

Jamaican Development Strategies: Are the Free Trade Zones Contributing to Decent Work?

By
Tina Renier

A Major Research Paper Submitted to
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Masters of Arts in International Development Studies

December, 2019, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Copyright Tina Renier, 2019

.....
Approved: Dr. Suzanne Dansereau
Professor

Date of Submission: December 18, 2019

Jamaican Development Strategies: Are the Free Trade Zones Contributing to Decent Work?

By

Tina Renier

Abstract

Many developing countries have used export processing zones as central development strategies to attract foreign direct investment and to create employment. However, a serious problem associated with export processing zones is the fact that workers, mainly women, have been subjected to low wages, deplorable working conditions, limited or no social security protection and freedom of association is strictly prohibited. Jamaica serves as a unique case study because it is a small island developing state in the Caribbean that faces serious development challenges due to its fragile economy, growing population and dependence on foreign powers for international aid. The primary objective of the current Andrew Holness-led Administration of Jamaica is to promote economic growth through job creation in the business product outsourcing sector. The 2016 Special Economic Zones Act was introduced with a revised special incentive package to investment and create high value-added jobs in a new regime of zones.

By using content analysis of online newspaper articles, I will argue that because Jamaica's current EPZ development strategy is heavily focused on using special incentives to attract foreign direct investment, it does not contribute to decent work. I will first examine Jamaica's main development strategies geared towards employment creation and the labour strategy of each government administration. I will then critically assess working conditions in the business product outsourcing sector by using the ILO's pillars for evaluating decent work, in order to determine whether the current EPZ development strategy contributes to decent work.

.....
Approved: Dr. Suzanne Dansereau

Professor

Date of Submission: December 18, 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	3
Introduction.....	4-6
Development Strategies	
Import Substitution Industrialization.....	7-12
Export-Oriented Industrialization.....	12- 17
Current Development Strategy.....	17- 22
Decent Work or Not?	
Pillars of Decent Work.....	23- 25
Feminization of Labour.....	26- 30
Wages	31- 32
Working Conditions.....	32- 35
Social Dialogue.....	36
Conclusion.....	37- 40
Bibliography.....	41-51

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my graduate supervisor, Dr. Suzanne Dansereau for providing critical, theoretical insights and helpful recommendations to complete this major research paper. I would like to thank other members of the academic community in the International Development Studies program who have provided suggestions for strong research proposal and academic writing. I would like to thank the Information Literacy Librarian, Ms. Heather Sanderson for assisting with me a systematic search for academic sources on my research topic.

Secondly, I would like to thank Ms. Miyuki Arai, the Project Manager for Inter-Cultural Support and Global Learning at Saint Mary's University for approving my application for the 2019 International Mobility Awards. The research travel grant has helped me to source publicly available resources in Jamaica. These resources have helped to significantly shape the broad concern of this major research paper. I would like thank Mrs. Katrin Casserly, Chairperson of Hanover Charities, Jamaica who has helped to finance my tertiary studies and for contributing to professional development.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends who have provided logistical, academic and moral support for the completion of this research project while I was in Jamaica during the summer of 2019. I would also like to thank all my family members who have provided consistent encouragement and learning resources to pursue my passion for labour issues in development.

Introduction

Export processing zones are geographically defined areas that offer special incentives to attract foreign direct investment through export-oriented production (ILO, 2008). Many developing countries utilize export processing zones as central development strategy to create employment (UNCTAD, 1993; Sharon, 2007; Magana, 2013). Jamaica serves as a unique case study because it is a small island developing state in the Caribbean that faces serious development challenges due its fragile economy, growing population and dependence on foreign powers for international aid (Braveboy-Wagner, 2008). Amidst economic decline, the Jamaican government established the Kingston Free Zone in 1976 to promote national self-sufficiency and to create jobs (Matthews, 1992). Export processing zones became a more popular development strategy as way of meeting balance of debt obligations with the International Monetary Fund and to curb chronic unemployment. As a result, the Montego Bay Free Zone was established in 1985 (Wilmore, 1994; Klak, 1996). A serious problem associated with Jamaica's export processing zones is the fact that workers, mainly women, are subjected to low wages, poor working conditions, limited or no social security protection and freedom of association is strictly prohibited (Dunn, 2001; Russell-Brown, 2003; Ming, 2017). There is a growing number of women in precarious forms of employment such as EPZ employment due to significant changes in the labour force since 1980 and gender ascribed assumptions associated with the low value of their labour and the specific tasks they are expected to perform in jobs (Munck, 2002; ILO, 2015).

It is therefore important to examine this problem because the real purpose of the EPZ development strategy should be to create decent work creation and not simply employment creation (ILO, 2017). Decent work is remunerative, secure, respects human dignity and develops the capacity of the worker (Fields, 2003). An EPZ development strategy that contributes to decent work facilitates better wages, improved and safe working conditions, greater access to social protection for workers as well as broad based participatory democracy in the work place among trade unions, employers and workers (Frey, 2017; ILO, 2017).

The problem becomes more significant because the primary objective of the Government of Jamaica is to promote economic growth through job creation under a new regime of export processing zones (Jamaica Gleaner, 2018). The 2016 Special Economic Zones Act was created to establish a new regime of export processing zones that will promote international competitiveness, attract foreign direct investment and create thousands of higher value-added jobs in emerging sectors (Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce, 2019). The business product outsourcing industry is the largest sector in Jamaica's export processing zones in which it employs an estimated 36,100 persons in 63 firms. The Montego Bay Free Zone is home to majority of these firms (Business Product Industry Association of Jamaica, 2019). Jamaica's current, neo-liberal development EPZ development strategy continues to place heavy emphasis on special incentives such as tax exemptions, profit repatriation and competitive labour costs in order to attract foreign direct investment. Consequently, Jamaica's current EPZ development strategy does not contribute to decent work.

Research Question

Does Jamaica's current EPZ development strategy contribute to decent work?

Development Strategies in Jamaica

Development strategies are often built on specific broad-based assumptions that are used to harness resources, scale interventions and streamline government agencies and policies in order to steer a country towards desired development goals (OCED, 2019, pp.11-12). The Jamaican government has pursued a combination of conventional and heterodox policies at specific development periods to modernize the economy, attain growth and to create employment (Fosu, 2013, p.1). This section will critically examine Jamaica's main development strategies geared towards employment creation, particularly the EPZ development strategy. Employment creation has been a critical development objective for Jamaica because the newly independent Government of Jamaica was forced to confront the challenge of chronic unemployment rates and restructuring an inherited colonial economic system (Kreye, 1986; p.7, Best and Levitt, 2009).

Import Substitution Industrialization

In 1972, the Michael Manley was elected on a democratic socialist platform in Jamaica. His landslide victory as Prime Minister of Jamaica was amidst concerns of growing poverty, social inequities and a high unemployment rate which stood at 23.2 per cent in 1972 (Pantin, 1993; Kamugisha, 2013; 3). Manley's rationale for using import substitution industrialization was predicated on the philosophy that there should be a greater role of the state in the economy to provide better access to social programs and jobs (Mars and Young, 2004). Greater state intervention in the economy was evident in

the fact that several foreign- owned industries became nationalized and restrictions on imports and capital were imposed in order to develop industries (Payne, 1992). Manley was integrally involved in re-negotiating the terms of tax arrangements with North-American multi-national firms that controlled the bauxite industry in order an attempt to create a capital-labour compromise (Perkins, 2008). The National Bauxite Levy was imposed and significant revenue was gained from it to finance social programs and employment creation projects (Gray, 1991). The average government expenditure on health care, housing, education and social protection for the population was thirty-two per cent (32%) from 1972-1976 (Boyd, 1986). Financing towards social programs and employment projects was also derived from loans from multi-lateral agencies such as the World Bank (Davies, 1986; World Bank, n.d.).

Labour Strategy under the Manley administration: 1972-1980

Skills upgrading, access to quality education and investment in technology and infrastructure were seen as pre-cursory steps by the Manley-led administration to take in order to ensure better employment opportunities for Jamaicans (Hague and Fletcher, 2002). Manley decided to create important institutions such as the Vocational Training Development Institute, National Youth Service in 1973, the German automotive school as well as free education up to the tertiary level (Goodleigh, 2002, p.65). These institutions would equip persons with the necessary skills to enter the labour market in highly-skilled jobs that are characterized by higher wages. Subsequently after, Manley had implemented the Special Employment Programme in 1974 to reduce unemployment. He particularly targeted vulnerable groups such as women and young people because the unemployment rate among women (33.8%) while unemployment among young people

was (39.5%). This was higher than the overall unemployment rate (12%) for the country in 1974 (Department of Statistics of Jamaica 1974, p.50). Women and young people were structurally marginalized from active labour force participation because of the difficulty to find jobs in urban areas and the jobs that were available paid extremely low wages (Standing, 1981, p.53). The National Planning Agency was responsible for policy co-ordination between several councils, government ministries and agencies to ensure a successful undertaking of the Special Employment project in Jamaica's fourteen parishes. An estimated fifty-thousand (50,000) persons were employed in fields such as road construction, agriculture and community development planning and intervention (Keith and Garling, 1981, p.13). This employment initiative also incorporated a social protection component in which unemployed, low-income families would have received income support from the government (Payne, 2008). Overall labour force participation in other sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing grew from 40.1% to 44.9% from 1972-1974 because of strong state intervention policies that were supportive of these industries (Gafar, 1988).

The Government of Jamaica had created a robust policy space for broad-based political participation which encompassed the involvement of trade unions in national decision making (Phillip and Husey, 2006). Manley enjoyed a very close relationship with Jamaica's trade unions, particularly the National Workers' Union. He worked along with the National Workers' Union to organize a successful workers' strike at Jamaica Business Corporation (JBC) against the unfair dismissal of workers by management. This was prior to his career in representational politics (Gray, 1991, Bogue, 2002). Labour unions have contributed to the passage of national labour laws such as the 1974

Employment Act, the 1974 Minimum Wage Act, the 1974 Holiday with Pay Act, the 1975 Industrial Disputes Act, the 1975 Equal Pay for Women Act and the 1979 Maternity Leave Act, respectively (Meeks, 2016; Trade Unions of Jamaica, 2019). Trade unions were also played in an instrumental role in negotiating significant wage increases for public sector workers from 1972-1975 (National Library of Jamaica, 2019). Jamaica had also ratified twenty (20) International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions since 1962. Manley placed serious focus on international conventions pertaining to equal remuneration and discrimination, minimum wage fixing machinery, right to organize and freedom of association (Goodleigh, 2002, p.7).

The import substitution industrialization strategy in Jamaica began to falter due the economic shocks from the OPEC oil crisis, poor GDP rates (0.2%) per annum and heavy government spending of J\$212.2 million to J\$603.8million from 1972-1974 (Edmond, 2015). Amidst economic decline, the Kingston Free Zone was established in 1976 to promote national self-sufficiency and to create jobs (Matthews, 1992). Loans totalling US \$10 million from the Development Bank of Jamaica and the World Bank had assisted in financing the establishment of the Kingston Free Zone (World Bank,n.d.). Special incentives including tax exemptions for investors to establish firms within the free zone were granted under the 1956 Export Industry Encouragement Law but there was still restriction on capital outflow from Jamaica because of the nature of the import substitution industrialization policy (Henry, 1981). The Kingston Free Zone was established primarily as a warehouse distribution facility (Long, 1989). It employed an estimated three thousand one hundred and eighty (3,180) persons, mainly women, in the garment assembly industry (Gafar, 1988). The garment assembly industry accounted for

85% of production within the zone (Long, 1986, p.53). Other sectors of production within in the Kingston Free Zone were ethanol production, food processing, manufacturing and warehouse distribution (Industrial Development Corporation of Jamaica, 1985). These sectors were reliant on highly skilled individuals who specialized in technology, engineering and advanced forms of manufacturing (UN, 1983, pp.298-300). Highly skilled workers in the Kingston Free Zone were able to earn on average an estimated US\$40 –US\$63 on a weekly basis. There was general improvement in working conditions due to strong trade union involvement and strong enforcement of labour law (Phillip and Hussey, 2006). There were also greater possibilities for career advancement in and outside of the Kingston Free Zone because of the high quality training provided to workers in various sectors (Long, 1986, p.56).

The free zone strategy had failed due to limited capital inflow and investment in technology. There were also no backward linkages established to benefit the domestic economy (Watson, 2001). Moreover, Manley's socialist philosophy towards development became highly unfavourable in the eyes of the local private sector, international investors and the United States of America because there were tight restrictions on foreign capital and close alignment with communist Cuba (Scott, 2018). As a result of the growing disillusionment with Manley's policies, there was a capital strike which contributed to a chronic meltdown in traditional export and employment sectors such as bauxite and sugar (Wint, 2005).

The National Planning Agency through the direction of Manley had announced an Emergency Production Plan (EPP) in 1977 which invited national consultations with economists, academics and other key stakeholders to discuss a socialist alternative prior

to meeting with International Monetary Fund officials (Bissessar, 2014). The plan outlined recommendations such as greater national self-reliance on agricultural production to protect social gains, particularly benefits for workers (Thorburn and Morris, 2007). This alternative was not feasible because Jamaica had accumulated exorbitant debt, double-digit inflation (26.9%) and dwindling net international reserves (Bernal, 1984; Boyd, 1986). Jamaica had entered its first Standby Agreement with the International Monetary Fund in 1977. Manley was pressured to accept US\$ 468 million in credit to reduce government spending on social programs, freeze wages of public sector workers and to devalue the Jamaican currency by 40% (Brown, 1981; Conway, 1997, p.8). Manley lost the 1980 General elections.

Export-Oriented Industrialization

Edward Seaga of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) was elected as Prime Minister of Jamaica in 1980. He strongly favoured the free market as the primary engine for restoring economic growth and ensuring an attractive business and investment climate in Jamaica (Central Intelligence Agency Assessment, 1980, p.2). Long-term development strategies and policy formulation in Jamaica became almost non-existent because of the negative economic effects of the 1980s international debt crisis and structural adjustment programs (Ambursely, 1983; Levitt, 1990). Consequently, structural adjustment programs played a more pronounced role in determining government decisions (Davies, 1986; Seaga, 1987, p.66). Jamaica had successfully implemented structural adjustment programs in 1981 with the full-fledged backing of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Gafar, 1997). Structural adjustment reforms in Jamaica included: removal of trade barriers, privatization of state-owned assets, currency devaluation,

reduced government spending on social programs and attracting foreign direct investment through export-oriented industries (Davis, 1988). Seaga created a National Divestment Committee in 1981 to allow greater market intervention in business activities. As a result of divesting six state-owned enterprises to the private sector, the country was able to earn US\$2.5 billion in foreign direct investment (Pantin, 1993).

The private sector contributed extensively to short-term and medium term development strategy planning in which the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica was supported by the United States Agency of International Development (USAID) through a US\$ 750,000 loan towards seizing investment and business opportunities congruent with the objectives of structural adjustment reforms (PSOJ, n.d., p.17). The Jamaican economy experienced modest improvement in growth rates by 2% from 1981-1982 due to foreign exchange earnings from economic activities in the tourism and financial aid from the multi-lateral agencies (Binns, 2018). Additionally, banking and finance institutions had contributed to the increase in growth in Jamaica through their services (Gayle, 1994).

Labour Strategy under the Seaga administration: 1980-1989

Despite the moderate improvement in growth rates and change in government policy, employment creation continued to be a pressing problem for policy makers and the Seaga-led administration as they were confronted with the fact that the national unemployment rate stood at 26.9% in 1981. The unemployment rate for women and young people stood at 38.6% and 43.1% respectively (Bahl, 1999; Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1990).

Employment creation was also a pertinent problem because structural adjustment programs exerted pressure on the labour market in which the supply of jobs has deteriorated (UNRISD, 1994;; Khan and Aflab, 1995). Seaga started tackling the unemployment by establishing Human Employment and Resource Training (HEART) in 1982 to equip persons with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the evolving demands of the labour market (HEART Country Profile, 2014, p.2). The Human Employment and Resource Training institution trained 4,160 persons in garment assembly, basic literacy, industrial production, hospitality, office and cosmetology skills from 1982-1985. Most of the individuals were trained in garment assembly (International Business Publications, n.d.). The intention for Human Employment and Resource Training was to co-ordinate with other training programs such as the Vocational Development Institute and other government ministries to ensure that there was a match between skills and the demands of the labour market. This training program, however had already experienced early challenges of co-ordinating with other training programs because of lack of technical know-how among administrators. There was also inefficient distribution of responsibilities among different ministries that had different policy agendas (McArdle, 2008, p.168). Financing towards education of the population and by extension, the labour force was reduced from 26% in 1973 to 11% in 1980 due to the sharp cuts in government spending on social programs. Hence, there was limited access to secondary and tertiary education to gain pre-requisite knowledge and qualifications to work in higher value-added jobs in the national economy (Edgar, 1974). Most jobs were low-valued added and relied on a low-skilled labour force in which workers earned low wages without any access to social protection and other worker's benefits (Pantin, 1993 and Weiss, 2005)

Export processing zones became the centerpiece of the Government of Jamaica's development strategy to promote job creation, enhance export performance and attract foreign direct investment (Pantin, 1990; Danielson, 1996). Seaga first established the Jamaica National Investment Promotion Limited (JNIP) as the nation's chief agency for attracting local and foreign capital by reducing state bureaucracy and marketing the island as an attractive location for investment (Tollefson, 1985; Payne, 1988). This national agency had also worked closely with the Joint Investment Committee on Employment that was supported by President Ronald Reagan and American businessman, David Rockefeller. The purpose of this committee was to facilitate policy emphasis on areas of employment creation in Jamaica such as garment assembly, electronics, manufacturing, printing and wood work (Daily Observer, 2014; Payne, 1981). Most of the emphasis was placed on garment assembly because the Jamaican Government wanted to identify avenues of expanding a non-traditional export market to the United States of America. The expansion of non-traditional exports such as garments were made possible through the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) free trade agreement in 1982 (Hendricks, 1992).

The Government of Jamaica then, introduced the 1982 Free Zones Act to govern regulations of all free zones, Kingston Free Zone (1976) Montego Bay Free Zone (1985) and Garmex Free Zone (1988). The 1982 Free Zones Act also outlines the special incentives that that investors will granted whenever firms are established within the free zones. These special incentives include: unlimited restrictions on capital, tax exemptions and personal assistance with zone occupancy through the Factories Corporation of Jamaica (FCJ) (Free Zones Act of Jamaica, 1982; Klak and Myers, 1997; Montego Bay Free Zone Board, 2012). Employment in the Kingston Free Zone, Montego Bay Free Zone

and Garmex Free Zone grew from 6,000 persons in 1983 to more than 28,000 persons by 1988 (Long, 1989; Fishback, 1996). Approximately ninety per cent (90%) of persons employed in garment assembly sector of Jamaican EPZs were women and this contributed to a significant increase for women in EPZ employment (Dunn, 1987; Boyenge, 2007). The garment assembly sector had accounted for 89.6% of production in the zones while other sectors such as manufacturing and food processing were minor contributors to the productivity of the zones (Wilmore, 1993). There was no production or exports of electronics from Jamaica (Nurse, 1994). Apparel exports including jeans, shirts and blouses contributed to US\$10.7 million in exports in 1983 to US\$220.9 million in 1987. Most of these exports benefitted the United States of America market (Willmore, 1993; UNCTAD, 2003). This exponential growth in exports can be attributed to the fact that there was implementation of robust free market policies (Long, 1987; Matthews, 1992; Nurse, 1995). The overall foreign direct investment from export processing zones accounted for US \$27.3 million from 1982-1987 (Stone, 1987; Patin, 1990).

The EPZ development strategy began to crumble in 1988 to due to a rapid decline in demand for garment exports to United States market. This is reflected in the stark difference in the number of imports versus the number of exports where imports of materials stood at 9, 610 versus exports of garments stood at 3,113 in 1988 (Nurse, 1995). This forced operators of firms within Jamaica's free zones to make massive changes in operations by reducing the number of people employed (Klak, 1996). Foreign investors were also discouraged from investing in free zones because of a weak bureaucratic structure that prevented full occupancy in the zones, low profit margins and high interest rates (Hart, 2002). Adding to the series of discontents with Jamaica's free zones was the

fact that the garment assembly industry was characterized by low wages and deplorable working conditions (Bolles, 1996). As a result, an estimated 15,000 garment workers, mainly women, from the Kingston Free Zone demanded an increase in wages from US\$15 per week and better working conditions through a general workers' strike (James, 1988). Trade union involvement in free zones was strictly prohibited as they were seen as inhibitor to maximum efficiency of firms (Bhagwatti, 2004). This anti-union environment was largely influenced by Seaga's pro-conservative stance which strongly discouraged industrial disputes and work stoppages (Joint Trade Union Research and Development Centre, 1987). Although the major trade unions, Bustamante Industrial Trade Union and National Workers' Union were very vocal against the negative implications of structural adjustment reforms on specific labour issues such as wages, their general influence in terms of worker representation and organizing have drastically declined (Klak, 1997). Millions of dollars were lost in investor contracts and firms moved to elsewhere in the Latin America and the Caribbean region where there were more attractive incentives and cheaper labour (Hughes, 2006).

In attempt to alleviate the failures of the EPZ development strategy to create jobs and attract foreign direct investment, Seaga revived the traditional sectors export sectors such as bauxite mining and sugar but these sectors had performed below expectations because of declining global demand and foreign exchange shortage. This resulted in a US\$ 137 million loss in revenue (Henke, 1999; Payne, 1988). Jamaica had accumulated over US\$3.6 billion in debt and poor GDP rate at an average 1% towards the end of 1989 (Lendy, 1999; Chambers and Airey, 2001). The consistent poor economic indicators of

development paved the way for the Seaga's loss in the General elections in 1989 (Danielson, 1996) .

Current EPZ Development Strategy

The current EPZ development strategy is a continuation of the neo-liberal development strategy that Jamaica has pursued during the 1980s under the Seaga regime (Ming, 2017). It became more prominent between 2012-2015 against the backdrop that Jamaica's national unemployment rate was 13.1%, a debt to GDP ratio that was 140% and an estimated growth of 1.9% per annum (Foreign Direct Investment Magazine, 2016). Unemployment was highest among young people (36.2%) and women (33.7%) in 2015-2016 (USAID, 2017). The primary objective of the current Andrew Holness-led administration of Jamaica is to promote economic growth through job creation (Jamaica Gleaner, 2018). This primary objective has been translated into the decision to upgrade all of its free zones to special economic zone status in order to create thousands of higher-value added jobs, establish backward linkages that benefit the local economy and to attract foreign direct investment (Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce of Jamaica, 2019). The new regime of zones is also expected to promote international competitiveness in keeping with the standards of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization (Waters, 2013; Brown, 2016). The transition period for upgrading free zones to special economic zones ends on December 31, 2019 (Jamaica Observer, 2018; Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority, 2019).

The Government of Jamaica has repealed the 1982 Free Zones Act and has introduced the 2016 Special Economic Zones Act. The Special Economic Zones Act has

new set of regulations that govern the operations of the free zones along with a revised list of special incentives that are granted to foreign investors. The special incentives that foreign investors are entitled are: no general consumption tax (GCT) on goods and services, a 12.5% corporate income tax, productive tax credit, capital allowance scheme and employment tax credit and no limits on profit repatriation (Special Economic Zones Act of Jamaica, 2016; JAMPRO, 2017, p.4). JAMPRO is responsible for marketing Jamaica as the ideal location for investment. Jamaica is now marketed as an attractive investment location because of its: close proximity to the United States of America, English-speaking population, pro-investment parliamentary democracy and competitive labour costs (Jamaica Promotions for Trade and Investment, 2016).

The Montego Bay Free Zone is home to majority of the business outsourcing firms in Jamaica and accounts for 68% of business product outsourcing services island-wide (JAMPRO, 2014). It has applied to transition from free zone status to special economic zone status since 2018 through the Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority. It has also been commended for immense contribution to the national economy through foreign direct investment attraction and job creation which peaked at US\$120 million from 2015-2016 (Jamaica Information Service News, 2015; Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority, 2018). The Montego Bay Free Zone falls under the jurisprudence of the Port Authority of Jamaica and rental space is granted by the Factories Corporation of Jamaica (Factories Corporation of Jamaica, 2011; Montego Bay Free Zone Company Limited, 2012).

The Montego Bay Free Zone has three major sectors which include: business product outsourcing/ information communication technology (BPO/ICT), manufacturing

and warehousing. Seventeen (17) firms within the zone provide business product outsourcing services, two (2) firms provide manufacturing and (12) twelve firms specialize in warehousing (Montego Bay Free Zone Company Limited, 2015). Employment of persons in the business product outsourcing sector grew from 4, 472 in March 2012 to 6,737 in 2015 (Montego Bay Free Zone Company Limited, 2012-2015). In terms of foreign direct investment, the Montego Bay Free Zone has earned US \$127.97 million in 2014/2015 and this accounted for 12% in total exports from the zone (Montego Free Zone Company Limited, 2015).

Labour Strategy under the Holness administration: 2016- present

The largest sector for employment within Jamaica's free zones is the business product outsourcing sector which employs an estimated 36,100 persons in 63 firms. The record amount of foreign direct investment from the business product outsourcing sector stood at US\$323 million (Business Product Industry Association of Jamaica, 2019). Business product outsourcing is an export-oriented sector in which firms of developed countries move to developing countries to conduct cheaper, efficient services. These services are mostly performed in call centres (International Trade Centre, 2016). The Government of Jamaica has undertaken initiatives to support policy co-ordination among specific government ministries and agencies to ensure that fifty thousand (50,000) are created within the new regime of zones by 2020. The ambitious intention of job creation under the new regime of zones has been highlighted in the National Development Strategy 2015-2020 and the Vision 2030 plan (Jamaica Observer, 2017). The Human Empowerment and Resource Training (HEART) has attempted to co-ordinate with major universities such as the University of the West Indies, University of Technology, Caribbean Maritime

Institute and Northern Caribbean University to equip persons with the necessary skills and knowledge to enter into the business product outsourcing sector. HEART has received an estimated US\$130 million from the Inter-American Development Bank to train individuals in fields such as basic computer knowledge, customer support services and communications (Jamaica Promotions for Trade and Investment, 2014; USAID, 2017). Despite these critical policy steps to create higher value-added jobs within the new regime of zones, there are serious challenges in the education and training component in terms of preparing persons to work in the business outsourcing sector. Majority (70%) of employees in the business product outsourcing sector have only completed secondary level education. The low- graduation rates from training programs and tertiary education institutions is due to reduced government subventions towards public education (World Bank, 2019). This inhibits persons from being effectively prepared to be engaged in higher valued added jobs like engineering, manufacturing, software development, legal services and health within in the business product outsourcing sector (Jamaica Promotions for Trade and Investment, 2017). As a result of this persistent challenge, most jobs in the business product outsourcing sector rely on low-skilled labour in customer support services in call centres (Cofu and Fernandez-Stark, 2018).

Trade unions are recognized for the progressive track record of contributing to worker's rights by the current Government administration of Jamaica. However, there is still no unionization in Jamaica's free zones (ITUC, 2011). This is due to the fact that there is increasing hostile attitudes and beliefs towards organized labour in which trade unions are perceived as hindrances to economic growth recovery and massive foreign direct investment earnings in EPZs by both foreign investors and the government of

Jamaica (Jamaica Gleaner, 2018). The new regime of zones have experienced a wide array of challenges because only ten per cent (10%) of zones that operate under the old regime has been approved of Special Economic Zone status (Bennett, 2019). There have been several complaints that many companies operating under the free zone regime have not maintained proper record keeping. Therefore, it is extremely difficult for them to upgrade because the Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority introduces record keeping as a major requirement of transitioning to the new regime of zones (Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority, 2019). Finally, there are issues with chronic shortage in investment due to high operational costs and problems with red tapes. (Pate, 2019).

Decent Work or not?

The Decent Work Agenda (DWA) was introduced by the International Labour Organization to promote fairness and equality in employment opportunities for men and women in 1999. The ILO defines decent work on the basis of four pillars. These four pillars include: a) the right for the ILO to respect core labour standards b) fostering policies to promote full employment c) the right to social protection for workers and d) the right to social dialogue between workers, employers and governments at the international level(ILO, 2019). These four pillars are further sub-divided into the categories of decent wages, decent working conditions and freedom of association (ILO, 2013).

Decent Wages

Decent wages are among the most essential conditions for ensuring decent work through collective bargaining (ILO, 2008; ILO, 2019). Access to fair income and higher wages can increase the ability to afford basic social amenities and increase household consumption for workers and their families (Frey and McNaughton, 2016). Decent wages also allows workers to achieve a sense of dignity and economic empowerment (International Labour Rights Forum, 2019). The International Labour Organization's commitment to promoting decent wages is evident in its policy advice that is outlined in the ILO Conventions including the Minimum Fixing Wage Convention. The ILO has

outlined that there should be minimum and living wages for all employed persons (ILO, 2016; ILO, 2019). In Jamaica, minimum wages fall under the regulations of the National Minimum Wage Order and have been increased from JS\$6,200 to JS\$7,000 in August 2018. This increase is applicable to all Jamaican workers except private security guards (Jamaica Information Service, 2018).

Decent Working Conditions

Decent working conditions encompass a workplace where workers are allowed to undertake value-added activities in which there is proper remuneration, quality training, scope for career advancement and recognition for worker's achievements (Ruggiero et. al, 2015). Supportive workplace systems of workers' achievements leads to a sense of self-actualization and can contribute to higher productivity in the work place (Malid, 2001; UN, 2006). Decent working hours is one of the main components in decent working conditions. The ILO outlines that there should not be excessive working hours that undermine periods for recuperation, rest and balancing work- family life responsibilities(ILO, 2016). Decent working hours is regulated by the ILO Convention on Hours of Work (ILO, 2016). In Jamaica, working hours fall under the regulations of the Employment (2014 Flexible Work Arrangements Act) in which the ordinary work week of employees should consist of 40 hours (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2010).

The broadening of access to worker's freedoms and choices to enjoy right to social protection benefits regardless of their contractual arrangements helps to promote and

maintain decent working conditions (ILO, 2016). Social protection mechanisms should facilitate granting compensation for workers during periods of illness and injury, maternity leave, retirement and workers living with disabilities (OECD, 2018). Social protection measures can facilitate the process of income security for workers who either unemployed or those who are transitioning into new jobs as well as to compensate low-income earners through access to health care services (ILO, 2017).

Working conditions should be safe and healthy for all workers (ILO, 2019). Occupational health and safety is the foundation for promoting decent work as its purpose is to protect workers from injuries, work-related illnesses or any other work place hazards (Lonel and Morau, n.d.). Occupational health and safety also ensures that workplace standards are actively promoted and maintained in order for workers to achieve the highest degree of physical, social and mental well-being (Tease and Admass, 2006). For Jamaica, a national regulatory framework for Occupational Health and Safety has been proposed and the proposed 2017 Occupational Health and Safety Act is expected to be passed into law by later in 2019 (Jamaica Observer, 2019).

Social Dialogue

Social dialogue refers to exchange, consultation and negotiation between governments, trade unions, workers and employers (ILO, 2019). It is also a critical component of a democratic society in which workers are entitled to the right to become members of trade unions and for trade unions to represent and organize workers in the collective bargaining process (Labour Education Outlook, 2000; p.2). The ILO standards on social dialogue encompass freedom of association and collective bargaining for workers and employers as social dialogue seeks to balance both the interests of workers

and employers (World Employment Confederation, 2019). Strong social dialogue in the workplace encompasses strong labour legal framework, a supportive role of the government in shaping national institutions that protect labour's interests, strong and independent trade unions as well as large numbers of workers protected by collective bargaining agreements (Lawrence and Ishikawara, 2005).

The Feminization of Labour: Women in EPZ employment

Conceptually, the feminization of labour can be categorized into two main dimensions. The term 'feminization of labour' refers to the significant statistical increase in women who have entered the global labour force since 1980 (ILO, 2004; Richter, 2012). It also refers to women's growing susceptibility to engaging in insecure and precarious forms of labour. Globally, an estimated 48.6% women are in vulnerable employment compared to 46.6% of men in vulnerable employment since 2015 (Akorsu, 2016; ILO, 2015;). The feminization of labour is an important aspect in the history of debates of the export processing zones development strategy in developing countries. This is because majority (80-90%) of workers in export processing zones in developing countries are women (Munck, 2002; Otoboe, 2015). Women are preferable choices in export processing zones because they are gender-ascribed assumptions and norms associated with the value of their labour and the specific tasks that they are expected to perform (Holland, 1995; Dunn, 2001; Wright, 2006). Early literature on Third World women in export-oriented, garment assembly and manufacturing industries in developing countries has shown that owners preferred women workers because of their limited education and skills, tough work discipline, submission to management and natural capacities such as their 'nimble fingers' (Elson and Pearson, 1981). The notion

of ‘nimble fingers’ was used as a rationale to justify super-exploitation by keeping wages low and allowing Third World women workers to perform tasks under deplorable working conditions (Sharon, 2007). Case studies of women workers in export processing zones from Mexico, Honduras, South Korea, Turkey, Sri Lanka and Philippines in the early 1980s have shown where women workers have worked for meagre pay as low as US\$0.50-US\$1.25 per hour, they worked for extremely long hours, there was a lack of insurance schemes and they were prone to occupational health problem such as headaches, dizziness and gastrointestinal problems. There was also a lack of job security, limited or no scope for career advancement and representation of labour unions were repressed (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Women Working World Wide, nod; Hernandez-Kelly, 1983; Wright, 1995; Bolles, 1996; Prieto, 1997; Gunawardana, 2014).

Gender-ascribed norms and assumptions about women’s labour is reinforced through patriarchal discourses and practices that justify women’s docility and the ability to perform and balance multiple tasks and responsibilities effectively (Ong, 2010). The exploitative nature of work in garment assembly export processing zones has only led to the point of depletion and exhaustion among women workers (Wright, 2006; Gunawardana, 2016). This reifies the functioning of ‘cognitive capitalism’ wherein work is primarily seen and utilized as the primary contributor to the local economy while the desires, emotions and thought processes of workers are repressed; in an attempt to gain monetary value (Marini, 2007). A black feminist perspective views black labour as final site of subjugation, conquest and exploitation by new forms of colonial policies such as the establishment of export processing zones in the Third World. Women workers in countries like Jamaica, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic have been subjected to

hostile treatment from employers, sexual harassment, racism and other discriminatory practices such as no paid maternity leave or access to insurance schemes. The war waged against black bodies is a remnant of colonial policies that were constructed on the values of profitability and competitiveness of industries and not necessarily the conditions under which workers have to work (Belen and Bose, 1990, Cohen, 1991; Hoppers, 2001).

Not all women workers in Third World see work in export processing zones as a source of exploitation. They are Third World women workers in countries such as India, Ghana, Sri Lanka and Malaysia who view work as source of economic empowerment in which they are able to earn personal income to take care of themselves and their families, learn new skills and gain mobility in other public spheres with their work experiences. Wages in export processing zones were generally higher than wages in employment outside of export processing zones so many women opted for the EPZ work opportunity (Bacchus, 2005; Hosain, 2011; Hancock, 2012; Obeng Adomaa and Ane Apatinga, 2019). Early literature on women workers in garment and manufacturing sectors in export processing zones has generalized the skills set and education level of women workers. There are emerging international labour reports and case studies that show that there are women workers with college education and high skill level working in export processing zones such as Mexico, Turkey and Sri Lanka. This is due to the fact that global restructuring process has caused a sharp contraction in permanent, high quality jobs which were dominated by men and now there is growing precarious jobs that are occupied mostly by women (Prieto, 1997; Shaw, 2007, ILO, 2012; Tyugi, 2014; ILO, 2019). Other feminist scholars have contested that employers are not concerned

about gender ideology but rather the vibrancy of production processes in EPZ (Rios, 1990; Caraway, 2007).

Literature on EPZs in developing countries during the decade of the 1990s and 2000s has highlighted the changing nature of work organization due to technological developments (Knights and McCabe, 2001). Business product outsourcing is a global, multi-million dollar export-oriented sector in which most of the services are performed in call centres (International Trade Centre, 2016). Call centres are fast growing phenomenon within the business product outsourcing industry because there is a growing demand for services and the need to reduce operation costs in industries such as banking and finance, health, insurance and legal services (Richardson and Belt, 2001; Narli and Akdemir, 2019). Majority of the workers in call centres are women. For the global workforce, it is estimated that seventy per cent (70%) of workers are women (Bonds, 2006). In developing countries, it is estimated that thirty six per cent (36%) to sixty-eight per cent (68%) of workers are young women in call centres (Belt et al, 2002, Sharma, 2005).

Women workers mostly perform customer support services in call centres. Young women workers are the ideal choice of employers because of their dedication to service work, mastery of the English language and accent as well as their ability to pitch sales and empathize with customers' problems (Thompson, 2002; Golpewar, 2012). Employers often recruit workers based on their ability to exhibit good social skills, attitude and personality rather than on the basis of their technical competencies, educational level and other qualifications (Brock, 2004; Dublin, 2006). Gender-ascribed notions of work are deeply embedded in the social performance of call centre work.

Young women workers are expected to conceal their genuine feelings and thoughts as they engage with clients over the phone by employing exuberant and positive attitudes. This phenomenon is referred to as 'emotional labour' (Hoschild, 1983). The social performance of emotional labour in call centre work is seen as the deployment of positive feminine traits associated with the ideal expressions of femininity (Leidner, 1999). The feminization of labour encompasses an extensive creation of more 'feminized' jobs because it is a complex, multi-dimensional process (Buchanan and Koch-Schutle, 2000, p.7; Basak, 2017). This is evident in the fact that call centre jobs have also attracted an influx of men, secondary school leavers with limited skills and university graduates because they are considered as another attractive source of cheap labour (Baldry, 2002). The global economic restructuring process has also contributed to higher levels of unemployment and other labour market distortions that structurally marginalize specific groups of people. This is applicable to case studies conducted in developing countries like India and South Africa and also developed nations like Germany and Britain that have growing numbers of student workers, secondary school leavers and university graduates in their call centres (Pal, Holgreve and Ursuala, 2002; 2008; Scholarios and Taylor, 2011; Brophy, 2015).

The feminization of labour thesis has attracted several criticisms in terms of its explanatory power on new forms of work in export processing zones. The relevance of this thesis has drastically fallen because since the 1990s there has been an upsurge of women in other forms of employment outside of export-oriented sectors. This contributed to an upward pressure on higher wage demands (Prasad, 2018). There is a statistical decrease of women in specific sectors of export-oriented employment that requires advanced

skills in sectors as advanced information communication technology (ICT), software development, engineering and manufacturing because industrial upgrading coupled with investment in technology leads to a fall in the share of women in employment (Saloma-Akpendu, 2001, Tejani and Milberg, 2016).

Wages

The composite picture of wages in call centres is that they are low (Brophy, 2015). This is because increased competition for profits leads to a downward pressure on wages (OECD, 2007). For call centres in Jamaica, low wages are caused primarily by the rapid devaluation of the Jamaican dollar against the US currency. Jamaica has an estimated 7.7% devaluation in its local currency per annum (Nearshore Americas, 2010; IMF, 2017). Four anonymous workers in Jamaican call centres have reported that their wages are low (Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, 20 April 2016; Testimonial, The Jamaica Gleaner, 31 August, 2019). The recurring phrases that were used to describe wages in Jamaican call centres were “*minimal pay*”, “*low*” and “*unfair*” while one worker was more specific by stating, “*my pay is J\$195 (US\$3.45) per hour and the salary should be increased.*” (Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, 20 April, 2016; Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, August 31, 2019).

However, there are variations in the wage rates across call centres (Gerlach and Stephan, 2006). Call centres with typically higher wage rates because there are good human resource practices that prioritize proper remuneration for workers (Anders et. al, 2008; Henning and Claudia Weinport, 2009). This is evident where two Jamaican women call centre workers named Jennifer and Marie respectively that their salary is good (Interview, Nearshore Americas, December 13, 2016). Marie expressed in detail “I

earn J\$14,800 (US\$115) for a normal 40 hour work week” while Jennifer shared with great enthusiasm, “my salary is fine, I can earn more money if I do overtime hours. Management is very supportive” (Interview, Nearshore Americas, December 13, 2016). Call centres also have performance-based pay systems in which workers will only receive remuneration under the conditions that their daily and hourly work targets are met (Frenkel et. al, 1998; Aarbu and Torsovik, 2010). There was a single case where an anonymous woman call centre workers shared, “I have no set income because my pay is determined by my performance. If I do not meet work targets, I will not receive any pay” (Interview, Nearshore Americas, December 13, 2016).

Working Conditions

The general picture of working conditions in call centres is one where workers often experience immense emotional and mental pressure to attain stringent call performance targets by team leaders and management (Garson, 1988; Fernie and Metcalfe, 1998). Call centres are spaces that embody neo- Taylorist principles of task routinization and physically and emotionally challenging work (Tomengas and Gawhead, 2008 and Sarawat, 2017). Most call centre workers use the repetitive phrase ‘*slavery*’ to describe the nature of working conditions in Jamaican call centres (Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, April 20, 2016; Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, August 31, 2019). The phrase ‘*slavery*’ in relation call centre work implies Jamaica’s long contentious history of labour exploitation stemming from forced slave labour and has now evolved into new forms of worker mistreatment (Best and Levitt, 2009). Three anonymous workers have provided explicit details of their working conditions in Jamaican call centres (Lifestyle and Culture Magazine, August 20, 2019; Editorial Letter,

Teenage Observer, August 21, 2019; Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, August 31, 2019).

One call centre worker argued: *“The call centre is like being in a hot seat when you speak with angry American customers. One must have tough balls to do this job because you have to be polite regardless of how they talk to you”*.

(Testimonial, Lifestyle and Culture Magazine, August 20, 2019).

One call center worker lamented: *“It is very difficult talking on the phone with people every day. I should spend no longer than 2 minutes talking with a customer or addressing a query. Whenever I spend longer than 2 minutes, my team leader berates me.”*

(Editorial Letter, Teenage Observer, July 24, 2019)

Another worker expressed: *“The workload is very overbearing and there is constant pressure on staff to meet targets”*.

(Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, August 31, 2019)

These detailed accounts suggest call centre work is heavily dependent on ‘customer-orientation’ in which the interests and needs of the customer comes first regardless of the genuine feelings of the workers (Bain et. al, 2002; Taylor et. al, 2003). Working hours in call centres generally are controlled by management and they exceed the normal 40 hour work week with restrictions on lunch, break and bathroom periods (Tomengas and Gawhead, 2008; Sarawat, 2017). Working hours in call centres is a mechanism used to regulate and reinforce capitalist values of commodifying and manipulating labour in which all workers are expected to exhibit attitudes of punctuality and consistent hard work (Adams, 2007). Call centre employees are also expected to do

night shifts because outsourcing requires extensive working time (Mirchandandi, 2005). Many call centre workers try to stay awake while speaking with customers in the Western world. (Mirchandandi, 2012). Two anonymous Jamaican call centre workers have described their working hours as “*overwhelming night shifts*” and “*burdensome hours from 7am to 1am weekly*” (Editorial Letter, Teenage Observer, August 21, 2019). There are socio- cultural cues that often associate call centre work shifts with ‘low-status’ and ‘low-skilled’ people who have to work extra hours in order to make meet their personal and household needs. Marr and Perry, 2004; Patel, 2006) This negative social stigma translates into feelings of low self-worth among many call centre workers (Ishtiyaque and Gera, 2014). This is evident in the example of a single case where a young woman call centre worker stated: “*a negative social stigma is attached to the work you do and when you do it. Call centres are often associated with an uneducated, low-skilled person and it makes me feel so ashamed*” (Testimonial, Lifestyle and Culture Magazine, August 20, 2019).

Most call centre workers have limited or no access to social security protection because they are considered as ‘non-standard’ workers (Kerst and Hotlgere, 2001). Hence, call centre workers would not enjoy social protection benefits that formal wage workers would (ILO, 2015). Examples of denied health benefits, over- time pay denial, sick leave policy denial and maternity leave with pay denial were widely cited social benefit problems mentioned by two Jamaican call centre workers (Editorial Letter, the Jamaica Gleaner, August 31, 2019; Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Star, 3 February, 2017). Most call centre working environments are not safe and healthy for workers. Occupational health and safety problems are prevalent in call centres because there is

limited or no social support for workers' health and safety by management (Vilkman, 2004; Akouya, 2006; Marr, 2011). For example, one anonymous worker shared: "*there is no access to nearby doctor or nurse for workers*" while another worker laments: "*people have to be rushed to the hospital in near-death conditions because the vents are filled with residue*" (Editorial Letter, The Jamaican Gleaner, April 20, 2016; Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, August 31, 2019).

An emergent thematic concern surrounding working conditions in call centres is prospects for career advancement (Gosh, 2013; Khan, 2017). Most call centre workers quit their jobs because due to deplorable working conditions, low wages and limited or no alignment to long-term career aspirations (Kizel, 2013). Three young Jamaican call centre workers called T.J, James and Ashley respectively have all agreed that they do not see a call centre job as a long-term career opportunity. Their big conclusion is "*no one really wants to work in a call centre*" (Editorial, Teenage Observer, July 24, 2019).

It must be noted, however, not all call centre workers view their working conditions as exploitative (Gilmore, 2003). They are experiences in call centres in which there are quality training programs (Larner, 2008). Quality training programs and strong support from management and team leaders encourage complexity and variation in work-related tasks in order to bring talent and creativity in call centre workers (Balt, Nohora and Kwon, 2010). Call centres can also allow workers to learn new skills, gain better self-confidence with speaking with clients and colleagues and earn higher income (Gosh 2013; Khan, 2017). One young man said: "*I like the fast-paced environment because it challenges me to do my best at a variety of tasks. With the support from management*

and excellent training programs, I was able to be promoted to the position of supervisor of the Montego Bay Free Zone” (Interview, Jamaica Observer, February 5, 2018).

A young woman call centre acknowledged: *“The call centre is an important outlet for many school leavers like ourselves. Senior positions are opened if you work extremely hard. The call centre is a rewarding opportunity for me because I am able to learn new skills, meet new people and earn income” (Interview, Jamaica Observer, February 5, 2018).*

Social Dialogue: Workers, Trade Unions and Employers

Social dialogue was the least prominent issue in all the newspaper articles that covered the experiences and working conditions of workers in Jamaican call centres. Only one call centre worker mentioned: *“Nobody is on the side of workers. Regular reports are submitted to management and complaints get swept under the rug” (Editorial Letter, The Jamaica Gleaner, August 31, 2019).* This profound statement implies the absence of social dialogue in Jamaican call centres in which the right for workers to become trade union members and for trade unions to organize workers is strictly prohibited (Holdcroft, 2009; International Trade Union Confederation, 2011). The declining influence and membership of trade unions is due to the fact that there are significant changes in the world economy that affects work organization and industrial relations (Pillay, 2007). Outsourcing practices combined with a complex human resource managerial bureaucratic structure in call centres have created worker council meetings which replaces the traditional role and presence of trade unions (Norantia and D’Cruz, 2006; Balz et.al, 2010). The statement is also inextricably connected to the fact that current EPZ development strategy is heavily focussed on foreign direct investment

and hence, there is a consistent onslaught against worker's interests' and rights (Bergene, 2007; Lafferty, 2010).

Conclusion

The findings have illustrated that EPZs were established to confront persistent development challenges such as low growth, high debt and high unemployment rates. Unemployment has always been a structural and a chronic problem, particularly among young people and women in Jamaica because of the inherited legacies of the colonial economic system. The Michael Manley-led administration (1972-1980) in Jamaica attempted to create decent jobs with a focus on national self-sufficiency, skills upgrading institutions, access to higher education, broad based social protection coverage and strong involvement of trade unions. The 1976 Kingston Free Zone under the import substitution industrialization model was primarily used as a warehouse distribution facility. Both highly skilled and low skilled workers had access to better wages, improved working conditions, social security protection benefits along with greater trade union involvement. Quality training programs had broadened the prospects for career advancement within and outside the Kingston Free Zone for both highly-skilled and low-skilled workers. The EPZ development strategy under the import substitution industrialization model faltered due to restrictions on foreign capital inflow and external forces such as the OPEC and international debt crisis.

Edward Seaga (1980-1989) pursued the export-oriented industrialization model Jamaica to attract higher levels of foreign direct investment to create jobs. Export processing zones were the centrepiece of the government's development strategy to create employment. Due to reduced social spending, there was no serious public

investment in quality training and education institutions to equip persons for higher value-added jobs. The heavy focus on attracting foreign direct investment has facilitated repatriation of profits by foreign investors. There was a growing number of women in EPZ employment in the Kingston Free Zone, Montego Bay Free Zone and Garmex Free Zone due to changes in the global labour force and gender ascribed assumptions about the value of their labour and the performance of specific tasks such as garment assembly. The garment assembly sector in EPZs relied on low-skilled labour in which workers were subjected to low wages, poor working conditions, limited or no social protection and freedom of association was strictly prohibited. The garment assembly sector in Jamaica's EPZs also did not benefit the local economy as there were no backward linkages and the demand for garment exports to industrialized nations primarily the USA suffered from a drastic decline. Foreign investors were forced to downsize the firms and or to re-locate to more investor-friendly locations that had less red tapes, better physical infrastructure, incentive packages as well as cheaper labour costs. There was virtually no decent employment creation associated with EPZs under the export-oriented industrialization model because they were introduced as primary mechanism to honour IMF and World Bank obligations through structural adjustment reforms. Structural adjustment reforms contribute to a deterioration in employment, particularly formal wage jobs along with a significant reduction in wages and social security protection measures particularly for workers. Moreover, the heavy foreign direct investment focus of the EPZ development strategy under the EOI model leads to the weakening of a strong trade union movement because trade unions are seen as

hindrances to firm efficiency by both investors and the pro-conservative government administration.

The current EPZ development strategy under the Holness administration (2016-present) is a continuation of neo-liberal development strategy that was pursued by Edward Seaga from 1980-1989 in Jamaica. Despite the intent to create higher value-added jobs and establish backward linkages to benefit the domestic economy, most of the jobs in the business product outsourcing sector heavily rely on low-skilled labour in customer support services in call centres. The Montego Bay Free Zone is home to majority of these BPO/call centre firms. Jamaica's current, neo-liberal development EPZ development strategy continues to place heavy emphasis on special incentives such as tax exemptions, profit repatriation and competitive labour costs in order to attract foreign direct investment. The findings show that the current EPZ development strategy does not contribute to decent work because workers, mainly women perform routine-based tasks based on gender-ascribed assumptions about the value of their labour and specific activities that they are expected to perform. Workers are also subjected to excessive working hours which undermines periods for break and recuperation. Workers are expected to maintain positive inter-personal relations with clients under mentally, physically and emotionally demanding conditions from team leaders and management. There is no decent work creation associated with the current, neo-liberal EPZ development strategy because the social security benefits of call centre workers have been denied and most working environments in the call centres are not safe and healthy. Most call centre workers do not see their jobs as long-term career opportunities due to poor prospects for advancement. The current EPZ development also does not contribute

to decent work because social dialogue is strictly prohibited in which workers are denied the right to become members of trade unions and neither are trade unions allowed to represent and organize workers in call centres.

Future research should explore the alternatives to the current EPZ development strategy in order to promote decent work creation. It is important that these alternatives are explored as the focus of the EPZ development strategy should not be limited to simply job creation in Jamaica.

Bibliography

- Adomaa-Obeng, F. and Apatinga-Ane, G. (2019). Women's Economic Empowerment and Precarious Employment in Ghana's EPZs. *Labour, Capital and Society*, 49 (1), pp. 2-22.
- Akorsu, A. (2016). *Feminization of Labour*. Masters of Arts dissertation, University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
- Ambursley, F. (1981). *Jamaica: The Demise of Democratic Socialism*. *Latin American Perspectives*, 28 (2), p.76
- Bain, P. and Taylor, P. (2003). Subterranean Work Sick Blues: Humour as Subversion in Call Centres. *Organization Studies*, 24 (9), pp. 1487-1509.
- Barker, D. (2005). Beyond Women and Economics: Re-reading women's Work. *Signs*, 30 (4). pp. 2189- 2209.
- Barnes, W. and Kazar, J. (2008). The Exploitation of Pregnant Workers in Apparel Production. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 2 (3), pp. 285-293.
- Belen, E. and Bose, A. (1990). From Structural Sub-ordination to Empowerment: Women and Development in Third World Contexts. *Gender and Society*, 8 (3). pp. 299-320.
- Beneria, L. and Sen, G. (1981). Accumulation, Reproduction and Women's Role in Economic Development: Boserup Revisited. *Signs*, 7 (2), pp. 279-298.
- Beng, C. (1980). Export-Oriented Industrialization and Dependent Development: The Experience of Singapore. *Institute of Development Studies*, 2 (1), pp. 35-40.
- Benner, C. (2006). South African Call Centres: IT and Labour Market Restructuring. *Regional Studies*, 40 (9), pp. 1025-1040.
- Bergene, A. (2007). Trade Unions Walking the Tight Rope in Defending Worker's Interests: Wielding a Weapon Too Strong? *Labour Studies*, 32 (2), pp. 142-166.

- Bernal, R. (1984). IMF and Class Struggle in Jamaica, 1977-1980. *Latin American Perspectives*, 11 (3), pp.53-82.
- Best, L. and Girvan, N. (2009). *The Theory of the Plantation Economy: A Historical and Institutional Approach to Caribbean Economic Development*. Kingston: Jamaica. University of the West Indies Press.
- Biddle, W. and Stephens, J. (1989). Dependent Development Foreign Policy: The Case of Jamaica. *International Studies Quarterly*, 33(4). pp. 411-434.
- Binns, L. (2018). *Jamaica Under Siege: A Post-Independence Struggle for Economic Identity in the 21st Century*. Kingston: Jamaica.
- Bisessar, A. (2014). Whose Governance? IMF Austerities in Small Island State: The Case of Jamaica. *Journal of Reviews of Global Economics*, 3 (2), pp. 190-199.
- Bogues, A. (2002). Micheal Manley: Equality and the Jamaican Labour Movement. *Caribbean Quarterly*, 48 (1), pp.77-93
- Bohle, P. Willaby, P. and McNamara, Q. (2010). Flexible Work in Call Centres: Working Hours, Work-life Conflict and Health. *Applied Ergonomics*, 42 (2), pp. 219-224.
- Boyd, D. (1986). *Macroeconomic Stabilization in Jamaica: The Lessons of Recent Experience*. Overseas Development Institute: London.
- Braer, W. (1972). Import Substitution Industrialization and Industrialization in Latin America: Experiences and Interpretations. *Latin America Research Review*, 7 (1), pp. 95-122.
- Braveboy-Wagner. J. (2008). *Small States in Global Affairs: Foreign Policies of Caribbean Community*. Studies of the Americas. Palgrave MacMillan.
- Brophy, E. (2015). New Perspectives on Call Centre Work. *Le Travail*, pp. 211-230.
- Brown, A. (2018). *Economic Zones : Special Tools of Development : Placing Jamaica's Special Economic Zone into Context*. Amazon Publishers Limited.
- Business Product Industry Association of Jamaica. (2019). Investment Facilitation. Retrieved from <http://bpiaj.org/> date retrieved December 12, 2019

Caraway, T. (2007). *Assembling Women: The Feminization of Global Manufacturing Industries*. United States of America: Cornell University Press.

Carr, M. and Chen, M. (2004). Globalization, Social Exclusion and Gender. *International Labour Review*, 143 (2), pp. 129-160.

Central Intelligence Agency.(1980). *Profile on Jamaica's Prime Minister: Edward Seaga*. National Foreign Assessment Centre: United States of America. p.2.

Chandra, R. (1992). *Industrialization and Development in the Third World*. New Fetter Lane: London. Routledge.

Chang, H. (2008). *Bad Samaritans: The Myth of Free Trade and the Secret History of Capitalism*. New York: United States of America.

Conway, D. (1997). *Pursuing an Appropriate Development Model for Caribbean Small Islands: Can Past Experiences Help Subvert The Neo-liberal Agenda?*. Latin American Studies Association: Indiana University.

Cunningham, T. (20, August 2019). Call Centre and its Social Stigma in Jamaica. Lifestyle and Culture. <https://yootjamaica.com/call-centre-and-its-social-stigma-in-jamaica/> date retrieved December 12, 2019

Doellgast, V. Batt, R. and Sorenson, O. (2009). Institutional Change and Labour Market Segmentation in Europe's Call Centres. *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 15 (4), pp. 349-371.

Davies, O. (1986). An Analysis of the Management of the Jamaican Economy 1972-1985. *Social and Economic Studies*, 35 (1), pp. 73-109.

Davis, N. (1988). Debt Conversion: The Jamaican Experience. *Social and Economic Studies*, 37 (4), pp. 151-169.

Department of Statistics of Jamaica. (1974). *Labour Force Survey 1973-1974*. Kingston: Jamaica.

Downes, A. (2004). *Sir Arthur Lewis and Industrial Development in the Caribbean*. Institute of Social and Economic Studies. University of the West Indies, Cave Hill: Barbados.

Dublin, S. (2006). *Developments in the Call Centre Industry*. United States of America. Routledge.

- Dunn, L. (2001). Export Processing Zones: A Caribbean Development Dilemma. *Development in Practice*, 9 (5). pp.601-630.
- Elias, J. (2004). *Fashioning Inequality: The Multi-National Company and Gendered Employment in a Globalizing World*. Hampshire: England. Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Elson, D. and Pearson, R. (1981). Nimble Fingers Make Cheap Workers: An Analysis of Women's Employment in Third World Manufacturing. *Feminist Review*, 7, pp. 87-107.
- Fosu, A. (2013). *Achieving Development Strategies for Success: Strategies and Lessons for Developing Countries*. United Nations Policy Brief No. 3. United Nations University.
- Franko, P. M. (2003). *Import Substitution Industrialization: Looking Inward for the Source of Economic Growth*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Gayle, D. (1994). Expanding Jamaica's Private Sector: Policy Sources and Interim Consequences. *International Review of Administration Sciences*, 60 (1), pp. 67-99.
- Gray, O. (1991). *Radicalism and Social Change in Jamaica*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Gunawardana, S. (2016). To Finish We Must Finish: Every Day Practices of Depletion in Sri Lanka's Export Processing Zones. *Globalizations*, 13 (6), pp. 861-875..
- Henry, B. (2018, July, 13). *Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority predicts US \$ 5 billion in investments and 5,000 jobs*. Jamaica Gleaner. Retrieved from [https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/business-report/JSEZA-predicts-US\\$5-billion-in-investments-and-5,000-jobs-138498?profile=1056](https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/business-report/JSEZA-predicts-US$5-billion-in-investments-and-5,000-jobs-138498?profile=1056) date retrieved December 12, 2019.
- Human Empowerment and Resource Training. (2014). National Training Authority and Pre-Technology Partnership. Jamaica Profile. p.2.
- Hernandez-Kelly, P. (1983). *For We are sold, I and My people: Women and Industry in Mexico's Frontier*. Albany, New York: United States of America. Sony Press.

Holland, J. (1995). Female Labour Force Integration and the Alleviation of Urban Poverty. A Case Study of Kingston, Jamaica. *Habitat International*, 19 (4). p.477.

Holger, H. (1999). Jamaica's Decision to Pursue a Neo-liberal Development Strategy. *Latin American Perspectives*, 26 (5), pp. 3-7.

Hoppers, C. (2001). Poverty, Power and Partnerships in Education Development: A Post-Victimology Perspective. *A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 31 (1), pp. 21-38.

International Labour Organization. (2008). Export Processing Zones. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/actrav/areas/WCMS_DOC_ATR_ARE_EPZ_EN/lang-en/index.html date retrieved December 12, 2019.

International Labour Organization. (2012). Better Jobs For a Better Economy. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmstp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---public/documents/publications/wcms_179453.pdf date retrieved December 12, 2019.

International Labour Organization. (2013). *Decent Work Indicators: Guidelines for Producers and Users of Statistical and Legal Framework Indicators*. Geneva, Switzerland: International Labour Organization. pp. 14-15.

International Labour Organization. (2019). Wages. Retrieved from <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/wages/lang-en/index.html> date retrieved December 12, 2019.

International Labour Organization (2019). *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2019 Report*. Retrieved https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_670171/lang-en/index.html date retrieved December 12, 2019.

International Labour Rights Forum. (2019). Decent Wages. Retrieved from <https://laborrights.org/> date retrieved December 12, 2019.

International Trade Union Confederation. (2011). Internationally Recognized Core Labour Standards in Jamaica. Retrieved from https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/FINAL_Jamaica.pdf date retrieved December 12, 2019

Ishtiyaque, M. and Gera, R. (2014). Economic and Social Implications of Sustainability of Call Centre Jobs in India. *Journal of Urban and Regional Studies*, 1 (1), pp. 1-7.

JAMPRO. (2016). Doing Business in Jamaica's Knowledge Services Sector. Retrieved from

<https://www.jamaicatradeandinvest.org/sites/default/files/resources/DoingBusinessJamaicaKnowledgeServicesFeb2014.pdf> date retrieved December 12, 2019

JAMPRO. (2017). Doing Business Jamaica: Frequently Asked Questions about BPO. Retrieved from

<https://www.jamaicatradeandinvest.org/sites/default/files/resources/BPO%20FAQ%202017.pdf> date retrieved December 12, 2019.

Jamaica Gleaner. (24 May, 2018). *Labour Climate Hostile Towards Union Growth*. Retrieved from <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20180524/current-labour-climate-hostile-union-growth-patterson/> date retrieved December 12, 2019.

Jamaica Gleaner. (31 August, 2019). *BPO Conditions Akin To Slavery*. Retrieved from <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/letters/20190831/bpo-work-conditions-akin-slavery> date retrieved December 12, 2019.

Jamaica Observer. (24 July, 2019). Call Centre FYI. Teenage Observer.

Retrieved from http://301-joweb.newscyclecloud.com/teenage/Call_Centre_FYI?profile=1548&template=teenagearticle date retrieved December 12, 2019.

Jamaica Observer. (5 February, 2018). More Young People Seeing Opportunities in BPO. Retrieved from

http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/More_young_people_seeing_opportunities_in_BPO date retrieved December 12, 2019

Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority. (2019). Special Economic Zone Legislation and List of Free Zones and Special Economic Zones. Retrieved from <https://www.jseza.com/> date retrieved December 12, 2019

- Jamaica Star. (3 February, 2017). Call Centre Workers Denied Benefits. Retrieved from <http://jamaica-star.com/article/news/20170203/call-centre-workers-denied-benefits> date retrieved December 12, 2019.
- Jauch, H. (2002). Export Processing Zones and the Quest for Sustainable Development: A Southern Africa Perspective. *Environment and Urbanization*, 14 (1).
- Klak, T. (1996). Distributional Impact of the Free Zone Component of Structural Adjustment: The Jamaican Experience. *Growth and Change*, 27 (3), pp. 352-387.
- Klak, T. and Myers, G. (1997). The Discursive Tactics of Neo-liberal Development in Small Third World Countries. *Geo Forum*, 28 (2), pp. 133-149.
- Knights, D. and McCabe, D. (2001). A Different World: Shifting Masculinities in the Transition to Call Centres. *Organization*, 8 (4), pp. 619-645.
- Larner, W. (2002). Calling Capital: Call Centre Strategies in New Zealand and New Brunswick. *Global Networks*, 2 (1), pp. 133-152.
- Larner, W. (2008). Globalization, Governmentality and Expertise: Creating the Call Centre Labour Force. *Review of the International Political Economy*, 4 (4), pp. 650-674.
- Levitt, K. (1990). The Origins and Consequences of Jamaica's Debt Crisis 1970-1990. Consortium of Graduate School of Social Sciences. University of the West Indies Press.
- Levitt, K. (2005). *Reclaiming Development: Independent Thought and Caribbean Community*. Kingston: Jamaica. Ian Randle Publishers.
- Lewis, W.A. (1954). Economic Development with the Unlimited Supplies of Labour. *The Manchester School*, 22, pp. 139-191.
- Little et. al (1979). *The Experience and Causes of Rapid Labour Intensive Development in Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore: The Possibilities for Emulation*. The ILO Asian Employment Programme. Working Paper No. 1.
- Long, F. (1986). Employment Effects of Multi-National Enterprises in Export Processing Zones in the Caribbean. Institute of Social and Economic Studies. University of the West Indies: Trinidad and Tobago. pp. 51-57.

- Long, F. (1987). New Exports of the Caribbean to the International Economy. *Development Policy Review*, 5 (1), pp. 63-72.
- Long, F. (1989). Manufacturing Exports in the Caribbean and the New Industrializing Countries. *Social and Economic Studies*, 38 (1), pp. 115-131.
- Mars, P. and Young, A. (2004). *Caribbean Labour and Politics. The Legacies of Cheddi Jagan and Michael Manley*. Michigan: United States of America. Wayne University Press.
- Massiah, J. (1986). Work in the Lives of Caribbean Women. *Social and Economic Studies*, 35 (2), pp. 177-239.
- McArdle, T. (2008). Workforce Education and Development in Jamaica. *International Perspectives on Workforce Education and Development*. Amazon Publishers.
- McMicheal, P. (2004). *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mies, M. (1986). *Women in the International Division of Labour. Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale*. London: Zed Books Limited.
- Moberg, L. (2015). *The Political Economy of Special Economic Zones*. George Mason University: United States of America.
- Mohammed, J. (2015). *Caribbean Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. London: MacMillan Publishers Limited.
2015. Annual Free Zone Report. Montego Bay Free Zone Corporation Limited. Montego Bay:Jamaica
2014. Annual Free Zone Report. Montego Bay Free Zone Corporation Limited. Montego Bay: Jamaica.
2013. Annual Free Zone Report. Montego Bay Free Zone Corporation Limited. Montego Bay: Jamaica.
2012. Annual Free Zone Report. Montego Bay Free Zone Corporation Limited. Montego Bay: Jamaica.
- Munck, R. (2002). *Globalization and Labour: The New Great Transformation*. London: Zed Books.

- Nearshore Americas. (13, December 2016). Call Centre Agents Identify the Best Workplaces in Jamaica. Retrieved from <https://nearshoreamericas.com/jamaica-call-center-agents/> date retrieved December 12, 2019
- Noranha, E. and D’Cruz, P. (2006). Organizing in Call Centres: Emerging Issues. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 3 (1), pp. 2115-2121.
- Nurse, K. (1994). The Development Efficacy of Female Garment of the Export Oriented Clothing Industry: The Jamaican Case. *Social and Economic Studies*, 44 (2-3), pp. 195-227.
- OECD.(2007). *Globalization, Jobs and Wages*. Policy Brief No. 1.
- OECD. (2007). *Export Processing Zones: Past and Future Role in Trade and Development*. Trade Policy Working Paper No. 53. Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development.
- OECD.(2019). *Perspectives on Global Development: Re-Thinking Development Strategies*. OECD Report 2019.
- Ong, A. (1991). The Gender and Labour Politics of Post-Modernity. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 20, p.280.
- Oszarow, R. (2017). *The Foot on Each Side of the Picket Line: The Contradictory Role of Labour Unions in South American Governance*. Routledge. pp. 1-25.
- Pantin, D. (1993). Dual Labour Markets and Unemployment in Jamaica: A Modern Synthesis. *Social and Economic Studies*, 42 (1), pp. 75-118.
- Patel, R. (2006). *Working the Night Shift: Gender and the Global Economy*. University of Texas: United States of America.
- Payne. A. (1988). Orthodox Neo-liberal Development in Jamaica: Theory and Practice. *Third World Quarterly*, 10 (3), pp. 1217-1238.
- Phillip, G. and Hussey, B. (2006). *A-Z of Industrial Relations in the Caribbean Workplace*. Kingston: Jamaica. Canoe Press.
- Pillay, D. (2007). Globalization and the Challenges to Labour and Development. *Labour, Capital and Society*, 40 (1&2), pp. 1-16.
- PSOJ, (n.d.). *Annual Report 1985-1986*. Kingston: Jamaica.

- Prasad, A. (2018). De-feminization and Disempowerment of Women Workers in Garment Factories. *Indian Journal of Women and Social Change*, 3 (1), pp. 12 - 23.
- Prieto, N. (1997). *Beautiful Flowers of the Maquiladora: Life Histories of Women in Tijuana*. University of Texas Press: United States of America.
- Prieto, N. and Quinteros, C. (2004). Never the Twain Shall Meet? Women's Organizations and Trade Unions in the Maquiladora Industry in Central America. *Development in Practice*, 14 (2), pp. 149-159.
- Richardson, R. and Belt, V. (2001). Saved by the Bell? Call Centres and Economic Development in Less Favoured Regions. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 22 (1), pp. 67-98.
- Rios, P. (1990). Export Oriented Industrialization and the Demand For Female Labour: Puerto Rican Women in the Manufacturing Sector 1952-1980. *Gender and Society*, 4 (3), pp. 321-337.
- Russell-Brown, S. (2003). Labour Rights Are Human Rights: The Situation of Women Workers in Jamaica's Export Processing Zones. *Berkeley Journal of Employment and Labour Law*, 24 (1) p.185.
- Safa, H. (1981). Runaway Shops and Female Employment: The Search for Cheap Labour. *Development and the Sexual Division of Labour*, 7 (2), pp. 418-433.
- Scott, S. (13, May 2018). 2018 Marks 31 Years of IMF Rescue of Jamaica. Jamaica Observer. Retrieved from Jamaica Observer http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/2018-marks-41-years-of-imf-2018-marks-41-years-of-imf-8216-rescue-8217-of-jamaica_132762?profile=1096
- Sarawat, Y. (2017). Investing Factors that lead to Jobs Stress: Special Focus on Call Centre Employees. *International Journal of Engineering Development and Research*, 3 (3), pp. 234-245.
- Sharon, H. (2007). *Women's Labour in the Global Economy: Women Speaking in Multiple Voices*. Rutgers University Press.

- Tejani, S. and Milberg, W. (2016). Global De-Feminization? Industrial Upgrading and Manufacturing Employment in Development Countries. *Feminist Economics*, 22 (2), pp. 24-54.
- Standing, G. (1981). Unemployment and Female Labour: A Study of Labour Supply in Kingston, Jamaica. New York: USA. Martins Press. p.52.
- Stone, C. (1985). Jamaica in Crisis: From Socialist to Capitalist Management. *International Journal of Development*, 40 (2), pp. 281-371.
- Tellefson, S. (1985). Jamaica: The Limits of Showcase Policy. *John Hopkins University Press*, 5 (2), pp. 189-204.
- Thorburn, D. and Morris, D. (2007). *Jamaica's Foreign Policy: Making the Economic Development Link*. Caribbean Policy Research Institute. Kingston: Jamaica.
- Tyugi, A. (2014). *Development, Globalization and Women*. New Dehli, India: Omega Publications.
- UNRISD. (1994). *Structural Adjustment in a Changing World*. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development Briefing Paper No.4
- UNCTAD. (2015). *Enhancing the Role of Export Processing Zones to the Sustainable Development Goals. An analysis of 100 EPZs and a Sustainable Framework*. United Conference on Trade and Development. Geneva: Switzerland.
- Willmore, L. (1993). *EPZs in the Caribbean: The Jamaican Experience*. UNECLAC Review. Santiago de Chile: Chile.
- Veltmeyer, H and Wise, R. (2018). Re-Thinking Development From A Latin American Perspective. *Canadian Journal of International Development Studies*, 39 (3), pp. 335-352.
- Veltmeyer, H. (2010). A Synoptic of the Development Idea. *Migracion y Desarrollo*, 14, pp. 9-30.
- Weiss, T. (2005). A Precarious Balance: Neo-liberalism, Crisis Management and Social Implosion in Jamaica. *Capital and Class*
- Wright, M. (2006). *Disposable Women and Oher Myths of Global Capitalism*. New York: United States of America. Taylor and Francis Group.