them I say carry them home. Luckily for us now at grade 4, 5 and 6 we have our classrooms. Previously, when you finish the class we take up our students so that the next teacher comes in with her 40 students...we have two computers here, if a teacher using it sometimes we have to do group to get access to what they are saying. (Angela)

Finally, about a quarter of teachers did not support the implementation of the NSC (Group 3). Among their reasons for not supporting the MOEY in its decision to implement the NSC was the belief that the MOEY should not tell how to teach students and should teachers should be able to exercise flexibility in enacting the NSC:

The Ministry can't tell us, should not be able to tell us, how to teach our classroom, because they are not in the classroom and see what we are dealing with. On paper and in practice are two different things the Ministry must allow teachers to teach their classes how they can because we have students coming from different backgrounds, and some of them, they are really not interested in learning...you have students who will look at you point blank and say, "Miss me no interested. This nah go help me" (sic). (Elizabeth)

So, I think flexibility is very important, so, you must consider the topic that's being taught as well as the type of student whom you are teaching...so, to enforce something right across the board, it is not fair, it is not reasonable. You cannot give people baskets and say carry water...eighty-eight days to prepare them for exams. I don't know if you have ever seen a chemistry syllabus...But with the number of activities that the NSC is asking for, we would need five years to prepare our girls for CXC alone, five years. (Rose)

5.4 CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS AND VIDEO RECORDINGS OF LESSONS

I used five sub-themes from the NEI's National Observation Report Framework were adopted to rate the classroom observations. Using a partial NEI frame of reference to view and classify the observation data recorded in the lessons was convenient as it allowed me to categorise and characterise the activities in the classroom setting as part of the framework of data analysis. There was no assignment of ratings to the teachers, nor were the observations reported to the principals. The five sub-themes were (a) teachers' classroom management techniques, (b) the content and quality of questions and responses, (c) students' classroom interactions with teachers and peers, (d) expressions of mutual respect and (e) teachers' pedagogical strategies.

Teachers' management techniques were generally authoritarian or teacher-centred, focusing on control. The observed teachers were mostly intent on establishing control over their students, sometimes at the expense of opportunities for students learning. For example, Rose declared, "If you are not

speaking to me, you cannot speak. Because speaking out of turn causes brain retardation". The data showed that ten teachers in the sample were rated unsatisfactory, two were rated satisfactory, and eight were rated good. Those teachers were rated good because they consistently facilitated students' participation in the lessons and employed student-led behaviour management techniques to encourage engagement.

The content and quality of questions and responses during the lessons were generally lower-order recall in orientation. The data showed that ten teachers used lower-order question techniques for formative assessments, and the techniques were rated unsatisfactory, which could restrict opportunities for building critical thinking skills. Five teachers used a mix of lower and higher-order questions, and their techniques were rated satisfactory. The remaining five teachers consistently used higher-order questioning techniques, which allowed students to think through scenarios and relate them to their everyday experiences. These teachers' assessment techniques were rated good.

Students' interactions with their peers and teachers during the lessons describe the ease with which they collaborate and how teachers facilitated these interactions as part of their teaching strategy. In this regard, the data showed that ten teachers constrained students' interactions and were rated unsatisfactory. On the other hand, six teachers were rated satisfactory because although there were instances where they restricted students' interactions, these teachers generally enabled students' collaboration, cooperation and peer-sharing. The remaining four teachers were less focused on class control and more on creating opportunities for student engagement. As a result, these teachers were rated good.

Expressions of mutual respect and the quality of the interaction between teachers and students describe the classroom climate. The data showed that 14 teachers restricted students' ability to question concepts, answer questions and oppose positions taken. On occasions, teachers did not even allow their students to express themselves. Therefore, the quality of these classroom interactions was rated unsatisfactory. The exchanges were rated satisfactory in two of the 20 lessons because teachers allowed students to express opposing viewpoints and explain their positions. The interactions in the four remaining classroom

observations were rated good because teachers facilitated discussions and the airing of contending perspectives in an atmosphere of cordiality and mutual respect.

In regards to pedagogical practices, the results of the classroom observations indicated that 14 teachers used mainly teacher-centred approaches and were rated unsatisfactory. Only six practised learner-centred approaches, and they were rated good. This observation contrasts with the earlier finding that 14 teachers said that learner-centred approaches best-enabled students' learning and that they understood its principles and used them in their classroom practice. However, only six of those 14 teachers practised learner-centred approaches in the observed lesson. For example, Paulette said, "learner-centredness, this is where students or the learners can formulate their meaning from a given topic...and the teacher acts as a facilitator". Nevertheless, her espoused beliefs were seemingly in stark contrast to her classroom practice, as notetaking and teacher talk dominated her lesson.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The data presented in this chapter reflects the views of eight policymakers on their expectations for the NSC, which included their knowledge of the global nature of the curriculum and their conceptual and theoretical understanding of how the NSC will change the quality of pedagogy and students' outcomes. The policymakers understand that the NSC is globally-inspired, and its adoption might have implications for resourcing and enactment in the classroom.

Principals indicated their support for the MOEY's implementation of the NSC and described their role as ensuring that teachers enact the NSC in classrooms.

Teachers support the implementation of the NSC and believe that students will benefit from its learner-centred orientation. However, teachers express some scepticism about the MOEY's commitment to providing the levels of resources necessary. Additionally, teachers believe the MOEY should fully engage them in the implementation process.

Policymakers and principals believe that they need to convince teachers to support the implementation of the NSC and fear that this might be their greatest

challenge. However, the data show the contrary, in that teachers welcome enacting the NSC.

Finally, the classroom observations revealed that teachers' management techniques were mostly authoritarian or teacher-centred. In assessing their students, the content and quality of teachers' questions were mostly recall in orientation or lower order. Most teachers restricted student interactions as part of their teaching strategy, thus lessening collaboration and peer-sharing opportunities. Similarly, the interactions and discussions between students and teachers were authoritarian, with little room for dissent or expressing contending views. Finally, most teachers' classroom practice was teacher-centred despite many stating that they favoured learner-centred approaches.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the study's findings within the broad context of the global influence on local curriculum policymaking, the ongoing conflict that this causes between global agents and local policymakers and principals and how teachers enact curriculum in their classrooms. This chapter also discusses the relationship between the MOEY, principals, and teachers in enacting the NSC and whether teachers are suitably engaged in the process.

The presentation format reflects the framework I developed in Chapter 4 and used to explain the findings in Chapter 5. There are 15 sub-themes and four themes, and together these provide the basis for answering the research questions (see Chapters 4 and 5, pages 84 and 89, respectively, for details).

The policymakers' interviews with three sub-themes contribute to the primary theme, 'policy drivers of the NSC'. This theme encompasses the MOEY's understanding of the global influences that helped shape the NSC and MOEY's motivations and expectations for implementing the NSC in the public education system. The concept of globalisation divides opinions. However, there is perhaps no gainsaying its effect on education policy and the spread of curricula content because of the integration of trade, culture and ideas (Butt 2017). Understanding globalisation's influence on education policy is a critical first step in situating the needs of Jamaica's education system as a counterweight against the threat of a unidirectional flow of ideas from the global to the local. Policymakers' motivations for and expectations of the NSC may indicate the MOEY's awareness of this imperative and its broader philosophical stance on the global-local interplay. Thus, the evidenced policymakers' positions might reflect the MOEY's policy perspective for the NSC.

The two sub-themes derived from principals' interviews constitute the primary theme, 'principals' views and role in implementing the NSC. This theme captures their expectations and how they see themselves as school leaders in the enactment process. The principals act as the interface between the MOEY and the classroom teachers: they occupy the space between the policy perspective

on the one hand and the teachers' or classroom practice perspective on the other hand.

The five sub-themes that frame teachers' interviews were derived from Elbaz's theory of teachers' practical knowledge, capturing the discrete components of her theory. As I discussed earlier in Chapter 2, her theory posits that teachers have a body of knowledge that they use to teach the curriculum in their classrooms. This body of knowledge starts with knowledge of self, knowledge of the teaching milieu, knowledge of their subject matter, knowledge of instruction, and teachers' knowledge of curriculum development. Together these sub-themes and the resulting theory represent perspectives on practice and lay the groundwork for an analysis of what characterises the gap between the MOEY's expectation for the NSC vis-à-vis teachers' understanding of it.

Finally, the three sub-themes derived from Elbaz's theory were also used to frame the classroom observations. They were a useful framework for comparing what teachers said in their interviews with what they did in their classroom practice. Themes encompass knowledge of instruction, subject matter knowledge, and, implicitly, their knowledge of the teaching milieu. Video recordings of the lessons were a valuable source of reflection and recall.

6.1 POLICY DRIVERS OF THE NSC

Policymakers were aware that global influences have partially shaped the framing of the NSC. This reflects their understanding of the global nature of education change and their knowledge of the NSC's design. They were also cognisant that policy borrowing has advantages and disadvantages, so planners must adopt measures to mitigate its adverse effects. For example, they were impressed with what they saw in Singapore and Finland during their study tours, particularly the successful enactment of learner-centred pedagogical policies. However, they believed that "adaptation of approaches must be carefully examined and tested to determine its suitability to the needs of other countries" (Policymaker 4).

Similarly, Policymaker 2 noted that "countries that adopt learner-centred education do not confine the principles to the education sectors, and their culture is usually consistent with the programmes". Implicitly, where the need exists,

there should be plans to foster greater coherence and compatibility of the policy with the existing sociocultural context.

Nevertheless, there was little to suggest that they appreciated the complexities of the global push towards standardisation, the influence of the GERM and the creation of equivalencies across nation-states. For example, Popkewitz and Rizvi (2009) argue that the OECD's PISA international assessment in the sciences and mathematics creates these categories of equivalence across countries. Most discussions, for example, the views of Policymakers 2 and 4, were focused on the sociocultural aspects of policy borrowing and its effects on the local education system.

There was a seeming lack of appreciation for the broader philosophical and practical perspectives of global education policies and their influence on the design and enactment of the NSC. This awareness is vital if most discussions about coherence and compatibility of curriculum policies are to be a serious part of the MOEY's efforts to bring about meaningful changes in the public education system. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) express a similar view, arguing that policymakers should recognise that global forces shape education policy. Bacchus (2009) argues that part of the challenge is that policymakers sometimes uncritically adopt education policies, not in their country's best interest.

The possible results of not understanding the inherent complexities of the situation are the uncritical acceptance of education policy frameworks that lack a practical appreciation for local conditions. There is a greater chance that education policies, particularly the NSC, risk not achieving their policy outcomes without continuing adjustments to accommodate the subtlety of existing public education contexts. For example, the MOEY's enactment of the learner-centred ROSE in 1998 and the RPC in 1999 suffered from a lack of appreciation of the local context. There were also issues with the practical integration of the RPC into the ROSE. For example, students had problems transitioning from primary to secondary schools because the curriculum did not spiral from grades 1 to 9, and there was an overlap between grade 6 at the primary level and grade 7 at the secondary level. Meaning that some of the curriculum content in grade 6 was repeated in grade 7 (Task Force of Education Reform 2004).

Nevertheless, some policymakers recognised that for the NSC, as a policy, to achieve clarity requires careful articulation of its goals and intentions and what this means in terms of the roles and participation of stakeholders and process owners. As policymaker 3 puts it, “the education policy needs to be articulated and not left to the interpretation of various groups. This affects the outcomes and leads to the splintering of knowledge”. She believed that without the MOEY guiding the curriculum trainers, schools and teachers in how to use the curriculum, they would have too much freedom to apply their interpretations, leading to splintering. Unfortunately, this view reflects the top-down philosophy that the MOEYI seemingly applies to the policy enactment process because policymakers tend to discourage adjusting the NSC to cater to local circumstances, even though this is vital to its success.

Most policymakers saw the issue of the overwhelming disparities in opportunities in the public education system as a significant source of concern. They believed that this was one of the lingering effects of colonialism. For example, policymakers 1, 6 and 3 believed that the continuance of a form of the British grammar school system had institutionalised inequality of opportunity, resulting in many students who do not attend these elite or traditional schools being left behind, particularly those from the lower stratum of Jamaican society. Arguably, the main challenge for policymakers and the broader education community is how to improve the quality of the other schools that make up the public education system so that they can offer a comparable standard of education. However, whether the NSC is enough to cause this gestalt shift remains an open question.

Most policymakers believed that the sociocultural structure of Jamaican society reinforced and extended these inequalities to the disadvantage of most students and that the NSC, with its learner-centred orientation, would lessen this problem. For example, policymaker 8 referred to the “sage on the stage” or teacher-centred approach as detrimental to fostering critical thinkers and problem solvers. Similarly, Policymaker 3 believes that constructivist approaches are the answer to acquiring 21st-century skills of “problem-solving, critical thinking, integrity, caring and knowledge”.

It is perhaps naïve to think that the NSC alone can displace the existing structural inequalities in the system, let alone the broader imbalances in Jamaican society.

As I stated in Chapter 2, the MOEY has not said enough in the NSC's policy document to allow for the drawing of direct comparisons with other curricula or to sufficiently characterise the intended pedagogical approaches beyond a learner-centred orientation, an underlying emancipation narrative and a standardised nature. In other words, the policy is short on details that might build a shared understanding of pedagogical intentions. The document states that it "promotes a learner-centred, holistic approach to learning...which is aimed at developing lifelong learners who are confident, productive individuals who value the Jamaican identity" (NSC 2016, p. 3-12). However, what this means beyond the rhetorical expressions is unclear. Moreover, the document lacks detail, specificity and examples of the principles underlying the NSC that would provide instructional guidance for principals and teachers to enact it in classrooms.

The circumstances surrounding enacting a learner-centred curriculum in The Gambia are similar to the MOEY's enactment of the NSC. For example, like Jamaica, The Gambia is a former British colony that gained independence in the early 1960s and has faced severe challenges in transforming its public education system. In analysing the process of enacting a learner-centred curriculum in The Gambia's public education system, Schweisfurth (2015) argues that concerning learner-centred pedagogy, the lack of detail, specificity and exemplification is quite common in the written policy documentation. Thus, "while policy creates space for learner-centred education, there is little direct reference to pedagogy—learner-centred or otherwise—in the policy documents" (p. 78). Therefore, missing from the policy documentation in the case of the MOEY's NSC and The Gambia's Department of State for Education's (DOSE) version of a learner-centred pedagogy is enough detail to guide principals and teachers on how to achieve the policy intent. Schweisfurth writes that in The Gambia, "there is a lot of reference to trained teachers: but trained in what? The curriculum is intended to emphasise problem-solving skills, but can it do this without teachers working within a learner-centred education framework?" (p. 79). Therefore, as with the NSC, the details matter, despite the standardised nature of the curriculum.

An analysis of Hirsch's (2009) support for using standardised core curricula to reduce the achievement gap between students from poor socio-economic circumstances and their wealthy counterparts may explain why the MOEY believes that the NSC can have this influence on the public education system.

However, although there are possible policy transfer challenges regarding Hirsch's ideas because of contextual differences between Jamaica and the USA, his suggestion that education reform focus on essential academic competencies, for example, reading, as a practical solution to improving equality of opportunity, is worth considering.

The MOEY also expects that the NSC will engender critical thinking, critical consciousness, cultural awareness and identity, and a willingness to participate in the affairs of the country (NSC 2016). Freire's (1974) critical pedagogy is perhaps relevant, mainly because of Jamaica's colonial past, even though his ideas seemingly contradict Hirsch's conservative approach to pedagogy. Nevertheless, I believe combining the two approaches, where possible, makes practical sense. The NSC's policy document does not refer to Hirsch or Freire, nor did the policymakers refer to either. However, engaging with these thinkers' writings is valuable as some of their ideas relate to Jamaican reality. For example, as I noted in Chapter 2, Jamaica's adult literacy programme in the 1970s had the hallmarks of Freire's national literacy plan in Brazil in the 1940s and his work in Grenada in the 1970s.

Despite not referring to Freire and its lack of specificity regarding achieving concrete academic goals, a close read of the NSC policy document reveals intrinsic linkages to the emancipation narrative, consistent with most policymakers' views. For example, Policymaker 6 argued that little had changed in the post-Independence experience of Jamaicans from the lower strata of society with access to quality education, echoing the views of Policymaker 1. This obliquely mirrors what Nettleford (1998) calls the struggle to be 'smaddy' (somebody). This persistent struggle for freedom is pervasive in Jamaican society.

The struggle for freedom is persistent because some pre-colonial structures and institutions remain in place, adversely affecting the life chances of many Jamaicans. The state of the public education system is one example of this, with traditional secondary schools as offshoots of the elite schools of the colonial era and the non-traditional ones mirroring the elementary schools in terms of the quality and standard of educational offerings, despite the improvements of the last 60 years and the seeming standardised nature of the curricula. Despite

Jamaica's overwhelmingly black population, the issue is also one of identity and race. Nettleford (1998) spoke to this and asserted that remnants of colonialism continue to undermine the sense of identity and confidence that Jamaicans should have at this stage in their history. This helps explain the emancipation narrative principles in the NSC policy document. However, this is common for post-colonial societies.

Schweisfurth (2015) argues that The Gambia's DOSE policy reflects "the emancipation narrative, yet there is evidence of oppressive behaviours" (p.85). This indicates that decolonisation does not occur at the point of political independence. It is a much longer process that embodies the trauma of the past and the schizophrenic attitude of those in authority trying to decide what to keep and discard. For example, arguably, there is a tendency to criticise traditional secondary schools as if they bear some blame for the failings of Jamaica's public education system. However, the challenge is not to minimise their role in Jamaica's public education system. Instead, the challenge should be getting non-traditional schools to adopt their best practices.

Therefore, progress in public education requires a reckoning with the past. The MOEY should clearly indicate how NSC can reconcile with the past and prepare for the future. I believe there is immense value in promoting self-awareness and cultural identity in a post-colonial society like Jamaica to foster improvements in the public education system. Still, the policymakers' interviews indicate that the MOEY needs to outline how it will achieve its aims and how these will translate to better student outcomes and lessen the divide between the various socioeconomic groupings. However, lessening the divide in practical terms may mean ensuring students, irrespective of socioeconomic backgrounds, have opportunities to achieve their educational potential, not that everyone will attain the same level. Therefore, as far as is practicable, the MOEY should focus on providing equality of opportunity for its students.

It is evident that the policymakers in this study also believe there is a need for teaching reform, and they may see this as the primary condition for the success of the NSC. Richardson (1998) argues that there is an erroneous perception that education reform must start with teacher change or reform and that teachers resist change. This view, she says, is spread by people who think they know what

teachers should be doing in the classroom and have the authority to tell them what to do.

However, there is a thin line between teacher reform and teaching reform. Teacher reform concerns issues like professional development and certification. In contrast, teaching reform affects how teachers conduct teaching and learning. Often, this subtle distinction is lost when a policy is translated into practice, as those in positions of authority conflate the two. Windschitl (2002) argues that policymakers usually need to be aware of the difficulties in enacting a learner-centred curriculum and that the enactment process requires teacher sensitisation. Richardson (1994) suggests that sensitisation should provide opportunities for teachers to assess whether the changes satisfy their beliefs about teaching and learning and students' needs, which is seldom the case. For example, Policymakers 1, 7 and 8 expressed the need for teachers to embrace and adapt to the NSC, play a more facilitatory role, spend more time planning to meet their students' varied learning needs, relinquish power to their students, and a need for more in-service training for teachers. These are vital factors to consider.

Nevertheless, as shown in Chapter 2, changing teachers' attitudes to teaching and curriculum enactment is a lengthy process and seldom achieved in any wholesale manner. In this regard, there is seemingly a lopsided focus on teacher inputs and the need for training, and no mention of teachers' voices or, for that matter, principals' input as school leaders. The absence of teachers' voices in the policymakers' responses about the NSC is significant. It reflects Elbaz's (1981) assertion that there is a belief that teachers do not "possess knowledge and expertise appropriate to their work" (p.11). Therefore, the policymakers' interviews indicate a lack of inclination towards collaborating with principals and teachers in enacting the NSC beyond their insistence that teachers should be trained to administer it. This approach contrasts with policymakers' demands that teachers create opportunities for collaboration and for students to engage with their learning.

Many policymakers also recognised that the Government should provide material support if the enactment of the NSC is to be successful. From my experience as the Chief Inspector and member of the MOEY's executive and former classroom

teacher, providing the requisite support requires a radical re-think of how the MOEY provides material and other school resources. Presently, the MOEY funds schools based on a standard dollar amount per student across the board to cover each school's curricular programme. However, some schools, particularly those located within Jamaica's rural poverty belts and those in the poor inner-city communities, require resources that are arguably far more than the MOEY's current per-student funding. For example, most of the multigrade schools in the public education system are located within the poverty belts. Consequently, these schools require more money to assist with students' transportation, co-curricular and extracurricular activities and general teaching support.

The Jamaica Education Transformation Commission (2021) points out that the Jamaican Government's expenditure on education is comparable to its peers. However, the corresponding return on investment has fallen short of expectations. The Report states that one of the reasons for the gap in expectations "is the variation in private contributions, which contributes to variations in quality-of-service delivery at each level...the Commission found evidence of funding gaps in at least the primary level of education that disproportionately affect the poorest households" (p.21).

Additionally, some policymakers, like Policymakers 1 and 4, believe that the MOEY should improve its use of data in its decision-making process and have greater involvement of stakeholders as they are the education system's watchdogs. There is no absence of valuable data to support the MOEY's decision-making process. Instead, what might be lacking is wide-ranging data-sharing protocols and an institutional bias in favour of using them to inform decisions. For example, the MOEY's Planning Unit provides education statistics, school demographic and other data. Its Student Assessment Unit offers national and regional summative data. The NEI provides school performance profiles, overall feedback on the curriculum enactment programme and periodic reports on school performance. Nevertheless, there is a need for an integrated data management system to make the available data more accessible. For example, an integrated management system would provide seamless access to available data on school performance to aid decision-making on school improvement, and it would also counter the possibility of siloing, which hinders effective decision-making.

The MOEY's policymakers knew that there are global influences in the design and enactment of the NSC. However, the extent to which they understand the complexities that allow for discretion and critical decision-making needs to be clarified. The absence of this assurance prevents concrete judgment regarding whether policymakers are balancing or recognise the importance of balancing the requirements of global funding agencies and partners while ensuring that they address local needs and imperatives. However, even though there is no evidence that the World Bank and IDB influenced the implementation of the NSC outside of funding it, they likely also influenced the choice of policy prescriptions, given the longstanding nature of the relationship.

More narrowly, the NSC's policy document needs to be more precise in outlining the NSC's practical aims and, importantly, how the MOEY intends to achieve them. What is clear from interviews is that the British colonial legacy weighs heavy on the minds of policymakers. This explains the prominence of the emancipation narrative. However, in the same way that the MOEY should not blame the British for all the ills of the public education system, the NSC is not a panacea. Therefore its success requires time, effort and flexibility of policymakers, principals, teachers, other stakeholders and the MOEY to ensure sufficient resources.

6.2 PRINCIPALS' VIEWS AND ROLE IN THE ENACTMENT OF THE NSC

Most principals supported the enactment of the NSC and seemed enthused by its learner-centred nature and potential to improve the quality of teaching and, by extension, students' learning. For example, they welcomed its differentiated approach to teaching and learning (Principal 10). Principal 11 also welcomed the opportunity to engage students in their learning. Similarly, Principal 13 believes that the NSC provides students with greater autonomy and creates more significant opportunities for students to participate and learn by doing (Principal 15).

There is clear support for the MOEY's enactment of the NSC among the principals. As school leaders, they are essential participants in the enactment of the NSC, despite the policymakers failing to mention them in their assessment of the NSC and its enactment. However, like the policymakers, the principals were

also short on specifics, and many comments were very general. For example, none of them pinpointed how the NSC would improve students' performance in practical ways. Much of what they said about the NSC and its learner-centred orientation was consistent with readily available information on the characteristics of this type of curriculum. For example, there was no analysis or assessment of how these standard features would manifest or translate to their classroom contexts. Some of this absence of specifics may be due to the lack of detail in the policy document, but I contend that principals should fill in the blanks or, at the very least, raise appropriate questions about the enactment of the NSC. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the principals did not reflect on the issue of how this will, in specific ways, benefit their students. Therefore, aside from the slogan 'learner-centred', very little may change with the enactment of NSC.

Significantly, the apparent limitations to critical thought among some principals risk the viability of the NSC, considering that this is the MOEY's third attempt at implementing learner-centred curricula. Therefore, principals should ensure that the MOEY is aware of the situation within their schools. For example, many multigrade schools spread across the island's mountainous interior cater to the rural poor struggle to get adequate resources. These schools require targeted and nuanced approaches in the enactment of the NSC. The same can be said for many of the schools in the inner-city communities that cater to the urban poor. The NCS's enactment at the school level should therefore be responsive to the characteristics of the school's population and resource needs. Despite the principals' comments not being generalisable, my considerable experience working with these types of schools tells me that principals must play an active role if the NSC is to succeed. This situation requires their thoughtful and reflective application of the curriculum and an appreciation for the context's role in curriculum reform (Brinkmann, 2019).

Most principals stated that teachers' support for the enactment of the NSC was vital, and thus getting teachers' buy-in was their main priority. There were distinct similarities between principals and policymakers in how they viewed teachers and teachers' role in the enactment of the NSC, as their focus was on getting teachers to comply with the instructions of the MOEY. They saw themselves as MOEY bureaucrats and not as important local decision-makers who perhaps should

have had an essential role in the design of the NSC. This view of themselves no doubt framed how they viewed their teachers and teachers' role in the enactment process. For example, Principal 20 declared that "the principal's role is ensuring that teachers are compliant with the required standards". And "the biggest challenge is changing the culture of the teachers. Similar to how policymakers view principals, principals lacked evidence of inclination towards collaboration with their teachers, seemingly insisting on teacher reform and not teaching reform.

Some principals felt that teachers were wary of the NSC "because it's (sic) foreign and far-fetched, first world...and that the Ministry is forcing something on them" (Principal 6). Most principals' remarks about teachers characterise a view of teachers as mere 'facilitators, enactors or conveyors of policy...Rather than...thinkers, knowers and holders of knowledge in their own right" (Elbaz, 1983, p.7). "I will have to supervise, and I will carry out workshops. That is a must because teachers must always be on top" (Principal 5). "I will make myself an expert in the policy so that I can aid my teachers" (Principal 8). There was little room to infer that teachers could express genuine concerns about the NSC and its enactment process or contribute to its national or local design. This situation is problematic because teachers are responsible for enacting the NSC in classrooms; engaging them and soliciting their opinions is vital. For example, if teachers perceive insurmountable challenges in enacting the NSC, a lack of avenues through which they can express their concerns may severely hinder the successful enactment of the NSC.

The principals support the MOEY's decision to implement the NSC, as they believe it will benefit the students. However, aside from generalities, they did not say how this benefit would manifest in students' performance. Additionally, they appear to see themselves as extensions of the MOEY, not decision-makers whose independent thoughts would benefit the process and their schools. Similarly, some principals reported that part of their role was getting teachers to comply with the tenets of the NSC and saw this as their biggest challenge. However, such a view minimises teachers' role and may even deprive the curriculum enactment process of genuine classroom feedback.

6.3 EVIDENCE FOR ELBAZ'S (1983) THEORY OF TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND THE NSC

Elbaz's theory of teachers' practical knowledge comprises (1) teachers' knowledge of self, (2) teachers' knowledge of the teaching milieu, (3) teachers' knowledge of the subject matter, (4) teachers' knowledge of instruction (NSC) and (5) teachers' knowledge of curriculum development (NSC). Evidence for these is described below within the context of the MOEY's implementation of the NSC.

6.3.1 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF SELF

Teachers' knowledge of self describes how their values, beliefs, purposes and experiences shape their practice (Elbaz 1983). As shown in Chapter 5, 13 of the 20 teachers reported that their motivations to teach came from their own experiences as students. Combined with these early classroom experiences are their interactions with people and things. These experiences characterised their lived experiences and informed how they understood the world around them. Therefore, an understanding of teachers' practical knowledge and views about implementing the NSC must begin with a sense of who they are. For example, Carlton spoke about his teachers, Mr. L and Mr. H, and how they helped shape his optimistic view of teachers and the teaching and learning process. Mr. L, for instance, was very stern, and Carlton adopted this quality in his teaching practice. One could say the same for Elizabeth wanting to be like her primary school teacher. For Beverley and Lorna, their experiences were not pleasant. One of Beverley's primary school teachers was boring (chalk and talk), while Lorna endured consistent verbal abuse from one of her teachers. Nevertheless, their negative experiences instilled in them a commitment to treat their students in a way that ensured they had more fulfilling experiences.

For others, the defining experiences or interactions occurred outside the classroom in the broader social environment. For example, Karen's crucial experiences came in her early days as a teacher when she needed professional guidance. Her literacy coordinator and mathematics coach stepped in to mentor her and shape her views on teaching. In Angela's case, her parents and the example they had set for her influenced how she treated her students. For Jacqueline, the emotional experience of failing her primary school exit examination and, later in life, the difficulties she experienced in accessing good

quality education for her son framed her understanding of what it was to be an excellent teacher to her students.

In every case, the teachers in the sample related how their schooling, social interactions and experiences shaped their view of themselves and their teaching philosophy. Elbaz (1983) argues that these experiences and interactions frame teachers' orientations—orientation in the sense that it becomes “the way that practical knowledge is held in active relation to the world of practice” (p. 101). Thus, the material objects, events, persons, thoughts and feelings that flow from them are the lens through which teachers make decisions. Nespor (1987) asserts that the everyday challenges teachers encounter in the classroom are often ill-defined. Teachers rely on the sum of their experiences to filter, frame and ultimately make decisions. Elbaz (1983) asserts that when a teacher stands in front of a classroom filled with students, he is the final authority on what students are taught. Thus, “whether or not such authority is granted to him, the teacher is the only one in a practical position to discharge it” (p. 17).

It is also essential to appreciate that teachers' practical knowledge is both process and practice. Knowledge of self determines how teachers make sense of the world and use this acquired knowledge to make decisions. Elbaz (1983) argues that teachers use the knowledge in their practice to reflect their values. For example, Ursula uses her Christian beliefs and convictions to guide her classroom practice. Therefore, although she accepts that technology and the Internet are integral in today's learning environment, she applies a very strict caveat. “So, we try to use the device to bring across lessons, and we try to use music. I am a Christian, so I do not allow all those”. While Lorna used her dislike of her experiences of “what teacher says ‘or weh teacher sey’ is right” (sic) to embrace a different pedagogical approach in her practice. As she puts it: “the lesson must be planned around the students. So no longer do we say teacher will do this; we say that students should be able to do this”. Jacqueline and Devon also reflected on their teacher-centred experiences as students, and both knowingly adopted learner-centred methods in their practice. Fay had very similar experiences. Her teachers subjected her to consistent corporal punishment, which led to her refusal to use it as a method of instruction, as, among other things, this stifled confidence and self-expression: “If you have another way of doing something, you could never dare to say it to your teacher... Every day after

lunch, I would have my two hands stretched out to learn my timetables, and if you missed one,”.

Therefore, there is little denying that teachers' knowledge of self influences how they conduct their classroom practice, see their students, view and make sense of curricula and view and interact with the discrete social world of the school and things related to it. Practical curriculum design and enactment require teacher engagement.

Nevertheless, teachers drawing on their lived experiences in situations where these experiences run counter to the policy expectations can be problematic. For example, Ursula's insistence on using her Christian orthodoxy to guide her classroom practice may challenge enacting the desired curriculum. The same could be said for the persistence of teacher-centred approaches in attempts to enact the learner-centred NSC. These challenges illustrate the difficulties that the MOEY policymakers must overcome, or perhaps understand, to successfully implement the NSC in the public education system, and these will vary from school to school and from one classroom to the next. However, the seeming difficulties should not prevent policymakers from engaging teachers in the design and implementation of curriculum policy. The curriculum should reflect essential home-grown dimensions, which are local interpretations of the policy script and not deviations from it, necessarily. Therefore, within reason, these interpretations have a place. In other words, there is the possibility that Ursula's orthodoxy may have a place in her context, as it probably reflects the social milieu that exists and that her students understand. Despite the ideological and cultural challenges, student outcomes are the litmus test of success. Therefore, having a synchronous implementation framework, including policymakers, principals and teachers, to monitor and evaluate the implementation process and make changes when necessary is beneficial.

Similarly, the MOEY should work on clarifying the main issues regarding the NSC's underlying learner-centred philosophy. For example, what are its expectations for the NSC, and how do these translate to teachers' practice in the classroom? There are also issues concerning how principals can help reconcile these expectations with teachers' professional expectations and personal beliefs,

especially those teachers who are sceptical or have doubts about government policy.

6.3.2 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE TEACHING MILIEU AND SUBJECT MATTER

Teachers' knowledge of the teaching milieu characterises their relationships and interactions with their students as individuals (Elbaz 1983) – it is the teachers' understanding of the impact of the social setting and context within which their students learn and how to enhance the teaching and learning experience. This knowledge helps shape their approach and strategies to engage their students and make classroom decisions. As shown in Chapter 5, six teachers expressed an awareness of their teaching milieu and incorporated this knowledge into their relationships with their students. For example, Devon explained that interacting with his students in the morning is one way of teaching them appropriate behaviours.

Teachers' knowledge of their subject matter includes their knowledge of the subject content, demonstrated by how they differentiate the concepts for various groups of students. They can also use knowledge of their subject matter as a medium for expressing, clarifying and transferring experiences. Most teachers in the study demonstrated a basic knowledge of their subject matter, which overlapped with their knowledge of instruction and the teaching milieu. For example, Icylyn used various strategies to get her students to understand and relate to the subject content. Similarly, Jacqueline, in a mathematics lesson, comfortably used a game of marbles to teach the concepts of mean and mode.

Teachers' knowledge of their subject matter enhances the teaching and learning process. The NSC, for example, assumes the usage of subject content to transmit skills such as critical thinking, comprehension and application. The fact that most teachers in the study showed an understanding of the content knowledge of their subject matter is a vital first step in ensuring that they can appropriately students' learning of the concepts. Nevertheless, subject knowledge is necessary but insufficient to ensure effective teaching and learning. Shulman (1987) argues that effective teaching combines subject and pedagogical knowledge or knowledge of instruction.

6.3.3 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF INSTRUCTION (NSC)

Teachers' knowledge of instruction embodies their view of teaching and how students learn, including subject-specific knowledge. For example, Norma used varying strategies to facilitate learning, including peer tutoring and other forms of differentiated instruction. Devon used practical everyday activities as a means of teaching, including taking his students outdoors to do gardening to concretise their theoretical understanding of the matter. Fay used guiding questions in her lessons to allow her students to discover for themselves to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Beverley uses practical activities to cater to her students' differing interests and preferences. Norma uses students' experiences to ensure they are engaged in their learning. Again, there is an overlap between some of the discrete elements of Elbaz's theory, and it is fair to say that all the teachers in the study expressed varying understandings of how to teach and how students learn and an appreciation for differences in students' abilities as well as the need for varied approaches to preparing them.

Most teachers supported using various learner-centred approaches in teaching their students, and most, within reason, also understood what these approaches meant for their classroom practice. For example, Marcia drew comparisons with the teacher-centred methods that characterised her experiences as a student. Therefore, she was deliberate in her focus on her students. She states, "now, back in the day, it was teacher-centred pedagogy. What teachers say or weh teacha do right, and you never dare question what teacher says (sic). Now we notice that it's student-centred...it means focusing on the student and how they learn and finding ways to promote that kind of activity and learning". Devon expressed a similar sentiment, acknowledging that in the past, the common practice was rote learning, which is not the same as teacher-led instruction. There was little interaction and collaborative learning among students and teachers; the preferred delivery form was lecturing.

However, only some teachers used or supported learner-centred in all situations. Rose, for example, did not believe that the learner-centred approach was suitable for some classroom situations or lessons. As a chemistry teacher, she felt that only some syllabus topics lend themselves to a learner-centred delivery or approach. Part of her disagreement was that the teacher must lead if learning is

to take place in these situations. Rose was among the few willing to express a more nuanced view of teaching practice. She also acknowledged that other variables helped determine teachers' pedagogical approach in classroom practice. However, she understood the principles of learner-centred pedagogy and the possible advantages in certain situations.

Some teachers, like Beverley, acknowledged the improvements in the availability of teaching resources compared to the past. However, a few, like Angela and Ursula, felt this was not always good. For example, the increasing use of tablets was sometimes a source of distraction and, in some ways, detrimental to learning. Ursula reminisces, "in my time...you get a book, and you lose yourself in the book...our children, even when they are outside, they are on the device...I think their attention span is much shorter than ours". Ursula's comments underscore changes in students' nature and how they learn. This change also points to the increasing need for teachers to be flexible and ready to modify their teaching approach and view of how students learn.

Roughly half of the teachers in the study favoured some form of co-management in their classrooms. They included Beverley, Devon and Fay. Devon, for example, believed that placing his students in groups facilitated the management of activities and the engagement of students. Devon and Fay also rejected corporal punishment as a form of classroom management. Devon states, "some people might say that my classroom is noisy...I am a person who doesn't like to beat, so beating is not really a part of me". Helen held a contrary view, "on corporal punishment, well, to be honest, with the generation we have now...I can't keep my hands at my side". Significantly, corporal punishment is against the regulations. However, the practice persists in pockets within the public education system. Apart from being against the education code, it underscores the tension in a society where the underlying belief is that children should be seen and not heard.

Regarding The Gambia, Schweisfurth (2015) writes that "a manifestation of the belief in authority and control was the prevalence of corporal punishment (technically regulated against but used by some in practice)" (p. 81). Concerning children speaking out of turn, Fay reports that it is a thing of the past, "the difference is that in my day, as one saying goes, 'you are seen and not heard.

So, now students can speak”. Although no teacher in the study openly expressed their belief in silencing children, like corporal punishment, it is not inconceivable that some may harbour this belief. This belief challenges attempts to get teachers, who were socialised in this way, to respect their students' rights and place them at the centre of their learning experience.

Assessment strategies also reflect the degree of learner-centredness that teachers employ in their classroom practice. For example, Angela tries incorporating students' real-life experiences into her mathematics lessons. Beverley uses peer review techniques. Victor does not believe in summative assessments because everyone learns at a different pace. Lorna uses her students' willingness to participate in activities to ascertain whether learning occurs.

Therefore, Angela, Beverley, Victor and Lorna use real-life strategies, incorporating students' experiences even as they share with their peers. The teachers' seeming rejection of summative evaluations represents a more progressive approach to teaching and learning. Freire (1974), in his ideas of critical learner-centred pedagogy, encouraged strong teacher-student relationships in the teaching-learning process because of its role in knowledge creation and the humanising effect it brings to learning. However, the challenge is that this is not a policy position because the MOEY's approach to assessment is through national standardised tests and assessments. Therefore, these assessments greatly influence how teachers teach as they are prerequisites for grade promotion at critical stages of the school cycle. For example, at the primary level, there are age 4 assessments, grade 1 learning profile, grade 4 literacy and numeracy tests (commonly called PEP4), Grade 5 ability test (PEP 5) and grade 6 primary exit profile (PEP).

Similarly, there is the Grade 9 National Assessment Test (GNAT), at grade 11, the City and Guild's Exit Exam and the Caribbean Examination Council Exam (CXC). Finally, at grades 12 and 13, there is the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE). Therefore, the extent to which teachers can use these progressive forms of assessments depends on the context and opportunities that the MOEY's framework of standardised assessments provides for teacher flexibility.

6.3.4 TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE NSC

Teachers' level of support for enacting the NSC was mixed. As I stated in Chapter 4, this reveals the underlying tension between the MOEY and teachers—between policy and practice. Of the sample of 20 teachers, eight gave their unconditional support for its enactment, seven gave their conditional approval, and five did not support its enactment.

Carlton supported the enactment of the NSC because, watching teachers teach using the curriculum, he realised that the students were excited about the new approach. Furthermore, MOEY has the authority to determine curriculum policy and teachers are obliged to comply, and if they feel that there is a better way, they should say so. However, the challenge is that they need someone to report it to because even though principals should be curriculum leaders, as I indicated earlier, their interviews suggest they do not see themselves in this light. Instead, they seemingly see themselves as extensions of the MOEY, which has severe implications for enacting the NSC.

Some teachers like Jacqueline, Icylyn, Trevor, and Norma believe teachers do not decide curricular policy. Therefore, among those teachers who unconditionally supported the MOEY's enactment of the NSC, the common refrain was that the MOEY had the authority to do so, and teachers were obliged to comply with its instructions. My question is whether teachers should have a say. Unfortunately, their involvement in the curriculum enactment process remains a sore point. Roofe's (2022) characterisation of the process as top-down, with the "MOEY as the central authority leading the conceptualisation, development, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum from the early years to secondary education" (p.298), confirms the lack of teacher involvement.

Jenkins (2020) argues that teachers require 'teacher professional agency', which is sometimes difficult to acquire, considering the numerous contextual factors at play. Two of these contextual factors that resonate in my study relate to the approach of the school's leadership to curriculum change and, precisely, the role of the principal. Importantly, even in instances where the curriculum enactment process is centralised and top-down, there should be room at the school level for discussion and flexibility in the enactment process that will allow for the contextual

application of the policy. Teachers are essential, and principals, as curriculum leaders, should facilitate their involvement by providing the necessary feedback and support that they need.

Some teachers gave their conditional support for the enacting of the NSC. Fay, for example, believed that its learner-centred orientation was appropriate, despite her reservations about the level of resourcing. Devon thought that it was a good attempt by the MOEY to improve the public education system. However, he was not happy with the level of monitoring and evaluation because, having piloted the NSC in his school, the MOEY did not return to do the review and get his feedback. Thus, "it seemed like a half-hearted attempt". Devon raises an essential issue because although the MOEY's Pilot of the NSC created an opportunity for direct teacher feedback as part of its monitoring and evaluation framework, it failed to get his input. This failure speaks to the much deeper issue of the top-down nature of the MOEY's enactment of curricular policy, which provides very few opportunities for direct teacher input. Moreover, despite the general lack of opportunities for teacher engagement in enacting curricular policy, there is also a tendency for the MOEY not to use the available mechanisms. Both situations may be symptomatic of its general inclination to centralise decision-making. For example, there is a Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT) in all schools that has the task of training the curriculum trainers and providing a forum for feedback from the schools to the MOEY's regional offices and its Core Curriculum Unit. However, often its members do not receive the necessary training and other forms of support from the MOEY to make them viable (NEI 2016).

Marcia believed schools needed to modify the NSC wherever necessary to cater to their unique needs. In some respects, Angela thought the NSC did not reflect the school's reality. For example, she referred to its content, the requirement to do backyard gardening, and the fact that some schools did not have the space to do those sorts of activities.

These teachers were on the proverbial fence regarding the NSC, and their concerns were valid. For example, in Devon's school, the MOEY's monitoring and evaluation of the Pilot of the NSC was incomplete, missing an opportunity for valuable feedback and teacher engagement. But, equally, the concerns regarding the level of resourcing echo those of the policymakers and principals.

Those teachers who did not support the MOEY's enactment of the NSC included Elizabeth, who was very strident in voicing her disapproval. She felt that teachers should decide what is taught in their classrooms. As she puts it, "the Ministry can't tell us, should not be able to tell us how to teach our classroom, because they are not in the classroom and see what we are dealing with, on paper and in practice are two different things". However, while Elizabeth may be correct in saying that the MOEY is often remote and needs to engage its teachers, it also has a supervisory role in ensuring that schools enact the NSC. Therefore, the more significant challenge is how to do this in a way that utilises the benefits of teachers' practical knowledge. Therefore, there is a case for greater teacher engagement in the process, as teachers like Elizabeth face classroom challenges. Rose also raises some critical points, focusing on the demands of the CXC chemistry syllabus and the MOEY's insistence on learner-centred approaches. She considers their position unworkable. This underscores the need to engage the teachers in the enactment process to include the design phase. Therefore, I believe that the MOEY's initial consultations regarding the design of the NSC should have included a broader cross-section of teachers.

6.4 CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

The classroom observations provided a valuable source to triangulate what the teachers said in their interviews with their practice. In this regard, I found that their classroom management techniques were primarily authoritarian, even though several said they practiced collaborative classroom management to ensure that their students were engaged in managing themselves and the activities.

The content and quality of teachers' questioning in their interactions with their students were primarily lower order, which did not necessarily foster the development of critical thinking skills. Most teachers constrained teacher-student interactions with them and emphasised class control rather than creating opportunities for student engagement. In most cases, the classroom climate restricted student participation and engagement, which did not allow the active questioning of concepts and offering of contending views. Finally, the observations showed that 14 of the 20 teachers actively used teacher-centred approaches in the lessons. The remaining used learner-centred approaches, despite 15 saying they practiced learner-centredness. Therefore, most of the

lessons I observed demonstrated the reverse of what teachers claimed, as the classroom climate was predominately teacher-centred.

It is common to find situations where teachers' espoused beliefs or what they say are inconsistent with what they do in their classroom practice (Windschitl, 2002). These inconsistencies may be due to several reasons. For example, the collaborative approach that the learner-centred NSC requires is fraught with practical difficulties. Including the fact that Classroom management requires greater student participation, which demands that teachers have special skills to mediate discussions and activities (Windschitl, 2002). Additionally, sometimes teachers' espoused beliefs mask the underlying beliefs and biases, and these hidden or implicit beliefs are the ones that shape their practice. For example, Brown et al. (2008) and Sztajn's (2003) research showing how teachers' implicit beliefs that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to be successful shaped their classroom practices is very instructive. However, changing these practices is complex, although consistent training to counter these tendencies is beneficial (Moore and Esselman, 1994). Finally, interventions are more effective if teachers can see the results and there is ongoing support from the school administration (Beck, 2015). So, despite policymakers' and principals' assertions that the successful enactment of the NSC requires teacher training, their engagement is a precursor to the success of these interventions.

6.5 ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What characterises the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and teachers' understanding of it?

The study's results indicate that the MOEY is not actively engaging its principals and teachers in the design and enactment of the NSC. The MOEY sees each group's role as simply enacting its decisions. There needs to be more feedback from each group, even though there are mechanisms within the schools that it could use to foster meaningful engagement of its principals and teachers. Weinbaum and Supovitz's (2010) curriculum refraction framework would be constructive. For example, if the MOEY supports and activates the schools' Curriculum Implementation Teams (CITs), they will link to its regional offices and Core Curriculum Unit. The CITs would therefore provide a valuable means of

ensuring continuous refinement of the NSC's written curriculum within the context of each school. Thus, recognising nuance and diversity, as the ecology of each school is different, while ensuring that the MOEY maintains the core elements of the standardised curriculum.

As it now stands, there is a considerable disconnect between the MOEY and the schools in terms of the leadership of the enactment process, and a lack of communication further compounds this. Additionally, principals see themselves as mere extensions of the MOEY and adopt a top-down approach in their interactions with their teachers. Rather than supporting them and facilitating feedback to the MOEY on the progress of the NSC's enactment.

Further, the MOEY and the principals believe that the primary challenge to the success of the NSC is possible teacher resistance, so considerable time is spent formulating plans for teacher training and buy-in. However, this is not so, as most support its enactment and are willing to engage with the process. Therefore, the primary issue is the quality of the engagement with them.

There is also the question of resourcing the process, as many teachers share this concern with policymakers and principals. Therefore, this is a commonly held view, and successful enactment of the NSC requires focusing on financial, material and human resources. As I argued earlier, there should be a re-think of the MOEY's school funding formula and the financial and other support it gives to schools, particularly those in poverty belts.

The primary concerns above characterise the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and teachers' understanding of it. These concerns have implications for the enactment of curriculum policy, how principals see themselves and how the MOEY see them as school leaders, and how policymakers and principals see teachers and their contribution to the process.

2. What can we learn from how the MOEY policymakers view the enactment of the NSC?

Policymakers knew that global influences partially shaped the NSC, and many associated their views about learner-centred pedagogy with their study tour of Singapore and Finland. Generally, policymakers cautioned against the wholesale adoption of a foreign curriculum without adequate alteration to suit the local socio-cultural context. Their support for the emancipation narrative was also evident. Nevertheless, policymakers did not articulate how the NSC would facilitate this change. Instead, how they implemented the NSC reflected a lack of sophistication, resulting in the NSC being very short on details. The lack of vital information included a working definition of learner-centred pedagogy and what this approach should look like in practice.

As policy actors, the reasonable expectation is that they would have a clear and coherent strategy. This strategy would, of necessity, reflect an appropriate mix of the desire for global participation, recognition of local imperatives, and other needs, such as schools' human and material resources to support enacting the NSC. Recognition of local imperatives requires close collaboration with principals, as they are the critical bridge between the NSC and teachers' classroom practice.

3. What can we learn from how principals view their roles in enacting the NSC in their schools?

Most principals support enacting the NSC and believe that enacting the NSC benefits the students. However, many principals see themselves as extensions of the MOEY rather than instructional leaders tasked with ensuring the efficacy of the enactment process in their schools. Consequently, principals were preoccupied with ensuring that their teachers complied with the MOEY's instructions rather than ensuring that they engaged their teachers in providing helpful feedback about the enactment process. The principals' stance risks undermining the efficacy of the enactment process and marginalises teachers' contributions to the process.

4. What can we learn from some of the practical understandings of teachers about the NSC?

The design and enactment of learner-centred education policies require a deep understanding of the cultural context, including the culture of schools and the socio-cultural orientations of teachers, principals and other stakeholders (Schweisfurth, 2015). In this scenario, the teachers are street bureaucrats and have considerable practical knowledge about teaching, learning and the curriculum. Their engagement and grasp of intentions are, therefore, paramount to the success of the NSC. Moreover, there is little doubt that their practical knowledge can form a valuable body of understandings to help policymakers and planners to make the NSC more relevant to the Jamaican situation. However, there is a need to equip teachers for valid enactment of the NSC, including through the intervention and support of the MOEY and principals.

6.6 CONCLUSION

The significant or broad finding of the study is that there is a gap between the MOEY's policy expectations for the NSC and both teachers' understanding of it and how they choose to enact it in their classroom practice. This disconnect is typical of the enactment of learner-centred education policy. The example of The Gambia is instructive because it shares some similarities with Jamaica, even though Jamaica is further ahead in its development of public education. Both countries are former British colonies, and global influences through international donor organisations help to shape the design and enactment of education policy. However, there is a mix of desire and resistance concerning policy changes. Schweisfurth (2015) argues that adopting learner-centred pedagogy in the public education system is desirable because policymakers see it as progress and a way to align and interact with the modern world. However, there are significant pockets of resistance at the local level, and the emancipation narrative in the NSC and DOSE reflects this ambivalence. In South Africa, the underlying socio-cultural factors combined limit the adoption of learner-centred pedagogical policy in the classroom (Nykiel-Herbert, 2014). Similarly, teacher-centred pedagogy persisted in India, as these practices were deeply rooted in its culture (Brinkmann, 2015).

The discrete findings of the study suggest that policymakers' awareness of the enactment of Learner-centred pedagogy was limited to Finland and Singapore. These countries have vastly different social, economic, and cultural contexts from

Jamaica. Consequently, this limits the extent to which they could make practical comparisons with the Jamaican public education system, and the data bears this out. Policymakers should have exercised greater care in designing the NSC to ensure appropriate cultural relevance. It should be noted that the interviews did not address the possible value-specific and other limits that international agencies may have placed upon the MOEY as conditions for funding the NSC. Exploring this area would have been very insightful, as there is 'plenty' of conjecture and a lack of verifiable evidence.

Policymakers were aware that the success of the NSC, in considerable measure, depended on the level of resourcing. However, their focus was mainly on resources to train teachers to enact the curriculum. For example, Policymaker 8 argued that "the Government will need to provide resources that will aid the curriculum implementation and in-service training for teachers". The need for resources to train teachers is undeniable; however, the NSC's resourcing should go beyond teacher training. For example, the need to ensure that the schools in the poverty belts receive adequate funding to cover curricular and co-curricular activities. The Jamaica Education Transformation Commission (2021) confirms that funding gaps disproportionately affect the poorest schools. This finding justifies a rethink of how the MOEY funds schools, particularly how it intends to fund the enactment of the NSC. Other than the need for ongoing training, there is the need for labs, internet capabilities, teaching support and general improvements to existing infrastructure.

Not surprisingly, the data revealed that the policymakers had a strong desire for change, which explains their heightened expectations for the NSC to transform students' learning in the public education system. However, as Richardson (2003) argues, the potential for transformation and what this looks like is always contextual. Schweisfurth (2015) wrote about the effect of culture on curriculum enactment, which I discussed in Chapter 2. However, some of what she says bears repeating here. She asserts that "culture is the first and last contextual factor shaping the potential for learner-centred education. It is the first because it shapes everything else. It is last because it is not static, and it has the potential to be shaped itself" (p.52). Thus, decisions regarding what are appropriate pedagogies are heavily dependent on social context. By extension, aspirations

should be tempered by nuance and a recognition that there are possibly many approaches to realising the desired outcomes.

It is also a question of managing the gap between the MOEY's expectations for the NSC and the reality of the enacted curriculum in the schools, which presupposes an acceptance that each school is different and that the practical enactment of the NSC requires mediation within the schools themselves. Weinbaum and Supovitz (2010) argue that if policymakers and planners deliberately enact a curriculum, they can determine what works in the classroom. They recommended a model that considers how actors refract the original policy intents at each process stage. This framework fosters a more nuanced and enriched approach and adds a degree of predictability to the results of the enactment process. For example, school A represents a refraction point. The education officer who supervises the school would assist the principal and teachers through the school's Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT) in mediating the NSC to ensure compatibility with local conditions and the retention of the core elements of the curriculum. Therefore, the MOEY would know how the teachers enact the NSC in their classrooms. At the same time, the enacted curriculum would better satisfy the school's needs while fulfilling the overall policy intent.

I argue that assessing the viability of likely approaches to the realisation of the desired outcomes requires the inclusion of all the actors into the decision-making framework. For example, Victor spoke about the need to encourage consensus. He says that "at the beginning of the reform, it was not as inclusive as it should have been". Similarly, Beverley supported the MOEY's vision for the NSC. However, she felt that "it requires 'a lot' and not everybody is on board with what you're [MOEY] are doing". Hence, the noted absence of the principals and teachers from the policymakers' presentations is problematic because principals are a bridge to the schools, and teachers are enactors of the curriculum in the classroom.

Principals believed in the NSC and its ability to positively provide opportunities for students to improve their learning. However, their concerns about the NSC were centred mainly on the likely inability of teachers to adopt the new approaches that learner-centred pedagogy entails. Principals saw this as their

main challenge. They also recognised the existence of resource constraints which needed to be addressed. However, like the policymakers, their emphasis was skewed towards material resources, not other resources, such as required staffing improvements in terms of numbers and the quality of teachers.

Overall, the principals' responses left the impression that they were MOEY officials (in situ within the schools). This positive display of loyalty to the MOEY's policy position is not necessarily objectionable. However, in some circumstances, such a stance is problematic, as in the Jamaican education system, the policymaking process is arguably top-down in its orientation, and the enactment of learner-centred approaches requires a change in the institutional culture from authoritarian to collaboration, as in arriving at a consensus, views should contend. The spirit of collaboration should begin at the policymaking level and end in the classrooms. As a result, principals risk becoming barriers to opposing views rather than active curriculum leaders with the responsibility to objectively represent the concerns of the schools and the teachers charged with enacting the curriculum and optimise the experiences of the young people for whom they have responsibility.

Elbaz's (1983) theory of teachers' practical knowledge was instrumental in revealing the significance of teachers' daily decision-making and how they actively shaped the teaching and learning experience, especially given the ill-defined nature of their work. Moreover, the theory provided a credible framework within which to analyse and report the work of the teachers in the study. It was evident that the teachers' knowledge of self or their experiences and values influenced their classroom practice. Similarly, their knowledge of the teaching milieu, subject matter and instruction. Regarding the NSC and its learner-centred orientation, some teachers unconditionally supported its enactment. An almost equal number gave conditional support primarily because they believed its success would depend on the MOEY providing the necessary resources.

Irrespective of whether they support the NSC, it was evident that the teachers, as a collective and as individuals, held and used practical knowledge about how to teach and how students learn. However, the disparity between teachers' support for the NSC and the teacher-centred nature of their classroom practice suggests that they lack the requisite skills and knowledge to enact the MOEY's

intended curriculum, considering allowance for nuance for students' needs and other variables. This evidence further underscores the need for policymakers and principals to engage teachers to ensure the success of the enactment process. This engagement should be twofold. First, to provide them with the necessary material and other support to improve their understanding of learner-centred pedagogy and cultivate the required skills. Second, to harness the benefits of teachers' practical knowledge.

Like the group of policymakers and principals, most teachers in the study favoured implementing the NSC. Arguably, their concerns were not necessarily with the MOEY's decision to implement the NSC. Instead, most of their problems were with how the MOEY conducted the process, its inadequate provision of resources to support it and what they interpreted as their side-lining. The study found that most of the concerns that teachers raised were reasonable. Therefore these, in turn, increased the fundamental issue of whether teachers' role in curriculum development should be looked at differently.

CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the study's contribution to knowledge, the implications, recommendations and limitations. As I discussed in chapter 2, the existence of gaps between the intentions and expectations of policymakers and how teachers enact curriculum policy in their classrooms is commonplace. To illustrate this point, I cited several examples, notably The Gambia, India and South Africa. Although these cases had similarities, for example, the tensions between the philosophy of learner-centredness and the socio-cultural underpinnings of the different societies, some manifestations were unique to each country. Likewise, this study is unique because it examines the gap between curriculum policy and practice within the Jamaican public education system's context. Therefore, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, students of education policy and others should view the study's overall contribution to knowledge in this light. Significantly, the study also uses policymakers, principals and teachers to tell the story of enacting the NSC.

7.1 THE STUDY'S CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The enactment of curriculum policy is a very complex process; therefore, the study's contribution to knowledge reflects this complexity. The cut and thrust of the NSC's enactment process were evident in the underlying tensions and the inherent misunderstandings, particularly in respect of the policymakers. Exploring the enactment of the NSC was like peeling an onion and examining each layer, starting with the MOEY policymakers and moving to principals and teachers.

The MOEY policymakers expressed commitment to enacting the NSC, and they believed in its value and that it would begin to improve the quality of the public education system. However, policymakers appeared to lack the necessary sophistication and appreciation for the challenges that they would have in enacting the globally-inspired NSC within Jamaican classrooms. Their apparent limited understanding of the challenges meant their design and implementation of the NSC did not adequately consider nor reflect the nuances of the public education system. For example, the policy did not define learner-centred

pedagogy and what it should look like in the Jamaican setting, nor did it reflect the disparities between schools in the system.

The primary lesson drawn from the policymakers' design and implementation of the NSC is that context matters. Especially that of a small post-colonial developing state like Jamaica. In this context, there is the issue of insufficient human and material resourcing. The fact that the inherent socio-culture belief systems run counter to the NSC's liberal philosophy. The policymakers also failed to satisfactorily consider and militate the existing inequality in educational opportunities. These lessons, when taken together, provide a unique perspective on curriculum design and implementation within the Jamaican context.

In the implementation process, principals are instructional leaders within schools. They occupy the space between the MOEY, on the one hand, and teachers, on the other hand. However, their role is not simply that of space-holder or go-between; it is much more. I argue that they should provide critical leadership and guidance in enacting the NSC in their schools and convey vital information to the MOEY through its regional offices to enable the practical customisation of the NSC. They also create the instructional climate in their schools. This instructional climate fosters or hinders the professional learning community where ideas are shaped and shared, which is vital in the ongoing enactment of the NSC. The principals are responsible for developing and maintaining this climate.

The functional role of principals as instructional leaders is integral to enacting the NSC. However, success depends on how principals understand and carry out this function and how the MOEY sees them as instructional leaders. Unfortunately, principals in this study saw themselves as extensions of the MOEY rather than instructional leaders. They believed their primary function was ensuring teachers complied with the MOEY's directives regarding enacting the NSC. In other words, they were the MOEY's compliance officers. The result of the principals seeming lack of understanding was that the MOEY lost the benefit of information that would have facilitated the customisation of the NSC and highlighted the other problems concerning its enactment. Mostly, principals left their teachers to grapple with the pedagogical and other challenges of enacting the NSC. For example, principals should ensure that enabling material and other resources are in place in their schools, such as teaching support, whiteboards,

computers, labs, and internet capabilities. However, the MOEY is not blameless because its top-down institutional culture fosters self-censure to ensure compliance.

The principals' recognition of their role as instructional leaders and the MOEY's acceptance of this imperative will heavily impact the eventual success of enacting the NSC. Consequently, the MOEY's failure to enlist principals' participation in the NSC's design and implementation and to take steps to foster a greater understanding of principals' roles seriously undermines enacting the NSC.

As I stated earlier, teachers in this study faced the pedagogical and other challenges of enacting the NSC without the full support of the MOEY, and their principals, as instructional leaders. However, generally, teachers demonstrated a practical grasp of the issues that undermined the enacting of the NSC. Moreover, the data indicate that teachers' practical knowledge would have been helpful in the MOEY's design of the NSC and the subsequent implementation framework. Finally, the data revealed that teachers understood the principles and the philosophy of learner-centred, even though the classroom observations showed a disconnect between teachers' expressed views and the practical application of the learner-centred principles. However, this finding is consistent with the literature, as there is a general acceptance that enacting learner-centred pedagogy in classrooms is exceptionally challenging. The interventions of policymakers and principals may address these challenges.

Significantly, teachers welcomed the MOEY's decision to implement the NSC in the public education system. This finding is essential, as it directly contradicts any notion that teachers were resisting or would resist efforts to change the curriculum. Instead, teachers complained about the general lack of sufficient guidance, the unavailability of vital resources and the MOEY's failure to appropriately involve them in the design of the NSC. Nevertheless, despite teachers' general support for enacting the NSC, their practical application of learner-centred principles in their classrooms paints a different picture. This disconnect suggests that there is a skills and knowledge deficit. Developing these skills requires the active support of principals and policymakers. Especially given the current context of having limited resources. These interventions could be

teacher-educative curriculum resources and collaborative teacher professional development.

In sum, the study's contribution to knowledge within the Jamaican context is that (a) policymakers should have a fulsome understanding of globally-inspired curriculum policy to ensure coherence with local conditions, (b) principals should see themselves as instructional leaders, not as extensions of the MOEY so that they can facilitate discussions that allow the customisation of the applicable curriculum policy and (c) teachers hold practical knowledge of their students, the teaching context and of curriculum, and they can make valuable contributions to the design and enactment of curriculum policy.

This study has also contributed to my professional development. When I started, I was the Chief Inspector of Schools. This role involved ensuring accountability to education policy. Since then, I have assumed the role of Acting Permanent Secretary of the MOEY and the overarching responsibility for education policy. This study has caused me to reflect on some of my earlier views about policymaking. For example, the seeming resistance of teachers might not be resistance at all. Instead, it might indicate that the policy does not fit the existing circumstances, and teachers must mediate and make sense of curriculum policy to ensure effective teaching and learning. Therefore, I have become a more reflective practitioner since conducting this study.

7.2 THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study's findings have implications for adopting and using globally-inspired curriculum policies in a small-island context, and policymakers must apply criticality in their decision-making process. In addition, the results point to a need to revisit the approach to curriculum policymaking, the exercise of flexibility and the need to ensure cultural relevance.

The study also revealed some elements of the local context that have implications for the success of the enactment of the learner-centred NSC in Jamaica. Chief among these factors is that it is an expensive undertaking. Therefore, new and more resources are needed to support the diverse and differentiated learning materials the NSC requires. These include the cost of securing more and different textbooks, computers, manipulatives, and modern school furniture. These

acquisitions will allow for more student collaboration in the classroom setting. There is also a need for the retrofitting of classrooms and laboratories. Early engagement of teachers with the proposed changes would allow policymakers to know how to develop the teacher learning plan, which would serve as a driver for the implementation of the NSC. This situation calls for a realistic policy planning process that considers the global and local contexts of policy, recognises the disparities between schools at the local level, and allocates resources with this in mind.

The values and beliefs teachers hold locally may not always combine with or reflect those promulgated through the NSC. Therefore, there is a need for shared leadership across the board, especially at the school level, with principals ensuring that they provide the necessary instructional leadership to facilitate the engagement of teachers and the enactment of the NSC.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The MOEY should make concerted efforts to incorporate the voices of principals and teachers in curriculum design and enactment and develop a comprehensive framework that facilitates their active participation and equipping for valid enactment. In addition, the framework to resource and fund schools requires urgent attention, and the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission's Report (2021) confirms this need. These are the main recommendations emerging from the findings.

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This is a small-scale study; therefore, the results are not generalisable to the population of policymakers, principals and teachers in Jamaica. However, among other things, the study's findings reveal the desire of some policymakers, principals and teachers for a curriculum that reflects Jamaica's cultural heritage and addresses the disparities between schools and student performance.

The profound question is how to bridge the divide between the traditional schools and the many low-performing schools that cater to the overwhelming majority of students. Orane (2018) and Espuet (2019) speak passionately about the unacceptable dualism between elite traditional schools and other schools in the public education system. Therefore, expectations for the success of the NSC are

high, and we might ask what this means for education practice in light of the global shift toward the GERM. It means that there should be an unyielding focus on the fundamentals. These fundamentals include the MOEY engaging and supporting principals and teachers in curriculum design and implementation. It also includes teacher development, insisting on ongoing career development training to foster their professional growth, and close collaboration with the teacher training colleges to ensure teachers join the classroom with the requisite skills to deal with existing and evolving challenges.

The proportional resourcing of schools based on need and rationalising the current investment framework to ensure that the limited resources are spent in the areas of greatest need and those that will have the greatest impact on improving student outcomes. The adoption of a curriculum that reflects Jamaica's heritage. The insistence on adopting home-grown best practices. Strengthening the monitoring and feedback framework within the MOEY to inform decision-making, especially given the extensive and multifaceted nature of the undertaking. This approach reflects what education policy development should look like. It reframes or reimagines decolonisation and provides a suitable framework for lessening the gap between education policy and practice.

The preceding represents significant insights despite the study's small size and that a more experienced researcher might have probed deeper and gleaned more from some of the interviews. However, there were some advantages as well. These include my intimate knowledge of the public education system, general access, and access to NSC data, even though being an insider was also a limitation.

REFERENCES

- Asan, O, and Montague E. (2014). Using video-based observation research methods in primary care health encounters to evaluate complex interactions, *Informatics in Primary Care*, 21, pp 160-170.
- Bacchus, M. (2008) 'The education challenges facing small nation states in the increasingly competitive global economy of the twenty-first century', *Comparative Education*, vol. 44, no. 2, pp. 127-145.
- Bacchus, M. (2009) 'The impact of globalization on curriculum. Yatta Kanu (ed) in *Curriculum as cultural practice: postcolonial imaginations*, University of Toronto Press.
- Ball, S, J., Maguire, M, and Brown A. (2012) *How schools do policy: policy enactment in secondary schools*, London, Routledge.
- Braun A., Ball, S, J., Maguire, M., Hoskins, K. (2011) 'Taking context seriously: towards explaining policy enactments in the secondary school', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, vol. 32, pp. 585-596.
- Bandura, A. (1989) *Social foundations of thought and action: a social cognitive theory*, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.
- Beck, C., Hart, D., and C, Kosnik. (2015) 'The teaching standards movement and current teaching practices', *Canadian Journal of Education*, vol. 27, no. 2 and 3, pp. 175-194.
- Beckford, G, L. (1972) *Persistent poverty: underdevelopment in plantation economies of the third world*, UWI Press.
- Beckford, G, L and Witter, M. (1982) *Small garden bitter weed: struggle and change in Jamaica*, Zed Books.
- Beijaard, D., and Verloop, N. (1996) 'Assessing teachers' practical knowledge', *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 275-286.
- Bell, L., and Stevenson, H. (2006) *Education policy: policy, themes, and impact*, New York, Routledge.
- Blumer, H. (1969) *Symbolic interactionism: perspective and method*, University of California Press, Ltd, London, England.
- Bogotch, I. (2000) 'Educational leadership and social justice: theory into practice', *Journal of School Leadership*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 2-13.
- Braun and Clarke v. (2022) Conceptual and design thinking thematic for analysis. *Qualitative Psychology*, 9(1), 3-26.
- Brinkmann, S. 2015 'Learner-centred education reforms in India: the missing piece of teachers' beliefs', *Policy Futures in Education*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 342–359.

Brinkmann S. 2019 'Teachers' beliefs and educational reform in India: From learner-centred to learning-centred education', *Comparative Education*, vol. 55, no.1, pp. 9-29.

Brown, E., Molfese, V., and Molfese, P. (2008) 'Preschool student learning in literacy and mathematics: impact of teacher experience, qualifications, and beliefs on an at-risk sample', *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, vol. 13, pp. 106–126.

Bryman, A. (2012) *Social research methods*, New York, Oxford University Press.

Buenfil-burgos, R. (2009) 'Politics, global territories and educational spaces', *Yearbook for National Society for the Study of Education*, vol. 108, no. 2, pp. 67-68.

Carter, K. (1993) 'The place of story in the study of teaching and teacher education', *Educational Researcher*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 5-12.

Chandler, R, Anstey, E and Henry, R. (2015). Listening to voices and visualizing data in qualitative research hypermodal dissemination possibilities. Sage Open.

Cheng, Yin Cheong. (2005) 'New paradigm for education reforms: globalization, localization, and individualization', In *New paradigm for re-engineering education: globalization, localization and individualization*, Springer-Netherlands, pp. 19-44.

Clandinin, D, J. (1986) *Classroom practice: teachers' images in action*, London, Falmer Press.

Congressional Research Service (2021) Foreign assistance and education sector: programs and priorities, US Congress.

Connelly, M and Clandinin, D, J. (1990) 'Stories of experience and interactive inquiry', *Educational Researcher*, vol.19, no. 5, pp. 2-14.

Crain, W. (2016) *Theories of development concepts and applications*, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.

Creswell, J, W and Plano-Clark, V, L. (2011) *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*, London, Sage.

Crotty, M. (2015) *The foundations of social research: meaning and perspective in the research process*, CA, Sage Publishers.

Datnow, A., Hubbard, L., and Mehan, H. (2002), *Extending educational reform one school to many*, London, Routledge.

De Lisle, J. (2012) 'Explaining whole system reform in small states: the case of Trinidad and Tobago secondary education modernization program', *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 64-82.

DeLeon, P., and DeLeon, L. (2002) 'What ever happened to policy implementation? An alternative approach', *Journal of Public Research Theory*,

vol. 12, no. 4, pp.467-492 [Online]. Available at <http://jpart.oxfordjournals.org/> (Accessed 16 June 2020).

Dewey, J. (1897) *My Pedagogic Creed*, New York and Chicago, E.L Kellogg and Company.

Dewey, J. 1934. *How we think*, Boston, D. C. Heath.

Di Biase, R. (2019) 'Enabling Pedagogic Reform in the Maldives: implications for translating policy into teacher practice' *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, Vol. 39, NO. 3.

Edwards, D B., Rappeport A, Sperduti V. R and Caravaca, A (2021) "Paper commissioned for 2012/2 global education Monitoring report, Non-state actors in education" UNESCO

Elbaz, F. (1981) 'The teacher's practical knowledge: report of a case study', *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol.11, no.1, pp. 43–71.

———. (1983) *Teacher Thinking: Study of Practical Knowledge*, New York, Routledge.

———. (1991) Research on teacher's knowledge: the evolution of a discourse, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 1-19.

Elbaz-Luwisch, F., and Orland-Barak L. 2013. 'From teacher knowledge to teacher learning in community: Transformations of theory and practice', *Research on Teaching*, vol. 19, 97-113.

Fenstermacher, G. D. (1979) 'A philosophical consideration of recent research on teacher effectiveness', In L. S. Shulman (ed.), *Review of Research in Education* vol. 6, pp. 157-18.

Flinders, D. (1989) *Voices from the classroom: education practice can inform policy*, Oregon, Eric.

Fosnot, C. (1996) 'Constructivism: a psychological theory of learning', in Fosnot, C. (ed), *Constructivism: Theory, Perspectives, and Practice*, New York, Teachers College Press, pp. 8-33.

Freire, P. (1970) (2013) *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, New York, Bloomsbury.

——— (1976) *Education: the practice of freedom*, Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative.

——— (1996) *Letters to Christina: reflections on my life and work*, New York, Routledge.

——— 1974(2007) *Education for critical consciousness*, New York, Continuum.

——— 1997 *Mentoring the mentor: a critical dialogue with Paulo Freire*, New York, Peter Lang.

Freire, P. and Faundez, A. (1989) *Learning to question: a pedagogy of liberation*, New York, Continuum.

Freire, P and Macedo, D. 1987 *Literacy: reading the word and the world*, South Hadley MA, Bergin and Garvey.

———. (1982) *The meaning of educational change*, New York, Teachers College Press.

———. (1993) *Change forces: probing the depths of educational reform*, London, Falmer.

Fullan, M. (2000) 'The role of the principal in school reform', *Occasional Paper Series*, 2000(6), p.2. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.58295/2375-3668.1254> (Accessed: 18 January 2023).

Fuller and Stevenson (2019) 'Global education reform: understanding the movement', *Education Review*, vol. 71, no.1, pp. 1-4 [Online]. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1532718> (Accessed 26 May 2020).

Gergen, K. (2015) *An invitation to social construction*, New York, Sage.

Gerhardt, H-P. (2000) Paulo Freire, *UNESCO: International Bureau of Education* [Online]. Available at http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Publications/thinkerspdf/freiref.PDF (Accessed 10 April 2018).

Goodson, I, F. (1992) *Studying teachers' lives: problems and possibilities*, London, Routledge.

Goulet, D. (2005) 'Introduction' in Freire, P, *Education for critical consciousness*, London, Bloomsbury.

Greenwood J.D. (1994) *Realism identity and emotion*, London, Sage.

Greenwood and Levin (2000) *Handbook of qualitative research*, California

Guba, E and Lincoln, Y. (2005) Paradigmatic controversies, contradictory and emerging influences, in Denzin and Lincoln (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, pp. 191-215.

Halinen, I. (2018) 'The new educational curriculum in Finland', *Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe*, vol. 7, pp. 75-89.

Hargreaves, A. (1994) *Dissonant voices: teachers and the multiple realities of restructuring*, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Research Association, New Orleans, LA April 4-8, 1994.

Hattie, J. (2003) Teachers make a difference, what is the research evidence? Paper presented at the *Building Teacher Quality: What Does the Research tell us ACER Research Conference, Melbourne, Australia* October 2003 [Online]. Available at http://research.acer.edu.au/research_conference-2003/4/ (Accessed 26 May 2019).

Hickling-Hudson, A. (2014) 'Striving for a better world: lessons from Freire in Grenada, Jamaica, and Australia', *International Review of Education*, vol. 60, no. 4, pp. 523-543.

Hirsch, J. (1999) *The schools we need and why we don't have them*, New York, Anchor Books.

Hutton, D. M. (2015). 'Governance, management and accountability: The experience of the school system in the English-speaking Caribbean countries', *Policy Futures in Education*, vo.13(4), pp.500-517.

Kirk, D and MacDonald, D. (2001) Teacher voice and ownership of curriculum change, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 33 v. 5, pp. 551-567.

Levi, D.E. (1989) *Michael Manley: the making of a leader*, Kingston, Heineman Publishers (Caribbean) Limited.

Lincoln, Y. S., and Denzin, N. K. (2005) 'The discipline and practice of qualitative research', In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications Ltd.

Lipsky. M. (1969) *Towards a theory of street level bureaucracy*, Institute for the Research Poverty, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Lortie, D. (1975) *Schoolteacher: a sociological study*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Macedo, D. (1970) 'Introduction' in Freire, P, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, London, Bloomsbury

Mackie, R. (1988) 'Confusion and despair: Blanca Facundo on Paulo Freire', Australia: *Department of Education* [Online]. Available at <https://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/documents/Facundo/Mackie.html> (Accessed 2 September 2017).

Matland, R. E. (1995) 'Synthesizing the implementation literature: the ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 145-174.

Mason, J. (2002) *Qualitative researching*, London, Sage.

Massel and Perrault. (2014) 'Alignment: its role in standards-based reform and prospects for the common core', *Theory into Practice*, vol. 53, no. 3, pp. 196-203.

Maxwell, J.A. (2012) *Qualitative research design: an interactive approach*, CA, Sage.

McDonald, L. (2012) 'Educational transfer to developing countries: policy and skill Facilitation', *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences*, vol. 69, pp. 1817-1826, [Online]. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275541996_Educational_Transfer_to_Developing_Countries_Policy_and_Skill_Facilitation (Accessed 15 June 2016).

McLaughlin M.W., and Marsh, D.D. (1978) 'Staff development and school change', *Teachers College Record*, vol. 80, pp. 70-94.

McLaughlin M.W. (1987) 'Learning from experience: lessons from policy implementation', *American Educational Research*, vol. 9, pp. 171-178.

- Mercer, J. (2007). 'The challenges of insider research in educational institutions: Wielding a double-edged sword and resolving delicate dilemmas'. *Oxford Review of Education*, vol 33 no. 1, pp. 1-17.
- Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mikser, R, Kärner, A and Krull, E (2016). Enhancing teachers' curriculum ownership via teacher engagement in the state-based curriculum: Estonian case, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 48 v.6
- Miller, E. (1984) *Education research in the English-speaking Caribbean*, Ottawa, IDRC
- (1987) 'Church state and secondary education in Jamaica 1912-1943', *Ruby Hope King (ed), Kingston, UWI*.
- (1993) 'Jamaican society and high schooling', *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, vol. 18, no. 36, pp. 160-162.
- (1999) 'Commonwealth Caribbean education in the global context', *EDUCOAS.org*.
- Miller, P. (2016) *Exploring school leadership in England and the Caribbean: new insights from a comparative approach*, Bloomsbury, London.
- MOEYI. (2004) *Task Force Report on Education*, Kingston, MOEYI REP.
- MOEYI. (2016) *National Curriculum Document*, MOEYI.
- MOEYI. (2018) *National Standards Curriculum Grades 7-8 APSE 1*.
- Moore, W.P., and M.E. Esselman. (1994) 'Exploring the context of teacher efficacy: the role of achievement and climate', *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association* in New Orleans, LA, *Psychology in Schools*, vol. 31, pp. 221-231.
- Mundy, K., Green, A., Lingard, R., and Verger, A. (2016) *The Handbook of Global Education Policy*, John Wiley & Sons.
- Murgatroyd, S, and Sahlberg, P. (2016) 'The two solitudes of education policy development', *Journal of Learning and Development*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 9-21.
- NEI. (2014) *School Inspection Report*, Kingston, MOEYI NEI REP.
- NEI. (2017) *School Inspection Report*, Kingston, MOEYI NEI REP.
- NEI. (2019) *School Inspection Report*, Kingston, MOEYI NEI REP.
- NEI. (2021) *School Inspection Report*, Kingston, MOEY NEI REP
- Nespor, J. (1987) 'The role of beliefs in the practice of teaching', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, vol. 19, pp. 317-328.
- Nettleford, R. (1970) *Mirror, mirror: identity, race, and protest in Jamaica*, Kingston Publishers.

- Newby, P. (2010) *Research methods for education*, UK, Pearson Education Ltd.
- Nkwi, P., Nyamongo, I., and Ryan, G. (2001). Field research into socio-cultural Issues: Methodological guidelines. Yaounde, Cameroon, Africa: International Center for Applied Social sciences, Research and Training/UNFPA.
- Nykiel-Herbert, B. (2014) 'Mis-constructing knowledge: The case of learner-centred pedagogy in South Africa', *Prospect*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 249-265.
- Oakes, J., Stuart-Wells, A., and Jones, M. (1997) 'Detracking: the social construction of ability, cultural politics, and resistance to reform', *Teachers College Record*, vol. 98, no. 3, [Online]. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Makeba_Jones/publication/279699852_Detracking_The_Social_Construction_of_Ability_Cultural_Politics_and_Resistance_to_Reform/links/5c9a46b3a6fdccd4603cc46f/Detracking-The-Social-Construction-of-Ability-Cultural-Politics-and-Resistance-to-Reform.pdf (Accessed 23 February 2016)
- Oakes, J., Hunter-Quartz, K., Ryan, S., & Lipton, M. (2000) *Becoming good American schools: the struggle for civic virtue in educational reform*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- OECD. (2010) Finland: *slow and steady reform for consistently high results*, [Online]. Available at <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/46581035.pdf> (Accessed 5 October 2017).
- OECD. (2017) 'Education policy implementation: a literature review and proposed frameworks', *OECD education working paper no. 62*, OECD.
- OECD. (2019) 'Change management: facilitating and hindering factors of curriculum implementation', *9th Informal Workshop Group Meeting*. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, May 22-24, [Online]. Available at https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/contact/Change_management_for_curriculum_implementation_Facilitating_and_hindering_factors_of_curriculum_implementation.pdf (Accessed 6 November 2019)
- OECD. (2019) 'Future education and skills 2030: curriculum analysis', OECD.
- Onwuegbuzie, A and Leech, N. (2006) 'Linking research questions to mixed methods data analysis procedure', *CAHSS Journals*, vol. 11, no. 3.
- Orane, D. (2018) 'End education apartheid in Jamaica now', *The Gleaner*, 27 June [Online]. Available at <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20180628/orane-end-educational-apartheid-jamaica-now> (Accessed 27 June 2018).
- Ornstein, A, C, and Hunkins, F, P. (2018) *Curriculum: foundations, principles, and issues*, Pearson.
- Palincsar, A. S. (1998) 'Social constructivist perspectives on teaching and learning', *Annual Review of Psychology*, vol. 49, pp. 345-375.

Paudel, N, R. (2009) 'A critical account of policy implementation theories' status and considerations, *Nepalese Journal of Public Policy and Governance*, vol. xxv, no. 2, pp. 36-54.

Pedersen, S. & Liu, M. (2003) 'Teachers' beliefs about issues in the implementation of a student-centered learning environment', *Education Technology Research and Development*, vol. 51, no.2, pp. 57-76.

Popkewitz, T and Rizvi, F. (2009) *Globalization and the study of education, USA*, Wiley-Blacknell Malden.

Ravitch, S. M, and Riggan. J. M. (2012) *Reason and rigor: how conceptual frameworks guide research*, Washington DC, Sage.

Reed, G.G. (2007) 'Glocalizing education: focusing in and focusing out', *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education*, 7(1), pp.16-25. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2304/csee.2007.7.1>. (Accessed: 18 January 2023).

Richardson, V. (1990) 'Significant and worthwhile change in teaching practice', *Educational Researcher*, vol. 19, no. 7, pp. 10–18.

Richardson, V. (1996) 'The role of attitudes and beliefs in learning to teach'. In J. Sikula (ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education*, New York, Macmillan, pp. 102-119.

Richardson, V. (2003) 'Constructivist pedagogy', *Teachers College Record*, vol. 105, no. 9, pp. 1623-1640.

Roofe, C. (2014) 'One size fits all: perceptions of the revised primary curriculum at grades one to three in Jamaica', *Research in Comparative and International Education*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 4-15.

Roofe, C. (2019) 'Policy and practice in Jamaican primary schools: an analysis of school leaders and teachers' experiences', *Caribbean Journal of Education*, UWI, Mona, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 162-190.

Sahlberg, P. (2011) 'The professional educator: lessons from Finland', *American Educator*, vol. 35, no. 2, pp. 34-38, [Online]. Available at <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ931215> (Accessed 12 October 2017).

Sahlberg, P. (2012) 'How germ is infecting schools around the world' [Online] Available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/how-germ-is-infecting-schools-around-the-world/2012/06/29/gJQAVELZAW_blog.html (Accessed 10 February 2021)

Sahlberg, P. (2010) 'Rethinking accountability in a knowledge society', *Journal of Education Change*, vol. 11, pp. 45-61.

Schweisfurth, M. (2011) 'Learner-centred education in developing contexts: from solution to problems?' *Journal of Education Development*, vol. 3, pp. 425-432.

Schweisfurth, M. (2013) 'Learner-centred education in international perspective', *Journal of International and Comparative Education*, vol. 2, no.1, pp. 1-8.

Schweisfurth, M. (2015) *Learner-centred Education in International Perspective:*

whose pedagogy for whose development? London, Routledge.

Schweisfurth, M and Elliot, J. (2019). When 'best practice' meets the pedagogical nexus: contextualisation, reframing and resilience. *Comparative Education*, 55 (1), pp 1-8.

Shulman, L. (1987) 'Knowledge and teaching: foundations of new reform', *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 57, no. 1, pp. 1-21.

Shaw, G. B. (1903) *Man and superman: a comedy and philosophy*, New York: Brentano.

Sherlock, P and Bennett, H. (1998) *The story of the Jamaican people*, Kingston, Ian Randle Publishers.

Sjoberg, S. (2015) PISA and global educational governance—A critique of the projects, its uses and implications. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281684204_PISA_and_Global_Educational_Governance_A_Critique_of_the_Project_its_Uses_and_Implications (Accessed 6 March 2023).

Swart, F., de Graaff, R., Onstenk., J., and Knezic, D. (2018) 'Teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of language'. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, vol.24, no.2, pp. 166-182

Supovitz, J., and Weinbaum, E. (2008). *The implementation gap: Understanding in high schools*, Teacher College Press.

Sztajn, P. (2003) 'Adapting reform ideas in different mathematics classrooms: beliefs beyond mathematics', *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, vol. 6, pp. 53–75.

UNICEF (2021) 'Causal and bottleneck analysis for the situation analysis lifelong learning/education UNICEF Jamaica' Unpublished.

Tabulawa, R. (1995) *A socio-cultural analysis of geography classroom practice in Botswana senior secondary schools*, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Birmingham, England.

————— (1998) 'Teachers' perspectives on classroom practice in Botswana: implications for pedagogical change', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 249-268.

————— (2003) 'International aid agencies, learner-centred pedagogy and political democratisation: a critique', *Comparative Education*, vol. 39, no.1, pp. 7-26.

————— (2009) 'Education reform in Botswana: reflections on policy contradictions and paradoxes', *Comparative Education*, vol. 45, no.1, pp. 87-107.

Taylor, S., Rizvi, F., Lingard, B., and Henry, M. (1997) *Educational Policy and the Politics of Change*, London, Routledge.

Torres, R. (2007). 'Education or banking', *Journal of Adult Education and Development* [Online]. Available at <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/adult-education-and-development/editions/aed-692007/10th-anniversary-of-paulo-freire-s-death/education-or-banking>. (Accessed 11 July 2018).

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978) *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes*, Cambridge, Harvard Press.

Weaver, K. (2010) 'But will it work? Implementation analysis to improve government performance', *Issues in Governance Studies*, vol. 32 [Online]. Available at https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/02_implementation_analysis_weaver.pdf (Accessed 10 October 2019).

Weinbaum, E and Supovitz, J. (2010). 'Planning ahead: Make program implementation more predictable', *PDK International*, vol. 91, Issue 7.

Wilkins, J.L.M. (2008) 'The relationship among elementary teachers' content knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and practices', *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 139–164.

Windschitl, M. (2002) 'Framing constructivism in practice as the negotiation of dilemmas: an analysis of the conceptual, pedagogical, cultural, and political challenges facing teachers', *Review of Educational Research*, vol. 72, no. 2, pp. 131–175.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AND GSAT DATA

STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AND GSAT DATA

1

Region 1 is one of the largest of the MOEYI's six education regions and has the largest number of high schools. Among its 140 schools, there are 19 traditional, 18 non-traditional, and four technical and agricultural high schools, or a total of 41 of the 170 high schools in the public education system. The results of the CSEC, which is the main exit exam at the secondary level, shows the glaring difference in the achievements of students who attend traditional high schools compared to their peers who attend the non-traditional ones (Table A).

Table A: CSEC Results and PATH Data for Region 1 (2014-2017)

DETAILS	ELIGIBLE COHORT	PASSES IN ENGLISH	%	PASSES IN MATHS	%	PASSES IN 5 OR MORE, WITH ENGLISH & MATHS	%	POP	PATH
TOP 10 TRAD HIGH SCHOOLS	2,509	2,341	93.3	2,184	87.0	1,986	79.1	15,460	1,272
TOP 10 NON-TRAD HIGH SCHOOLS	2,508	992	39.5	553	22.0	283	11.2	12,440	3,185
TOTALS/%	5,017	3,333	66.4	2,737	54.6	2,269	45.2	27,900	4,457

For the period 2014-2017, the results of the top ten performing traditional high schools with a combined eligible cohort of 2,509 students shows that 2,341 or 93.3 percent of them passed English language and 2,184 or 87 percent passed mathematics. Similarly, 1,986 students or 79.1 percent passed five or more subjects, to include mathematics and English language. This is the minimum matriculation for tertiary training at the universities and colleges.

Correspondingly, in the top ten performing non-traditional high schools in the region, with an eligible cohort of 2,508 student, only 992 students or 39.5 percent passed English language, 553 or 22 percent of them

STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AND GSAT DATA

2

passed mathematics, and 283 students or 11.2 percent passed five or more subjects, to include English language and mathematics. The data show that this disparity in students' achievements was consistent throughout the remaining five education regions. The data also show that a higher number (3,185) of students attending the top ten non-traditional high schools were deemed poor or vulnerable, and therefore received welfare assistance from the State (PATH programme). This compares to 1,272 who attend traditional high schools (NEI, 2015).

Table B: Placement of 2016 GSAT Students

DETAILS	GSAT COHORT	%	TRADITIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS	%	NON-TRADITIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS	%	NOT PLACED	%
PRIVATE SCHOOLS	3,941	9.8	2,490	63	1,292	33	159	4
PUBLIC SCHOOLS	36,424	91.2	8,847	24	25,958	72	1,619	4
TOTALS	40,365	100	11,337	28	27,250	68	1,778	4

A similar situation exists in the comparative achievements of students who attend the public primary schools versus their peers who attend the private preparatory schools. The results of the GSAT, which is the exit examination at the primary level consistently demonstrate this. For example, in 2016 the results show that 36,424 or 91.2 percent of the 40,365 students who sat the examination were from public primary schools. However, only 24 percent of them were placed in traditional high schools, 72 percent of them were placed in non-traditional high schools, and the remaining four percent were not placed. This compares to 63 percent of the students from the private preparatory schools being placed in traditional high schools, 33 percent in non-traditional high schools, and four percent not being placed in either (Table B).

The fact that the disparity in the quality of education seemingly starts at the primary level and feeds into the secondary level indicates the cyclic

STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AND GSAT DATA

3

nature of the inequality. Its interrelationship with poverty is also of concern. For example, the data show that more than 200 of the low performing multi-grade primary schools are scattered across the rural poverty belt of the island. This is an area that stretches from the hills of remote rural St. Andrew along the spine of the Blue Mountains, which is the highest mountain range on the island, into the parish of St. Mary (NEI, 2020). The NEI also rated 50 primary schools in the interior of the parish of Clarendon, as unsatisfactory (NEI, 2015). Crucially, these schools are beset with problems of institutional capacity and lack of adequate resources. For example, in many of them the principal functions as a classroom teacher, teachers teach multiple grade levels and subject areas, and many of the students who enter these schools lack early childhood education. Yet, they sit the same exams for entry into high schools without the requisite support and scaffolding that the early childhood exposure would have provided, and so the poor results are expected.

APPENDIX 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW MOEYI AGENCIES

Description of the New MOEYI Agencies Created by the ESTP

Description of the New MOEYI Agencies Created by the ESTP

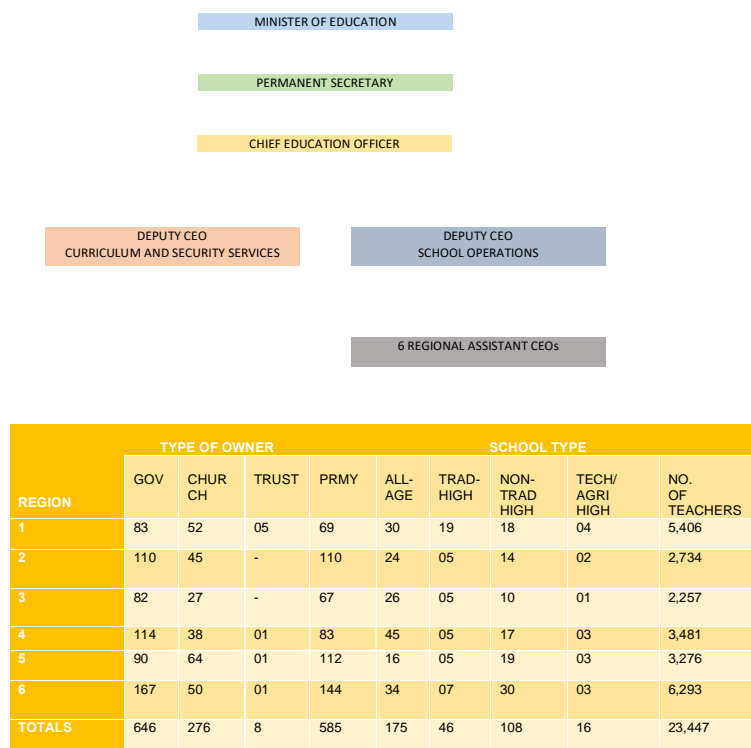
The newly-created agencies in the MoEYI are the: (a) National Education Inspectorate (NEI) which is responsible for the systematic inspection of public schools and monitoring students' performance; (b) the Department of School Services (DSS) which has the responsibility for school improvement, accountability and providing technical support to the schools; (c) Jamaica Teaching Council (JTC) which has the responsibility of developing frameworks or systems for the registration and licensing of teachers and the provision of in-service teacher training programmes; (d) National College for Education Leadership (NCEL), initially imagined as an arm of JTC, whose focus is on the training and certification of principals and education leaders; National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC) with its mission of enhancing the relationship between the home and schools, and creating opportunities for parents' involvement in their children's learning; (e) Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (J-TEC), which has the responsibility for the regulation and licensing of education entities; and (f) the National Education Trust (NET), the agency through which the MoEYI secures funding for capital expenditures. Conceptually, much emphasis was placed on the self-directed nature of the new units to give them the autonomy to make timely decisions, with the requisite oversight from the MoEYI.

APPENDIX 3: ABRIDGES ILLUSTRATION OF JAMAICA'S PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

Abridged Illustration of Jamaica's Public Education System

1

Figure A: Abridged Illustration of Jamaica's Public Education System



The public education system is complex. There are 1,720 early childhood institutions, which are primarily community-based and privately owned, and 930 primary and high schools, the latter are the immediate focus of the study. At the top of this system is the minister of education, and below is the permanent secretary, the chief education officer, two deputies, six regional directors; one for each of the six educational regions, 930 school boards, 930 school principals, 23,447 teachers (circa, 2019), and numerous administrators, and workers. The 930 schools in the system comprise: 585 primary schools, 175 all-age schools, 46 traditional high schools, 108 non-traditional high schools, and 16 technical and agricultural high schools (Figure A). In relation to

ownership, 646 schools are government owned, 276 of them are owned by churches, and eight are owned by trusts. The government schools, as implied, are owned by the State and it has the responsibility for all expenses incurred in running them.

Although church and trust schools own their lands and buildings the government is responsible for paying the salaries of teachers and administrators, upkeep of the schools' infrastructure, and for providing monetary allocations for each student enrolled. Therefore, the government pays these schools to teach students. Even though the government is the church and trust schools' leading benefactor, the churches and trusts have significant authority over the management of their affairs. This is because they have majority membership on their boards of management, exert strong ecumenical and other influences in the wider society, and many of these schools are among some of the oldest and best performing in the country, as judged by the exam results. Given their strong tradition of excellence many of them are also among the most sought after, and annual applications are almost always over-subscribed.

APPENDIX 4: PARTICIPANTS' CONSENT FORM

Participants' Consent Form

PARTICIPANTS' CONSENT FORM

Title: The Implementation of the National Standards Curriculum in Jamaica: Using Teachers Understandings to inform a Collaborative Model of Curriculum Change.

Maureen Dwyer:
Student Researcher
University College London - Institute of Education
Bedford Way, London

Serial	Particulars	Please Initial
1.	I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.	
3.	I agree to take part in the above study.	
4.	I agree to the interview being audio recorded.	
5.	I agree to the lesson being video recorded.	
6.	I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications.	

Name of Participant
Signature

Date

Name of Researcher
Signature

Date

APPENDIX 5: POLICYMAKERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Policymakers' Questionnaire

1

Policymakers' Questionnaire

I am undertaking an independent study as a doctoral student researcher at the University College London–Institute of Education. My topic of interest is: “The Implementation of the National Standards Curriculum in Jamaica: Using Teachers Understandings to inform a Collaborative Model of Curriculum Change”. The purpose of this study is to explore if there is a policy/practice gap in the implementation of the NSC, and whether teachers' practical knowledge should be harnessed in the design and implementation of curricular policy.

You have been selected to participate in the study based on the post that you hold as a policymaker in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica. Your responses are very important to the study. Please answer each question carefully so that the information provided reflects your views. It is estimated that it will require approximately 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

All answers given will be held confidentially. Its only purpose is the partial fulfillment of my Doctor of Education Thesis, at the University College London – Institute of Education.

Thank you.

1. What is the guiding philosophy behind the MoEYI's strategy of adopting learner-centred pedagogical approaches?
2. In articulating a learner-centred philosophy of pedagogy for Jamaican classroom, what are the social, political, historical and economic factors that drove the decision?
 - a. Social:
 - b. Historical:
 - c. Political:
 - d. Economical:

Policymakers' Questionnaire

2

3. Could you explain some of the specific short, medium, and long-term expectations to be fulfilled by the application of this approach to teaching and learning?
 - a. Expectations for students:
 - b. Expectations for teachers:
 - c. Expectations for the education System:
4. Are you aware of the use of learner centred approaches in other countries and the effects the results that have been gained from the use of these approaches? Please expand.
5. If yes, could you say specifically which of these countries would have directly influenced our decision to adopt the approach? How so?
6. Further comments:

Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire is appreciated.

APPENDIX 6: PRINCIPALS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Principals' Questionnaire

Principals' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is addressed to a sample of primary and secondary school principals, in Jamaica. Your school has agreed to participate in an independent study that I am undertaking, as a doctoral student researcher at the University College London–Institute of Education. My topic is: “The Implementation of the National Standards Curriculum in Jamaica: Using Teachers Understandings to inform a Collaborative Model of Curriculum Change”.

The purpose of this study is to explore if there is a policy/practice gap in the implementation of the NSC, and whether teachers' practical knowledge should be harnessed in the design and implementation of curricular policy.

Your school has been selected as part of a nationwide sample, and your responses are very important to the study. Please answer each question carefully so that the information provided reflects your views. It is estimated that it will require approximately 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

All answers given will be held confidentially. Its only purpose is the partial fulfillment of my Doctor of Education Thesis, at the University College London – Institute of Education.

Information about your academic and professional background

- a. How long have you been Principal, (i) overall _____, (ii) in this school, _____.
- b. What is your professional qualification? _____.

Statement: the MoEYI is making its third attempt to implement Learner-centred approaches in the Jamaican Classroom. Considering this, please respond to the following questions:

- 1a. Are you aware of the latest attempt? If yes, name and describe the mechanism being used, and your views on the MoEYI's efforts to encourage learner-centred approaches?
- 1b. What is your role, as the Principal, in the implementation of the NSC?

Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire is appreciated.

APPENDIX 7: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Teachers' Questionnaire

1

Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is addressed to a sample of primary and secondary school teachers, in Jamaica. Your school has agreed to participate in an independent study that I am undertaking, as a doctoral student researcher at the University College London–Institute of Education. My topic of interest is: "The Implementation of the National Standards Curriculum in Jamaica: Using Teachers Understandings to inform a Collaborative Model of Curriculum Change"

The purpose of this study is to explore if there is a policy/practice gap in the implementation of the NSC, and whether teachers' practical knowledge should be harnessed in the design and implementation of curricular policy.

You and your class have been selected as part of a nationwide sample, and your responses are very important to the study. Please answer each question carefully so that the information provided reflects your views. It is estimated that it will require approximately 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

All answers given will be held confidentially. Its only purpose is the partial fulfillment of my Doctor of Education Thesis, at the University College London – Institute of Education.

Information about your academic and professional background

- a. How long have you been teaching, (i) overall _____, (ii) in this school, _____.
- b. What grade levels have you taught? _____.
- c. What is your professional qualification? _____.

Teacher's Beliefs about Teaching

- 1a. How would you describe your philosophy of teaching?
- 1b. What methods do you use to achieve success in the classroom?

Teachers' Questionnaire

2

1c. Are there any personal experiences that have had positive or negative influences on your approach to teaching?

1d. Are there any exceptional experiences that you can share?

1e. Please share the 3 most important views that you have on teaching?

Teachers' Beliefs about Students' Learning

2a. What, in your view, are the best ways for students to learn?

2b. How do you know that your students are learning?

2c. Please explain further what might have influenced you to think about learning in these ways.

2d. Please reflect for a moment on students' learning, and compare it to when you were a student. Is there a difference? If there is, what do you think accounts for it?

Teachers' Understanding of Learner – centred Pedagogy

3a. What is your philosophy of classroom management?

3b. Describe how you accommodate the different learning styles within your classroom, and how you understand learner-centredness?

MoEYI Attempts to Implement Learner-centred Pedagogy.

The MoEYI is making its third attempt to implement Learner-centred approaches in the Jamaican Classroom. Considering this, please respond to the following question:

4. Are you aware of the MoEYI's latest attempt? If yes, what are your views on its efforts to encourage learner-centred approaches?

Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire is appreciated.

APPENDIX 8: SPECIMEN OF TEACHER'S INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Specimen of Teacher's Interview Transcript

1

Specimen of Teacher's Interview Transcript

Interviewer: ...shouldn't take more than twenty minutes.

Interviewee: Alright.

Interviewer: So uhm, if you want to read that first, it's okay.

Interviewee: Yes, I'm almost finished.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm. Oh, put your initial, simply because uhm, a tick can be changed.

Interviewee: Alright.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: So, this is on [inaudible – 00:01:10] mention my name is [REDACTED]. Oh, my word I am not even sure [REDACTED] had told you my name. My name is [REDACTED]

Interviewer: He said [REDACTED].

Interviewee: Alright. And today's date is the eighteenth?

Interviewer: Eighteenth. A young man in the class told me the nineteenth.

Interviewee: A me write it wrong. It's the eighteenth.

Interviewer: Eighteenth.

Interviewee: Yes, that means that is a mistake that I had on the board by not consulting because the watch is saying the eighteenth. And you hear mi a tell them fi have watch and mi have it and naa use it [REDACTED] and this is mine?

Interviewer: And that's yours. So afterwards you can look at it again.

Interviewee: Yes, I will.

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Interviewer: To make sure we are on the same page. So, I'm going to ask you for a bit of demographic data and then I'm going to speak to you about your belief about teaching and learning and then I am going to ask you about how you understand

learner centered pedagogy. And then I'm going to mention a ministry policy and ask you your view of that.

a. So, how long have you been teaching?

Interviewee: This is my fourteenth year.

Interviewer: Fourteen. In this school now?

Interviewee: No, this is my twelfth year at [REDACTED]. I was originally...I started at [REDACTED] in 2004.

b. Interviewer: And what grade levels have you taught?

Interviewee: In all these fourteen years?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: All grade levels...from grade seven to Cape.

Interviewer: Seven to twelve/thirteen.

Interviewee: I have taught all grade levels at some point or another I have taught all grade levels.

c. Interviewer: What is your professional qualification?

Interviewee: Degree, not completed...pending.

Interviewer: Mhm.

Interviewee: Pending. My degree is pending.

Interviewer: That's like a Bachelor's Degree?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: BA pending. You have teacher training?

Interviewee: No, it's a part of the qualification and it would be a BSC.

Interviewer: Oh, a BSC in Education?

Interviewee: Right, the one at UWI.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: That would be majoring in Biology?

Interviewer: But you were just teaching Physics?

Interviewee: Because at grade nine I really implemented an Integrated Science system. So, once you have the group you would be doing chemistry, physics and biology with them.

TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING

1a. Interviewer: Okay, right. So, I want to ask you some questions now about your beliefs about teaching...**How would describe your philosophy about teaching?** I have to make sure that I can hear this afterwards.

Interviewee: If I had known I would have taken my portfolio. But alright. Well, I believe that teaching is the foundation of the society and it dictates how well we can educate our population. It really dictates the movement of the country forward in all aspects whether it be economic, social aspects, all of these stems or hang on our ability to educate our youths.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm. So uhm, so you are saying it is a fundamental activity?

Interviewee: It is a fundamental pillar of society. And when I say education or teaching, it's not just the formal education system that I am talking about, right. So, it is not narrowed to formal education and it's not just narrowed to traditional subject areas....that teaching must be widened and broadened to the understanding that there are persons who are skilled based persons and there are persons who will fill a variety of roles within society...not necessarily having to be taught within the formal education system. So, let us take teaching as a wholistic way of educating our youth, not just through the formal setting.

1b. Interviewer: Mhm-mm. **Okay, so that said, what methods do you use to achieve success in the classroom?**

Interviewee: My success in teaching is predicated on: one, a very good interpersonal relationship with my students.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And two, a hands-on approach to learning. They must see, they must do. The more they see and the more they do, the better they achieve.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm. See and do.

Interviewee: Yes, they see, and do. Whenever I can't get them to --- if you notice my desk, it is not going to be pristine all the time. Because when I'm into the teaching, I take a knapsack to class.... if it means for everything to be in there. I move around with the materials, let them see, let them do.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And that is how over the years I realize that they have greater appreciation for whatever it is that you are trying to teach them. And then the interpersonal relationships, it helps me with discipline. So, discipline does not have to detract so much for my class because they are more in a relaxed setting so we can interact much better because they are relaxed.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: Because the way my personality is, I have to allow them to warm to me.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: Right. So, there will be challenges. However, with good interpersonal relationships we will overcome those challenges a lot quicker-

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: So that is two of the main things that my success is predicated on. And then finally, my knowledge base is important and staying current...trying to ensure that you are not static...the things that I do with one class may not necessarily work with a next class.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: Right. And the things I used last year may not necessarily work this year.

Interviewee: And twice the age of students in that class.

Interviewee: So, it tells me that the things that I was doing fourteen years ago will not work this year.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: It's a big generational gap.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: It may not do well today. So, I have to stay current and I have to make amendments to my practice.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: In all aspects, even my personality has to change sometimes in order for me to be able to [inaudible – 00:08:06].

Interviewer: Which personality were you on in that class?

Interviewee: Relaxed.

Interviewer: Relaxed?

Interviewee: Relaxed. There are days when I have to be a lot stricter, a lot more serious.

Interviewer: Yes. That was very effective though.

Interviewee: But not every day...not every day.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And not for all classes.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewer: Probably not even for the time of day.

Interviewee: Right.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: So, flexibility.

Interviewer: Flexibility.

Interviewee: Very flexible – must be.

1c. Interviewer: All right. So, it takes me now to a deeper question, what is it in your past, in your own experience as a student that would have caused you to adopt this philosophy and these methodologies that you use for success? **Are there any personal experiences that have had a positive or negative influence on your approach to teaching?**

Interviewer: Yes. My agricultural science teachers in high school.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: Both from the grade seven all the way to the grade eleven, right. Eventually I was placed first in agricultural science in the entire country.

Interviewer: Wow!

Interviewee: And from first form, I got a 100% on my first agricultural science exam.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: The agricultural science teacher was someone who would call me and interact with me and say, how did you get a 100, what are you-? I said I don't even know. Then I started to have an interest in the subject, just based on my scores. Then by the time I got to grade eight, I got a female teacher who was very warm, she was very neat, and I really admired that about her. She was very neat. Whenever she marked your book, it was a joy to see. So, I realized that she was doing something that she loved and now coupled with good grades, I now had a teacher who was very motivating because she would mark the work, she would return it and she would take such pride in marking our books that you could see the work that she was putting in. By the time I got to grade nine, I had a specialist agricultural scientist teacher who was a Mr. [inaudible – 00:10:30] and he was the one who introduced me to the practical aspects of agricultural science, where I also started to excel at the practical areas. So, he began to tell me about college and these things. Now, I am from a poor background....and he was the one...I actually started to work at the school.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: My mother also got a job at the school because of my work in agricultural science.

Interviewer: Do you mind me asking which school that is?

Interviewee: That is [REDACTED].

Interviewer: [REDACTED]?

Interviewee: So, it has not changed from just good grades –

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And pride, to financial gain. By the time I got to grade ten, I was being ushered along by my teachers, I was making presentations to the Minister of Agriculture from I was fourteen. I was interviewed by [REDACTED] when she was on the radio at that time. So, I was being pushed by persons who saw my talent. And these teachers now, finally [REDACTED] who, he was a cadet person. He instilled in me the discipline and the strictness. So, all along it was agricultural science and the teachers who taught me in agricultural science, who I have adopted their methodologies.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: Because it is what worked for me.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And they were all different. So, adopt different things from different persons.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: But the support that they gave would have been extremely important in me being here.

1d. Interviewer: Mhm-mm. Very good. **Was there any sort of exceptional experience and turning point when you know well, this is what I want to do?**

Interviewee: A turning point? Yes, actually you know, when I heard about college for the first time. Because up to that point I wouldn't have considered something like that. I thought I would have to ...I did not have any ambition to go to university, you know. If you are trying to find your dinner on a nightly basis and you don't have electricity and these things, University is the farthest thing from your mind. And I did. I was told

about the scholarship from grade nine and I did score the scholarship when I [inaudible – 00:12:46]. I went to college at sixteen. Because I was told if I worked I could get a scholarship.

Interviewer: What college was that?

Interviewee: [REDACTED]

Interviewer: Oh, you went to [REDACTED]? What do you have from [REDACTED]?

Interviewee: An Associate in Agricultural Science.

Interviewer: You have an Associate?

Interviewee: Yes, that is where I started.

Interviewer: Oh, you needed to have told me that.

Interviewee: Oh yes, that is where I started out.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: This is just me completing-

Interviewer: Yeah man.

Interviewee: To upgrade.

Interviewer: That's good.

Interviewee: So that is where I started.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: At all...all along the path that was where I got my motivation. It was my Agri teachers, and the support that they gave. So, I got the scholarship through the school, headed off to college, then I was back teaching at eighteen in the same department.

TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT STUDENTS' LEARNING

2a. Interviewer: I would have asked you about your important views on teaching. But you've said that you listen to them ...so I am going to skip this question because

you've answered it for me here, yes. And then I'm now going on to your beliefs to students learning. **How do you know that your students are learning?**

Interviewee: About students...

Interviewer: So, in your view...and you said to me that uhm -

Interviewee: They should be doing. And seeing.

Interviewer: And seeing. So, I am just going to transfer this here. Anything you want to expand on that?

Interviewee: Yes, what I would say is, I have been trying to highlight the generation gap that exist between us and the present students and the fact that technology...the students are unaware of the-

Interviewer: I have a question for that and I am going to just bring it up.

Interviewee: Okay. Technology?

Interviewer: Yes. Because I was going to ask you to reflect on students learning and compare it to when you were a student. You were saying the gap is the technology.

Interviewee: That's one yeah. There are others like music, etcetera. But what I'll focus mostly on is technology.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: The students will have a smart phone but they don't use it in a smart manner. And then we as teachers, we do not allow them, or we do not facilitate them learning how to use the technology. So, because we weren't exposed to the technology and we didn't get a chance to use it until later on in life, we don't realize how much we can actually assist the students in using technology. I will always encourage my grade elevens. I will place them into groups and I say based on the fact that you are in groups in the class, form your WhatsApp groups-

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And if someone tries to distract you from work at home you can just shout out a question relating to your subject area and you can get back on track. You will also have the internet. Not all sources are for solid information but refer to your

text. And the text now are written in such a form that they are more reader friendly. The graphics are much better designed...the typing—the fonts, the size of the fonts etcetera, is much better for reading. But we need to spend more time to actually teach the students how to use the texts so that the text book becomes a powerful tool as opposed to just weight in the bag. Because a lot of the times I discuss with my colleagues a lot, Mr. Adams is here, we discuss teaching a lot.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: The students will have the book, but they don't necessarily know how to use it. They just take it up as a big lump and try to use it. Too difficult...show them alright, students these are the objectives and the book have a section where the objective sits...you move from the objectives to specific definitions, you move to processes, then you try and answer the questions. But if they try to attack the book as a whole, they many times don't get anything from it...they are turned off. So, you need to teach them how to use their textbook, teach them how to use the internet...a lot of times we send them out there and tell them to go and read page 15-17.

Interviewer: So, you are talking about the skills of navigational research?

Interviewee: Research and navigation. Because they can learn on their own.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And they can learn from each other, but sometimes we have to teach them how to do so.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: Or guide them into doing so.

2b. Interviewer: Mhm-mm. Very good. So, I am going to jump back to the top of the paper and I am still on students learning. **How do you know in your experience, when your students are learning?**

Interviewee: Are learning?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Well firstly, there are the visual tools within the class.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: One can see a level of frustration on particular students. One might see a level of activity that the student is putting out. So, based on how a student is working, you may know that that student is comfortable and is absorbing the material. Sometimes you will see a students' efforts being pulled back. That happens in the class. That is uhm, on the spur of the moment. That is real time feedback. Then one must give varying forms of assessment –

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And their performance on these assessments must guide your future planning.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: And how you approach future lessons and see how well they have absorbed the materials that you have put out there, right. So, what I look at is, I give it time. I know that the system is structured that we have deadlines to meet and we have terminal examinations etcetera coming up. However, I don't believe on just focusing on the formalized assessment at the end. The formative assessment that goes along with it is extremely important because student needs time in order to learn. A student may not be learning at a particular time, based on their score on a piece of assessment. But given them more time, they will catch on, because not everyone learns at the same rate. So small pieces of regular assessment are what I aim for.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: So, I don't just leave or rush off the topic.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: So, this is something that for instance my lesson today, I could have completed it in thirty minutes and be out of there.

Interviewee: However, to add too much to what I have done today, would not have allowed the students to absorb sufficient material.

Interviewer: I must congratulate you for the way you...uhm, the integration.

Interviewee: I went to some workshops and so I try to uhm—

Interviewer: Yeah but I saw the implementation there. I didn't know where it was coming from but it was good to know that you brought in that maths in sort of explaining the international appropriateness of these things and so on and think it was really really good you know, to help them to not just narrowly focus on what's going there on the board but to apply those in a wider setting.

Interviewee: They must be able to. They must be able to.

Interviewer: Right. So, I am congratulating you for that. Tell me though, uhm you talk about the value of time in learning, which is very important because sometimes we think that things must happen instantly.

Interviewee: They don't learn instantly.

2c. Interviewer: What specifically would have influenced you to say that or to think of learning in those ways?

Interviewee: For most of the times, we teach far above average students most of the time because they are the ones who really allow us to look good and to feel like we're doing something. But what you find out is that in a school like St. Elizabeth Technical, most of our students are average students. So, I would be doing an injustice if I did not spend the time to allow for average and below average students to have a fair opportunity of grasping the material. So not because the first five are out of the blocks quickly, means that the lesson has gone well. In high school I was an above average student, so when the teacher left the class, the more student does not understand is the more work that is left for me to do. I was in charge of day students in the change room. And whenever a test was coming up we got time to sit in the changing room on the farm and I had to teach what was going to come on the test to the students who did not get extra time to learn it.

2d. Interviewer: Please reflect for a moment on students' learning and compare it to when you were a student is there a difference? If there is, what do you feel. Accounts for it?

So, my teacher allowed me from day one to realize that not everybody in the class is bright. Not everybody in the class is you. So, hear what, we have to go back over this,

we need more time on this until we ended up getting our own little marker board on the farm and started to use additional time on the farm so that we could learn more. So, I realize that from very early that students need more time than just the time that is spent in the classroom.

Interviewer: So, hence the notion of differentiation.

Interviewee: That is also very important – because differentiation cannot only come in terms of those that are kinesthetic learners or those that are visual learners. It can just be you the teacher stepping aside and giving the students the opportunity to go up there and say or do something. Allowing them also to make mistakes.

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: Stuff like that. And as I said, it's only time, they need time. Especially the average learner, they need time.

TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF LEARNER-CENTRED PEDAGOGY

Interviewer: Yes. I'm moving on to learner centered pedagogy. But you have answered my first question already so I am not going to go back to it.

3a & 3 b. Interviewer: Classroom management. Yes, you spoke about it in your first answer. Tell me how you understand learner centeredness, the concept itself. **Describe how you accommodate the different learning styles within your classroom, and how you understand learner-centredness?**

Interviewee: The concept itself is a good one. However, I do not believe that it should in totality replace some forms of learning like rote learning and so. There are sometimes when one must revert to old systems such as rote learning. I'll give you an example of why I say this. Learner centered education is the way to go. One, it requires a vast amount of resources, it requires a vast amount of planning and it requires a vast amount of time. And if we are aware of the Jamaican education system we know that time is not the there. Sometimes you see a class only once per week for an hour. By the time you are finished setting up and preparing, the time has gone, you get through very little. What you get through might be of high quality but it is not sufficient to meet the goals at the end of the year – the amount of resources. Now look at this, this is not something that I am supposed to be putting my hands on. I do this for the kids. These

dirty stuffs and so I not supposed to be touching these any at all, but I will do it for my children. There are times when I will go out and I will wash the materials for myself etcetera. Yes, but I can't be doing that all the time. The resources, we are talking about outdated resources.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: So, say for instance, if I need to do...and I don't believe that projector is the answer to resources. I just believe that it is one tool, right. However, most of the time what we have on the screen, they are static... it's always best if you can have the actual materials. So, if I am doing the tooth for example, I would like for them to be able to say, this is how the inside of my tooth looks. But I would need more of these. So, student centered or learner centered education requires vast amount of resources, a lot of time, because of the time it takes to set up, to transport materials etcetera, grouping etcetera. So, what we would have to do is make some twerks or redesign our system to allow for their to be sufficient time and ensure that there are sufficient resources, space, they way the classrooms are. Do I have access to a laboratory facility on call? So therefore, yes, it is the way to go but there are times when one must apply some degree of rote learning as well or older forms of education. If you want to call it uhm, conditioning then it must be applied. Say for example, if I am going to be doing a maths bases topic, I cannot go back from square one with the maths and be going through all the learner centered, I might just have to say, students in the interest of time, we need to be able to do this, we are just going to learn it by rote and we just move on. If I am going to be doing standard form etcetera I will have to lean on the maths teacher to put in the basics.

Interviewer: I heard you saying that today.

Interviewee: And then I would just apply some degree of rote learning so that I can move on.

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: Yes, it is a core area but I may not be able to have the time etcetera to change it as how a math teacher would do. So, I would lean on some form of rote or conditioning.

Interviewer: I am grateful for that. I'm coming down to the end. So, you've been in the system for fourteen years, so you should have some sort of knowledge of the ROSE.

Interviewee: The ROSE Curriculum. Yes, I did enter the system under the ROSE curriculum as a teacher.

Interviewer: Right. And then there is the RPC which is the primary level curriculum. And now there is the NSC.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you do know about the NSC?

Interviewee: Yes, I have been to workshops.

Interviewer: So, I am asking you to say that you would realize that in the last twenty or so years the ministry has reformed-

Interviewee: The education system, many times.

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: I am grateful for that. I'm coming down to the end.

4. Interviewer: Yes. So, this is our third attempt now at creating a curriculum reform and in all of them they have said, the approaches should be learner centered. In my view, it is not happening yet. Not on the scale that the policy makers –Yes. So here is my question to you, in this particular NSC the Ministry has been most explicit about the use of learner centered approaches. **What are your views on those efforts? Should the Ministry say to teachers, these are the approaches we want you to use when you are in your classroom?**

Interviewee: I believe the ministry is within their right to make such a forceful suggestion –

Interviewer: Mhm-mm.

Interviewee: However, at the beginning of the reform process, it was not as inclusive as it should have been. The STEM, STEAM, all of those are brilliant ideas. At the beginning, I believe there was too much wholistic copying from a more advanced system or more advanced countries and there was not enough inclusiveness. The

voice of the teacher was not properly heard in education reform. For if there had been the right amount of workshops and forums back and forth and giving our expert teachers a greater hand in designing this reform process. When you go to a workshop and you realize that there are persons from overseas, heading up the reform process in the initial stages and then coming to teach us about how to teach our children, it makes me uncomfortable. After fourteen years, you can't just take someone from overseas and tell them to come and tell me how to teach my kids. I should have been involved in the process from the beginning. And when I say I, I do make reference to the teachers. So, there was not enough inclusiveness and there was not enough ideas and input from our expertise teachers here in Jamaica before this system was put into place.

I teach at the grade seven level. My principal has been very astute in saying the best teachers cannot leave the grade seven level. So, I am domiciled to have always at least one or two grades seven students to ensure that there is continuity and there is a good foundational base being laid. Now, when I get my students from primary school coming out of the G-SAT, I realize that they have covered all of what I will cover and sometimes more, sometimes up to the grade nine level. But yet, these are the same students who we are saying are under performing. What has gone wrong in the primary schools. They have done the ear, they have done the eyes, they have done the flower, they have done all forms of reproduction, they have done photosynthesis. And when they are here, say to them, what are the raw materials for photosynthesis? What conditions does it occur under? What are the products? Half the class has already failed. If you use the term equation, another half of the class fail. So, when students are trying to name muscles of the body, that grade ten students have a problem in pronouncing, at primary level. The system has failed.

When students were doing common entrance like I did, the emphasis was on building our core learning skills, not on trying to overwhelm students with information. And the student-centered learning is not being understood properly...also taking place. It is not being understood properly I believe at the primary level to the detriment of the students. Because I interact with the students coming in from the primary. I had to break down certain systems and rebuild, whereby I have to back off on the amount of assignment I give them. Too many assignments at the primary level, the degree of difficulty of the assignments that are being given. So, where is the hand in the

government when designing the curriculum to say look, teachers some of these assignments – So as I said, it is not the government that is always wrong, sometimes we as teachers misinterpret what is required. Giving students an assignment, make a model of the solar system. Buy a model, get somebody to bring it to class, save some time, take off the planets, make them put it back. But for them to go out there they have to...so the parents end up doing most of the assignments.

The parents end up doing most of the assignments. So, let us look back at the whole system and let us better streamline and put in the core skills and focus more on the core skills at an early base and leave the higher materials for higher age groups. This is one of my thing and I say, whatever reform can't be when you finish reforming you are coming to tell the teachers. Teachers must be inclusive. I believe that there are quality minds here in Jamaica, who can design and implement a system and these systems require resources. And the government is very late in providing the type of resources that are required to facilitate this sort of system...very late in providing the resources, however, teachers do what they can with what they have. And we want to get past the stage of doing what we can with what we have and actually having the materials there to push forward.

So, students centered education, definitely the way to go. Education reform, quite necessary but it needs to be more inclusive. You can't tell me to come and teach this after you design it [inaudible – 00:34:56] after we have given input. And for basis of your research for science, look at the draft copy of the NSC...grade seven to grade nine and look at the final copy and I don't believe there was sufficient change and adjustment to the topics. I don't believe that after the workshops, they are so many ideas and recommendations that were put forward by teachers. And these were put forward sternly and loudly but yet there was no credence given to them and we don't see them reflected as adjustments. And these would have made the reform process a lot better. And it shows, due to the fact that the system has not worked, otherwise we would not be reforming again. For example, at the grade seven level where they bring homogenous and heterogenous mixtures etcetera, there is nothing wrong with that. However, most schools are not equipped, some teachers are not equipped. And the teachers would say for example, we have been doing this topic and it works better at grade eight. The topic that we did at grade seven was classification. Classification works better. We have found via experience and via experimentation that the students

are much likely to learn the biology topics, which they can see the different features and attributes of the organisms. They learn those topics better at the grade seven level as opposed to the highly abstract aspects such as chemistry. So, when you force more chemistry in at the grade seven level, it doesn't necessarily mean that we are going to have better chemistry students in future. We can have aspects where we teach skills and once you have the fundamentally critical thinking skills, you will have no problem learning at grade ten, grade eleven, once you have the ability to learn. And we should focus more at the primary at giving students the ability to learn.

Interviewer: Thank you very much.

Interviewee: No problem miss.

Interviewer: I really appreciate it.

Interviewee: No problem.

Interviewer: You are a bright man, with good ideas...you are a good teacher and if this is just a snapshot, I have seen enough to say that you are on the right road.

Interviewee: The road out of the system?

Interviewer: Are you going on the road out?

Interviewee: I don't think so. I don't think so.

Interviewer: But you might want to move on to another level in the system where you can make a different contribution.

APPENDIX 9: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET		
SERIAL	PARTICULARS	RATING
1.	Teachers' Classroom Management Techniques	<p>Exceptionally High</p> <p>The teacher plans lessons around activities that allow students to collaborate. Strong emphasis is placed on discussion, and students are taught to self-regulate. Students openly display and understand how to disagree with minimal urging from the teacher. The teacher generally reminds students of the ground rules at the start of the lesson.</p>
		<p>Good</p> <p>The teacher devises and utilises cues for students' responses to unacceptable classroom behaviours. Most students respond well to the teacher's cues and self-regulate with some urging. The teacher reminds students of good classroom behaviours in a few instances.</p>
		<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>The teacher reminds students of the ground rules at the start of lessons. Must interrupt lessons a few times to get the class under control. Time is wasted in getting students to settle for their lessons.</p>
		<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <p>General lack of discipline displayed by most students. The teacher struggles to engage students in the lesson, and the class is mainly out of control. Teachers may use force or insults to get students to settle.</p>

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET

SERIAL	PARTICULARS	RATING
2.	Teachers' knowledge of their subject matter and how best to teach their subjects	<p>Exceptionally High</p> <p>Teaching is characterised by a comprehensive understanding of subjects and their contributions to the curriculum. The teacher is adept at extending their students' capacity in the subject. The teacher is observed to reflect and search for more effective practice.</p>
		<p>Good</p> <p>Teaching is characterised by a thorough understanding of the subject they teach. In lessons, the teacher can help students overcome difficulties by offering different examples to illustrate points and different ways of tackling problems. Teachers regularly assess the impact of teaching and adjust approaches and methods accordingly.</p>
		<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>The teacher has a secure understanding of the subject. The teacher uses their understanding to make clear explanations and knowledgeable responses to students' questions. Most teachers reflect on the effectiveness of instruction and how well their students are learning and adjust their teaching.</p>
		<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <p>The teacher has insufficient knowledge of the subject, resulting in inaccurate teaching and incomplete curriculum coverage. Teacher lacks the understanding needed to promote successful learning in the subjects. Teacher engages in deliberate and productive reflection on the quality of practice.</p>

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET

SERIAL	PARTICULARS	RATING
3.	Teachers' Assessment Techniques	<p>Exceptionally High</p> <p>Teacher routinely assesses what students know, understand and can do in relation to their capabilities. Teachers can access assessment data that compares students' actual attainment with what has been predicted. It is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and teaching. Students routinely use objective criteria to evaluate their own and each other's work. The teacher adjusts teaching to support students who need help and extend those who could be challenged further. The teacher uses oral and written feedback to give individual students useful insights into how well they have done and what they need to do next.</p>
		<p>Good</p> <p>The teacher employs consistent and effective classroom assessment practices to develop a thorough knowledge of their student's performance. Record keeping is thorough and organised well. It tracks the progress of individual students against what is expected of them. The teacher uses assessment information to understand what students need to do to improve and adjust their teaching. Students are involved in the assessment of their own and others' work. The teacher gives helpful oral feedback to students during lessons. Marking helps students to understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work.</p>
		<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>The teacher regularly checks students' progress in lessons. And has some knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses. The teacher uses assessment information effectively when planning lessons and involves students in assessing their and others' work. The teacher provides students with regular oral and written feedback on their work, but their marking might offer little specific commentary about how it could be improved.</p>
		<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <p>Assessment in many lessons is irregular and inconsistent. As a result, the teacher does not have sufficient detailed knowledge of their student's progress. Students rarely evaluate their own and others' work. The teacher uses assessment information deliberately to assist their lesson planning so that weaknesses are tackled and students of all abilities are catered for. Teachers might regularly give oral feedback in lessons, but their marking is mostly cursory.</p>

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET		
SERIAL	PARTICULARS	RATING
4.	Quality of interaction between teachers and students	<p>Exceptionally High</p> <p>Social relationships between teachers and students show genuine concern for and tolerance of others. They respond very well to adults and resolve difficulties in mature ways. Most students are very well organised and take responsibility. Almost all students show positive self-esteem and confidence in their future.</p>
		<p>Good</p> <p>Good behaviour and attitudes prevail throughout the lesson. Staff/student relationships are positive and supportive. They lead, in turn to good relationships among students. Most students are well-organised and keen to learn, resulting in a positive learning environment. Most students show positive self-esteem and confidence in their future.</p>
		<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Behaviours and attitudes are generally good. Rules are respected. The school is orderly and safe. Student-staff relationships are based on mutual respect. The students cooperate well with others. Students are organised, and most are committed to learning. Many students show self-esteem as learners and as young people.</p>
		<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <p>The poor behaviour of some students disrupts some lessons and causes difficulties, leading to lost learning time. Students often do not obey rules and regulations. Many students show little respect for teachers or for one another. Many students are disorganised and not committed to learning. Some students lack self-esteem as learners and as young people.</p>

APPENDIX 10: DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE OF TEACHERS

1

Description of Sample of Teachers

The following describes the 20 teachers in the sample. This includes their qualifications, years of experience, and school type. The teachers also explain their pedagogical philosophies, and the source(s) of this thinking. The names used are pseudonyms.

1. Angela had postgraduate qualifications, 30 years' experience, and taught in an urban primary school. She stated that her teaching philosophy was "to bring change and to empower students to go out and fit into society".
2. Beverley had undergraduate qualifications, with seven years' experience, and she taught in a rural high school. She believed that "teaching has to do with giving something that you have to students...who have a need for what you have". Therefore, to her, teachers represented sources of information and their role was to pass this information to their students.
3. Carlton had undergraduate qualifications, 24 years' experience, and he taught in an urban all-age school. These schools lie between primary and secondary schools, as they extend to grade nine. Whereas, primary schools cover grades one to six. His philosophy of teaching was centred on the belief that teaching "mustn't be restrictive". As he suggests, "it must be free; freedom of movement and expression". In other words, the educative process must enable all students to freely express themselves.
4. Devon had postgraduate qualifications, 20 years' experience, and he taught in a rural primary school. He believed that "teaching should be relevant to students' everyday experiences".
5. Elizabeth had undergraduate qualifications, three years' experience, and taught in a rural high school. She believed that teachers must meet students "where they are, [so that they are] better able to bring them on the level where they should be".
6. Fay had postgraduate qualifications, ten years' experience, and taught in a rural primary school. She stated that her teaching philosophy "is basically to educate

- young minds, to see how best I can find different strategies to help them to understand concepts so that they have a good grasp of what they need to know".
7. Helen had undergraduate qualifications, ten years' experience, and taught in a rural primary school. She held the view that she "should be able to cater for [her students'] different needs".
 8. Icylyn had undergraduate qualifications was a high school teacher with 14 years' experience, and taught in a rural high school. Her philosophy was "that instruction should be student or learner-centred".
 9. Jacqueline had undergraduate qualifications, 12 years' experience, and taught in a rural all-age school teacher. She believed that "all her students should reach their full potential, no matter what level they are".
 10. Karen had undergraduate qualifications, 14 years, and taught in a rural primary school. She stated that her teaching philosophy thus: "I love what I do, teaching to me is an everyday situation...I love imparting knowledge".
 11. Lorna had undergraduate qualifications five years' experience, and taught in a rural high school. She stated her teaching philosophy thus: "I believe that teaching is an art. It is something that you have to love to do it...it helps you to impart knowledge that you have".
 12. Marcia had undergraduate qualifications, 24 years' experience, and taught in a rural high school. She stated that her philosophy was simply: "that all students can learn".
 13. Norma had undergraduate qualifications, seven years' experience, and taught in a rural high school. She believed "that in order to teach, and teach effectively, we must make sure that students are at the centre of the teaching and learning process".
 14. Opal had postgraduate qualifications, 13 years' experience, and taught in a rural primary school. She was of the view that "teaching should be engaging, [and] be a fun activity for students".

15. Paulette had undergraduate qualifications, ten years' experience, and taught in a urban high school. She explained her philosophy thus:

Well for me, I believe that students are—well we're not going to say that they are blank slates, but I believe that as teachers we have so much that we really need to impart to our students whenever we get to interact with them, and I think that as best as possible we need to be able clear up whatever misconceptions that they may have, because from time-to-time they will come with their own information.

16. Rose had undergraduate qualifications and nine years' experience, and taught in an urban high school. She remarked: "I don't believe, as a teacher that students can learn if they are not motivated, so if they feel my passion it will enthuse them with passion as well" (sic).
17. Sonia had undergraduate qualifications, three years' experience, and taught in a rural high school. She explained that her "philosophy of teaching is that [she] would try to ... teach from a perspective where I know that students can grasp content and concepts easily".
18. Trevor had undergraduate qualifications, 21 years, and taught in an urban primary school. He believed that "teaching was a two-way thing. It should be what the teacher must impart. It also has to do with how ready students are to absorb the information".
19. Ursula undergraduate qualifications, 21 years' experience, and taught in an urban primary school. She stated her teaching philosophy thus: "you really have to be a born teacher, because you have to be really in it to shape the minds of the ones that are entrusted in your care".
20. Victor had undergraduate qualifications, 14 years' experience, and taught in a rural high school. He stated that he viewed "teaching as a holistic way of educating our youth".

The teachers' experience ranged from three to 30 years, all had undergraduate qualifications, and four also had postgraduate qualifications. Of the 23,477 teachers in the public system, 19,499 of them have at least an undergraduate qualification.

APPENDIX 11: TEACHERS' BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

TEACHERS' BIOGRAPHICAL DATA						
Type	Level	Locale	Teacher ID	No. of Years	Grade levels	Level of Certification
Coed	Primary	Urban	Angela	30	4, 6	Dip., M. Ed
Coed	Secondary	Urban	Beverley	7	9-12	Dip., BA
Coed	Primary	Urban	Carlton	24	6-9	Dip., BA
Coed	Primary	Urban	Devon	20	6, 7-9	Dip., BA, M.Ed.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	Elizabeth	3	7,8	BA
Coed	Primary	Rural	Fay	10	1,2,4,6	Dip., B.Ed., M.Ed.
Coed	Primary	Rural	Helen	10	2	B.Ed.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	Icyllyn	14	9,10,11, adults	Dip. Ass of Sci, BSc
Coed	Primary	Rural	Jacqueline	12	2,3,4,6	BSc.
Coed	Primary	Rural	Karen	14	3,4,5	Dip. BA.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	Lorna	5	9,10,11	Dip.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	Marcia	24	8-12	B.Ed.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	Norma	7	7-13	B.Ed.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	Opal	13	3,5	MSc., B.Ed., NCEL
Coed	Secondary	Urban	Paulette	10	7-11	Dip., B.Ed.
Girls	Secondary	Urban	Rose	9	9-12	BSc Chem & Education
Coed	Primary	Urban	Trevor	21	5,6	BA Primary Ed.
Coed	Primary	Urban	Ursula	21	2,3,4,5	BA Primary Ed.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	Victor	14	7-13	BSc

APPENDIX 12: PRINCIPALS' BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

PRINCIPALS' BIOGRAPHICAL DATA						
TYPE	LEVEL	Locale	Principal ID	LENGTH OF SERVICE	SERVICE IN SCHOOL	LEVEL OF CERT
Coed	Primary	Urban	P1			
Coed	Secondary	Urban	P2			
Coed	Primary	Urban	P3			
Coed	Primary	Urban	P4			
Coed	Secondary	Rural	P6			
Coed	Primary	Rural	P5			
Coed	Primary	Rural	P8			
Coed	Secondary	Rural	P9			
Coed	Primary	Rural	P11			
Coed	Primary	Rural	P10	2	2	B.Ed.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	P13	8	8	Post Graduate
Coed	Secondary	Rural	P12	11	11	B.Ed., TT/DiP, PGD
Coed	Secondary	Rural	P14			M.ED
Coed	Secondary	Rural	P16	9 months	9months	M.ED, B.Ed.
Coed	Secondary	Urban	P15	13	13	M.Sc. Educational Leadership
Girls	Secondary	Urban	P18	14	14	MSc, BA, T.Dip
Coed	Primary	Urban	P20	4	4	M.Ed.
Coed	Primary	Urban	P21			
Coed	Secondary	Rural	P23			M.Ed.
Coed	Secondary	Rural	P22	2	2	BSc. Eng. Tech, Dip Sec Ed.

END OF PAPER.